

Planning the Soviet Defense Industry: the Late 1920s and 1930s*

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Abstract

The paper describes the procedures for planning the Soviet defense industry in the interwar period and analyses its limitations. Three features differentiated the planning of the defense industry from that of the civilian economy. First, the supply of national defense in the broadest sense had high priority and received the close attention of the country's top leadership. Second, the process of military and economic planning for defense that created the context of defense industry plans had a strongly forward-looking character and generated increasing demands through the interwar years. Third, the detailed planning of defense industry was carried on simultaneously in two separate bureaucracies, a military hierarchy preoccupied with formulating demands and an industrial hierarchy the task of which was to organize supply; planners made strenuous efforts to reconcile supplies and demands in the defense industry, and met with limited success.

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