

## Russia Notes

**RUSSIAN REVOLUTION NOTES 1905-1914** The unrest in Russia came to a head in 1905. Often called a "Revolution", changes were roced to be made by the Tsar. The focus question is WHY?

- Growing political opposition.
- Writings of Marx- Social Democrats.
- Split into Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, 1903
- Socialist Revolutionaries
- Popular with peasants.
- Cadets
- Represented middle class conservatives and liberals.
- Loss to Japan in Russo-Japanese war
- View that Russia would enjoy a quick and cheap victory over an "inferior" Rival.
- Disrupted Peasants and therefore agricultural supplies.
- Bloody Sunday
- What happened?
- Began with strike in the Putilov steelworks in St Petersburg on 16 Jan.
- By 20 January most factory workers in city were on strike
- Father Gapon organised a protest March and petition which would be presented to the Tsar at the Winter Palace on Sunday 22 January
- About 150 000 people Marched from all parts of the city
- Requests were: Guarantee of civil liberties
- Measures against poverty
- Better worker conditions, including an eight hour day.
- 4 Separate routes converged on the city centre.
- Officers fired on protestors.
- Official toll was 92 dead and several hundred wounded.
- Immediate aftermath.
- As 1905 Progressed, the government steadily lost control of events and the country reached a state bordering on anarchy.
- Hostilities directed at the Tsar (and the tsarist system)
- Strikes and mutinies.
- By the end of January there were more than 400 000 workers on strike.
- Later in the year the figure had risen to 2 500 000
- Mutiny aboard the battleship Potemkin of the Black Sea fleet.
- St Petersburg Soviet formed on 26th October
- October Manifesto
- 30th October 1905
- "Turned Russia into a constitutional monarchy."
- Enacted a principle that no law should in the future be enacted without the approval of the State Duma
- Took the "wind out of the sails of the revolution" and completely undermined the position of the St Petersburg Soviet.
- Still strong support from the bureaucracy, landlords and the Church
- Re-assertion of the Tsar's Authority.
- December 1905 leaders of the St Petersburg and Moscow Soviets were exiled to Serbia
- By March 1906 the revolution was crushed and revolutionary leaders were either dead, exiled or in hiding abroad.
- 6th May 1906 Nicholas issued a revised version of the Fundamental Law of the Empire, defining once again his view of the nature of his power.
- Dismissal of the Dumas (1st and 2nd)
- 1st Duma took a clear anti-government stance. It met for ten weeks, from May till June 1906, after which it was dissolved by the Tsar.
- 2nd Duma fared little better. Dissolved within three months after it severely criticized the Tsar's administration.
- Change in voting franchise for the 3rd Duma.
- Tsar altered electoral law to make sure that the representation of peasants, small landowners and urban dwellers was drastically reduced
- 3rd Duma served its full term from 1907-1912
- 4th Duma followed a similar pattern 1912-1917
- Stolypin's reforms and repression
- Peter Stolypin was chief minister (Prime Minister-replaced Witte in 1906), assassinated in 1911 before his peasant reforms could take effect.
- "Trials"
- Exile and death aimed at revolutionaries
- Over 20 000 exiled and 1000 hanged.
- Peasant land ownership
- Began a process of land reform to win over the peasants.
- Trying to create a richer group of peasants who would support the Tsar.
- Kulaks prospered
- Some industrialisation
- Workers did not see the gains. Increased profits went to capitalists.
- Wages did not keep pace with inflation
- Housing was inadequate
- Weakening of the Tsar's authority
- Influence of Rasputin
- Supposedly cured Alexandra's son, Alexis from Haemophilia
- Had support of Alexandra.
- Promoted friends and admirers to positions of power, regardless of ability.
- Felix Yussupov and Grand Duke Dmitry killed Rasputin
- Tsar's opponents seized on Rasputin as a sign of the Tsar's weakness and unfitness to rule Russia.
- "Backwardness" of Russia
- Activities of groups such as the Bolsheviks, Narodniks.
- Material given out in factories
- Exile/Arrest
- Wanted Change in role of Government. Russia was last of absolute Monarchs.
- World War I
- Originally seemed like the conflict would save the Romanov throne, not destroy it.
- Russia was ill prepared for the war.
- Shortage of Boots, rationing of ammunition
- Initially it seemed a story of unstoppable success until the Russians were defeated at Tannenberg.
- Economy soon began to feel the strains of World War One
- Inflation
- Speculation
- Hit rural areas particularly hard.
- Loss of fathers, sons and horses to the war effort meant less fewer people and animals to work the soil.
- Food was hard to come by in the cities: There was plenty of food in Russia, but it didn't make it to the cities because of an inefficient transport system.
- Wages remained low and as prices rose discontent showed itself in strike activity
- 1915 NII took over command of army: bad move: associated with disaster
- The war spread discontent, demonstrated Russia's economic weakness and confirmed the view that the corruption and ignorance of key officials (I.E. Rasputin and Alexandra) was leading the country to ruin.
- Economic chaos at home and military disaster had spelled the end of the Tsarist Regime.
- The March Revolution
- \*\*\* Why was there a revolution in March 1917?
- Long term causes
- Peasant unrest
- Role of the intelligentsia
- Role of political groups
- Middle class unrest
- Minor
- Role of Soviets
- Role of war
- Role of NII Tsarist system
- Role of Rasputin
- Role of workers/unrest.
- Spontaneously
- March in protest (Urban women)
- Strike
- Then Students, army
- Events of March Revolution
- 7th March
- Tsar left Petrograd
- 8th March
- Rioting women (after bread) joined by striking workers from the factories (90 000)
- Day filled with meetings, demonstrations and encounters with police. No Shooting
- 9th March
- About half of the cities workforce joined the strike. Processions made way from suburbs to city center.
- Police fired on crowds, but Cossacks refused
- 10th March
- Strikes spread wider (240 000)
- Fresh troops brought in.
- Military commander in Petrograd ordered to end the disorders the following day.
- 11th March
- As demonstrations renewed the police opened fire with machine guns, killing nearly 300 people.
- 6 PM first signs of mutiny came from the Pavlosky Guards- quickly arrested by loyal troops.
- 12th March by 10 A.M, over 10 000 soldiers had mutinied.
- Although the Duma was suspended, the members continued to meet.
- Streets were close to a state of Anarchy.
- By 3 P.M, members of the Duma had decided to form a provisional government.
- Rival Petrograd Soviet set up, first meeting at 7 P.M.
- Kerensky vice Chairman, also a member of P.G. -served as a link between the two.
- Nicolas decided to return to Petrograd.
- 13th March
- In Petrograd, shops and places were looted and former officers and policemen were liable to be beaten up or killed if they fell into the hands of the roaming revolutionary mobs.
- 14th March
- Soviet produced Order No.1
- Addressed to army
- Abolished the saluting of officers when not on duty
- Made provision for the election of soldiers representatives to the Soviet
- Made clear that no orders of the

state Duma should be obeyed if it conflicted with the orders of the Soviet - Announcement of details of provisional government - Kerensky minister of justice - link between soviets and P.G - Milukov foreign minister - leader of Cadets - Guchkov war minister - leader of Octobrists. - 15th March - Provisional Government sent demand to NII to abdicate. - Tsar had already decided to. - NII signed abdication at p.m. passed power to his brother Mikhail - 16th March - Mikhail also abdicated. - Russia a republic - How revolutionary was the Duma? - Made up of middle-class and conservatives (NII had changed the voting franchise) - Wanted NII's son, Alexis to take the throne. - Was the Revolution a spontaneous uprising or a planned event? - There were no clear leaders (Trotsky and Lenin were out of country!) - Took many revolutionary parties by surprise. - "With revolutionary parties in confusion and revolutionary leaders absent, the March revolution was a spontaneous, unplanned event. It was expected only in so far as some in Russia had expected a revolution at various times since 1905. The timing and the cause of its outbreak were unexpected, though quickly exploited by the masses in the city" (Simpson) - Aftermath of March Revolution - Provisional government - led by Lvov - Kerensky only Socialist - Began in a blaze of reforms - Universal suffrage from age of 18 introduced - Independence granted to Poland - Death penalty abolished - Political prisoners freed (Mistake!) - All restrictions on public meetings lifted (Mistake also!) - Progressive labor legislation (i.e. 8 hour day - Dole and medical insurance scheme - Discriminatory measures against religious and minority groups abolished - The Provisional Government: An opportunity lost - Ideology and policy - Liberal democratic reform - Freed political prisoners and returned revolutionary exiles - Relaxation of press censorship - Allowed open opposition to the new regime to go unchecked. - Postponed change in the vital area of land reform - Conduct of war - P.G. official war aim was "the defense- at whatever cost- of our own national honor and the expulsion of the enemy from inside our borders" - Bolsheviks wanted to end war - Lack of leadership - In July Lvov resigned - Kerensky replaced him as premier. - Struggle for authority with the Soviet - Period between March and November referred to as "dual power" - Lvov - "Soviet has power without authority, P.G. has authority without power" - As months passed power of Soviet steadily grew. - System of elected Soviets was set up through the factories, the armed forces and the villages. - Soviets much more responsible to pressures from electorates, P.G. becoming increasingly out of touch. - The Bolsheviks: An opportunity seized. - Only 40 of the 1500 delegates to the Soviets were Bolsheviks - Lenin's April Thesis - His ideas which were set out upon his return to Petrograd - An end to the war and rejection of "defensive war" theory which had support of P.G. and Soviet - No support for P.G. Soviet to be the only possible form of Government - Recognition that March revolution was just a means to an end. - The takeover of all landed estates, disposal by the local Soviets. - Took several weeks to persuade his party to follow. - Two main strengths of Bolsheviks - Supported end of war - Supported land seizures. - May Setting up of "Red Guard" - All Russian Congress of Soviets - June, met in Petrograd. - Most delegates Mensheviks or SRs, only 105 of 822 Bolsheviks - Vote of confidence in the P.G. passed - 1 July Kerensky ordered a new Military offensive - unpopular, demonstrations - July days - Bolsheviks placed themselves at head of demonstrations. - Series of street clashes from 16-18 July - Followed by arrest of Bolshevik leaders, accusation of treason - Lenin escaped in disguise. - Kornilov Revolt - Kornilov ordered by Kerensky to transfer troops to the capital to help in the suppression of the Bolsheviks. - Kerensky then suspected that Kornilov was planning to seize power for himself, and branded Kornilov a traitor. - Kors continued to move troops towards capital - Resistance came not from P.G., but from Red Guard, who persuaded Kors' troops to abandon planned attack. - As a result, the September elections for the Soviets in Moscow and Petrograd saw the Bolsheviks gain 50 per cent of the seats. - Trotsky released from prison and within a week had been elected chairman of Petrograd Soviet - November Revolution - By September 1917 250 000 people regarded themselves as Bolshevik. - Kerensky losing support (no army, alienated both liberals and socialists) - Decided to announce that the elections for the constituent assembly would take place at the end of November - Trotsky packed Soviet with as many Bolshevik members as possible - On evening of 6th November groups of Bolshevik Red Guards, aided by sailors from the Baltic fleet, moved through the city taking over key buildings such as the telephone exchange and police stations. - Little resistance. - Morning of the 7th Kerensky went in search of loyal troops, found few. - By mid-afternoon the Bolsheviks controlled all of the city except the Winter Palace. - At 9:40 PM the cruiser Aurora fired a blank shell at the Winter Palace. - Little bloodshed in takeover. - The Consolidation of Bolshevik Rule 1917-1921 - Oct 1917 the Bolsheviks overthrew the Prov. Govt.. Now what? - The quest for mass support - New government named "Sovnarkom" (short for Russia "Council of Peoples Commissars" - 8th November the Decree on Land was announced. Confiscation of landlords' property. - Zinoviev and Kamenev wanted a coalition gov't, Trotsky and Lenin argued otherwise. - However, Lenin formed an alliance with the SRs: allowed them to join Sovnarkom. - Meant that Bolsheviks could claim that they represented the peasants. - Some Government departments refused to support the Bolsheviks - Allowed voting for C.A. to go ahead, confident they would win. - Voting took place in November and December 1917. - SRs got 40% of vote, Bolsheviks 24. - When trend of results became clear, Sovnarkom postponed the opening of the assembly, claiming electoral abuses. - In the early hours of 19 January the C.A. adjourned its first meeting, but when they returned later in the day that found the entrances blocked by Kronstadt sailors. - The implementation of "peace, bread, land" had to be a priority, but Russia was in a mess. Peace became a preoccupation. - Treaty of Brest-Litovsk - The Bolsheviks had offered an immediate peace without annexations and without indemnities. - Trotsky the main man - His faction argued a state of "neither war nor peace" - Meant an end to the war and demobilisation of army, but no signing of any peace treaty - Eventually Lenin's view was taken (or forced - Lenin threatened to resign), and an immediate peace with Germany was signed. On 3rd of March 1918 at Brest-Litovsk. - Harsh - Russia lost Poland, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania and the Ukraine. Land given to Turkey which cut Russia off from the Black Sea - Had to pay a war indemnity of 6000 million marks - Lost 30 percent of its population - 32 percent of agricultural land, 85 percent of its beet-sugar land, 54 percent of its industrial undertakings and 89 percent of its coal mines - Opposition to the treaty. Peace from Germany was achieved at a high cost. But Russia was not at peace. War continued: Civil War: Reds v Whites with foreign intervention. - The Civil War - Both

hindered and advanced Bolsheviks - By threatening the very existence of the new government the civil war preoccupied the minds of Lenin and his associates at a time when they wished to lay the foundation stones of the new socialist state - Also, the war ensured that by 1920 the main counter revolutionary groups in Russia had been brought into the open and defeated. - What state Russia was in - Economy, transport - Bolsheviks had efficient transport stemming from Moscow, Whites were divided. - Despair/hope - Actual control held by the Bolsheviks - Strength greatest in the North-West, around Moscow and Petrograd. - Election and consequences - Size of Russia - Which groups supported Bolsheviks - Which groups against Bolsheviks - Liberals, monarchists, disgruntled socialists, ex officers. Foreign powers, Czech Legion. - Civil war - Some Battles - Some personalities - Trotsky was Commissar for war and took command of the army in March 1918 - Foreign intervention - British and French - Repudiation of Russian loans by Lenin was particularly resented by French - Policies of war communism - Economy totally geared to war - Rampant inflation - Forced requisition - Bolshevik use of propaganda - The Red Terror and the Cheka - Trotsky used thousands of officers of the old imperial army, but attached commissars to every one to ensure loyalty and share power. - Cheka established in December 1917. - Existing legal system replaced with one empowered to deal with counter revolutionary activities. - Its task was the identification and elimination of all counter revolutionaries. Action or speech against the government was not necessary. - Agents infiltrated workplaces - Anyone found with anti-government leaflets could be shot on the spot. - After failed assassination attempt on Lenin terror increased. - Why did the Whites win? - The Whites failed to gain support of peasants because all they could offer was a return to the past. - Offensives were rarely co-ordinated, due to the differing objectives of the leaders and the massive distances that separated their forces. - Foreign intervention worked in Bolsheviks favor, incited nationalism. - Kronstadt Revolt - Who Involved - What Happened - Why a key event

Review Questions Simpson, pg 248 1) The term "Revolution" means that there has been great change. The events of 1905 merit the term "Revolution" in the sense that the Duma has been formed and freedoms and concessions have been granted. There was a change in government in the sense that power was to shift away from the Tsar and towards the Duma, but it there had not been a complete changeover of power. 2) Nicholas had 2 main choices when facing the growing calls for change in Russia, he could use the Army, and risk a revolt or further bloodshed, or he could grant concessions Simpson, p249 1) Zinoviev- Bolshevik Rodzianko- Octobrist Miliukov- Cadet Kerensky- SR Martov- Menshevik 2) The Octobrists and Cadets wanted the Tsar to remain 3) SRs 4) Mensheviks believed that the working class should cooperate with the Bourgeoisie to overthrow Tsarism first, and they had a broadly based party. The Bolsheviks wanted an elite and tightly disciplined party and believed that there should be an alliance between the workers and peasants. Simpson, p251 1) a) Gumbinnen was a place where the Russians defeated the Germans b) Tannenberg was where the Germans inflicted heavy defeat on the Russians c) Samsonov was the Russian commander who shot himself at Tannenberg d) Sukhomlinov was the war minister who underestimated the needs of the Army. 2) There was an increasing volume of industrial unrest in the cities between 1914 and 1917 because food was hard to come by because of the terrible transport system and because wages remained low while prices rose.

Source Questions Simpson, pg247 1) The Manifesto was introduced according to source 13A because the Tsar is obliged by his vow of service to put an end to the disturbances so dangerous to the empire. 2) The changes granted by Nicholas were - Freedom - Election of state Duma. - No law shall go into force without confirmation by the state Duma. 3) The Tsar still had censorship, and he still had power over the soldiers. 3) She symbolises Liberty, of whom the Tsar has just released out of Jail, and will have to run to get her back. 6) Source 13C is very apathetic, and is saying that really nothing much has been gained. Source 13B, in contrast, is saying that it is just the beginning, that the Tsar has put into place the foundations of further freedom. 7) In Trotsky's view the desire for reform is very small and superficial, and is not intended as genuine reform, instead it is to make the people happy. 8) 13C.

## About the Author

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