

RUSSIAN REVOLUTION - OUTLINE

I. Russian Revolution

A. Causes:

1. Russo-Japanese War
2. Bloody Sunday
3. Revolution of 1905
4. Rasputin's influence on the royal family
5. World War I

II. Phases:

A. Phase One – The March Revolution – March 1917

1. riots and strikes in Petrograd
 - a) people protesting against the war and the shortage of food
 - b) soldiers refused to break up the riots and many joined the protests
2. Czar Nicholas abdicates the throne
3. Duma leadership sets up **Provisional Government** under leadership of **Alexander Kerensky**
 - a) positive impact:
 - (1) *introduces reforms including freedom of speech and religion*
 - (2) *elected assembly to draw up a constitution*
 - b) negative impact:
 - (1) *Provisional Government has little power*
 - (2) *Angers peasants by refusing to redistribute land right away*
 - (3) *Continue to fight in World War I despite widespread opposition*

B. Phase Two – Bolshevik Revolution – October 1917

1. Bolsheviks helped organize **soviets** (workers' councils)
2. Bolsheviks called for a socialist revolution (Bolshevik Revolution or Russian Revolution)
 - a) Lenin, leader of the Bolsheviks, tries to increase Bolshevik power over the soviets
 - b) Bolsheviks gain support due to promises of "Peace, Land, Bread"
3. **October 1917 – Lenin convinces Bolshevik leaders to seize power after the weak Provisional Govt. attempts to arrest Lenin**
 - a) Bolsheviks capture government buildings and arrest members of the Provisional Govt.
 - b) Lenin immediately wins support for 2 major reasons:
 - (1) *He tells peasants they can keep the land they seized after the March Revolution*
 - (2) *Lenin promises to seek an immediate peace with Germany and end Russian participation in World War I*
 - (a) **March 1918 – Russia and Germany sign Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, ending Russian participation in WWI.**
 - (b) Treaty affirms the independence of Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Ukraine, Lithuania and Poland.

C. Phase Three – Bolsheviks in Power and Russian Civil War

1. Marxist-Leninism – Lenin altered Karl Marx’s theories to suit his and Russia’s needs
 - a) Marx predicted that the proletariat would rise up in a great socialist revolution, without planning. Lenin believed that such a revolution was only possible if it was led by a small group of leaders
2. Lenin sets up a Bolshevik Dictatorship
 - a) all other political parties in Russia are destroyed
 - b) Bolsheviks close down opposition newspapers
 - c) Lenin sets up the **Cheka** – secret police – to end any resistance to Bolshevik rule
3. Civil War
 - a) groups who opposed the Communists (what the Bolsheviks now called themselves) were diverse:
 - (1) *democratic socialists (Mensheviks)*
 - (2) *capitalists*
 - (3) *monarchists who wanted to restore the czar to power*
 - (4) *national groups – Uzbeks, Georgians, Ukrainians wanted freedom and/or greater independence*
 - b) 1918-1921 – Civil War rages in Russia
 - (1) **Leon Trotsky leads the Red Army (Communist Army)** – Communists ruthlessly take anything they need to build and train the army
 - (a) seize grain from peasants
 - (b) take control of all factories, mines, banks, and businesses.
 - (2) **White Army** – oppositional forces – supported by British, French, and American troops for a while
 - (a) lost support as it lost control of important regions
 - (3) *Communists win control over most of the old Russian Empire*
 - (4) 1922 – Reorganize Russia into a union of four republics and rename the country the **Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR or Soviet Union)**
 - c) Lenin introduces **War Communism** (1918-1921), an economic policy to keep towns and the Red Army supplied with food and weapons during the Civil War.
 War Communism included the following policies:
 - (1) *all industry was nationalized (taken over by the govt.) and strict central management was introduced*
 - (2) *the state took control of foreign trade*
 - (3) *workers who went on strike were punished severely (sometimes shot to death)*
 - (4) *Govt. seized agricultural surpluses from the peasants, sometimes in amounts that exceeded what the peasants needed to survive*
 - (5) *food and most commodities were rationed and distributed in a centralized way*
 - (6) *private enterprise (business) was made illegal*