

The Russian Revolution

Background

- Alexander II assassinated in 1881 by terrorists
 - o Alexander III takes over
 - Complete totalitarian
 - Dies in 1894
 - Inept Nicholas II comes to power
- **Nicholas II**
 - o Russo- Japanese War 1904-1905
 - o First Russian revolution 1905
 - Attempt Liberalization
 - Horribly handled
 - Bloody Sunday January 1905
 - Peasants march on Winter Palace
 - General strike, paralysis of the country



Fall of the Tsars

- First concession by Nicholas on his power
 - o October Manifesto
 - Forms Duma
 - Supposed to be an advisory body to the tsar
 - Representatives elected by universal male suffrage
 - Majority of people elected to the Duma were liberals
 - o “**Kadets**” are constitutional democrats
 - o 1906 – cancels the Duma twice
 - Does not get called again until 1907
 - Returns with more conservatives
 - o Government violence used to suppress critics
 - 1906 in both Latvia and Estonia
 - Uses heavy handed tactics to get rid of dissidents
 - Over 1000 people killed
 - Persecution of Jews
 - 1906-1907 Executes political opponents
 - Over 1,000 executed
 - o Stolypin
 - Pushes for more control over land for peasants
 - Assassinated in 1911
 - By nobles who were against reforms
 - o Did not want peasants owning land
 - o 1911-1914 Industrial strikes, peasant violence
 - o 1914-1917 Russia does very badly in WWI

Socialism

- Makes a comeback because Nicholas II is so weak
 - o First party founded in 1898 by Lenin
 - Social Democratic Workers Party
 - Founded in Minsk
 - Lenin exiled to Switzerland
 - Intellectual heir to Marx

- **Leninism**

- **Violent Revolution**

- The only way to get rid of capitalism is violent revolution

- **Conditions**

- Industrialization was needed according to Marx
- Lenin revises it to any repressed workers
- Not necessarily in an industrial economy

- **Cadre**

- Highly focused, controlled cadre of dedicated, intellectually revolutionaries

- Marx called for dissatisfied workers

- Not everybody agreed with Lenin

- Socialist party splits
 - **Bolsheviks vs. Mensheviks** (minority)
 - Mensheviks want mass revolution



February Revolution - 1917

- Causes
 - World War I embarrassment
 - Duma with no power
 - Wife Alexandrina
 - Connection with Grigori Rasputin
- St. Petersburg
 - Centre of the revolution
 - People strike which leads to massive food shortages
 - Leads to riots
- Nicholas II Abdicated on March 7th
 - Put under house arrest
 - Only 1,000 people died
- Factions
 - Constitutional democrats vs. Petrograd Soviets (Mensheviks)
 - Communists wanted a seat at the political table
 - Supported the provisional government
 - Plan to eventually take it over
- **Alexander Kerensky** takes over
 - Worker
 - Has some legitimacy
- Seeks peace with the central powers
 - His program:
 - Did not want outright social revolution
 - Too big of changes right away
 - Equality under the law
 - Freedom of religion, speech, assembly
 - Right of unions to organize
 - Amnesty for political prisoners
 - Election of local officials
 - 8 hour work day



- Issuance of **Army Order No. 1**
 - o Issued by the Petrograd Soviets
 - Replace military officers loyal to the tsar
 - Positions should go to elected bodies of normal soldiers

October Revolution

- Lenin comes back
 - o With help of Germans
 - Germany is worried about the Russians rejoining the war
 - April 1917 arrange to get Lenin smuggled back into Russia
 - Lenin, true to form starts trouble
 - He refuses to cooperate with the provisional government.
 - o He wants nationalization of all banks and landed estates
 - April Thesis – socialist revolution, nationalization
 - “All Power to the Soviets”
 - “All land to the peasants”
 - “Stop the War now”
 - Lenin is creating the first communist revolution
 - In a country that Marx would have called unfit for a communist revolution
 - o Provisional government tries to repress Lenin and his government
 - He is forced to flee again to Finland
 - Which is part of Russia
 - Continues to direct the Bolsheviks from afar
 - Eventually the Bolsheviks will win a majority
- **Kornilov Affair**
 - o Overthrow of Kerensky’s government by the conservatives
 - Bourgeoisie
 - It works, but not the way they wanted it to
 - Lenin and the Bolsheviks take power
 - The provisional government falls
 - Chaos ensues
 - o Politburo created
 - Including **Leon Trotsky**, Vladimir Lenin, and Joseph Stalin
 - Trotsky was the leader of the Red Army
 - o Leader of the Petrograd which will evolve into the Red Army
 - Guerrilla General
 - o Jewish
 - o The Red Army overthrows the provisional government
 - Arrests its members
 - o Oct. 26th Bolsheviks take over the government
 - Arrest many opponents
 - Create Cheka
 - Secret police
- Elections for government assembly
 - o Lenin runs on the campaign **“Peace, Land, Bread.”**



- Bolsheviks loose (29%), but they overthrow them anyway
 - January 1918
- Lenin institutes Reforms to keep power
 - Gives land to the peasants
 - Which they have already taken
 - Gives control of the factories to the workers committees (Soviets)
- **March 1918 – Treaty of Brest-Litovsk**
 - Russia withdraws from World War I
 - They lost 1/3 of population and 25% of their land
 - Lost the Baltic states, Finland, Ukraine, and Poland
 - Treaty nullified when Germany loses the war in November
- Lenin moves the Government to Moscow
 - Trotsky takes official charge of the Army and reorganizes it
 - People resist

Russian Civil War

- 1918-1920
- Reds
 - Bolsheviks
- Whites
 - Conservatives and Liberals
 - Including monarchists
 - Including Old Army
 - Supported by Europeans and United States
 - Including trapped Czech legion
 - **Operation Archange**
 - United States sends 5,000 troops to help the whites
 - Creates problems later between Russia and the west
 - Stalin certainly does not forget
- Brutal war
 - Peasants side with the Reds
 - Eventually the reds will win by engaging in “War Communism”
 - Capitalism while government slowly takes control
 - Applied total war concept to their civil war
 - Declared all industries nationalized
 - Ended private trade
 - Forced peasant to deliver food to town
 - Cheka hunted down and assassinated thousands of opponents
 - Tsar and royal family killed July 17, 1918
 - Reds were organized and the whites were not
- Union of Soviet Socialist Republic declared in 1922
 - Not before **15 million died**
 - Starvation due to economic collapse
 - International trade stopped
 - 2 million workers fled the country

