

RUSSIAN REVOLUTION (1917)



Map of Russia in 1914



Questions

1. The New Economic Policy, 1921 of Lenin had influenced the policies adopted by India soon after Independence. Evaluate. (2014)

Synopsis

- A. Introduction**
- B. Significance**
- C. Factors responsible for the outbreak of the Revolution**
- D. Course of the Revolution**
- E. Bolshevik Govt at work**
- F. Marxian Socialism & New Economic Policy(NEP)**
- G. Impact of the Russian Revolution on India**

❑ Introduction:

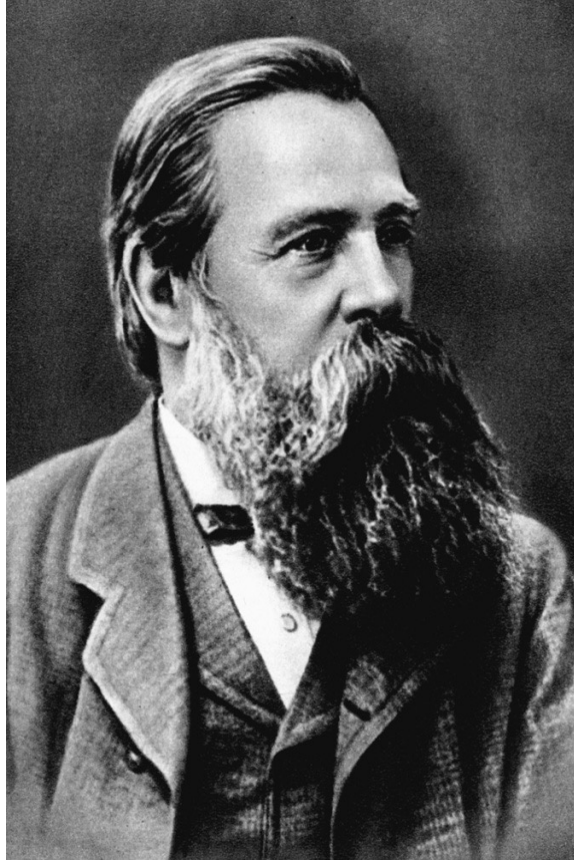
- The Russian Revolution was a major transformational event in Europe.
- It had immense effect in Europe and Asia where the model was followed in China and Vietnam and later in the Americas in Cuba.

- “Man is born free but everywhere he is in chains”-**Rousseau**
 - “The Proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workmen of all countries unite”-
Karl Marx
-
- Symbolized in the Russian Revolution of 1917
 - Marxist Socialist -Install Dictatorship of urban proletariat>withering>Communism
 - Symbolic continuation of French Revolution-Bourgeoisie **X** feudal order & monarchical despotism

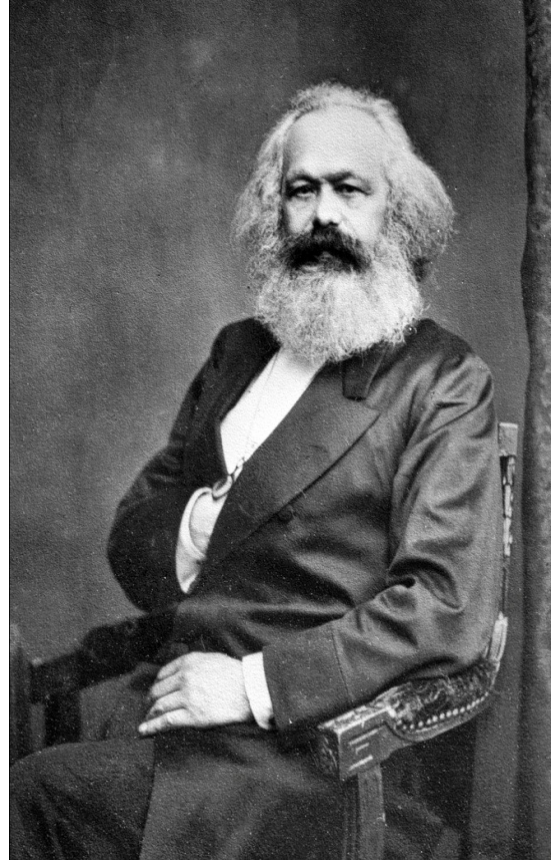
B.SIGNIFICANCE

- i. Text bookish
- ii. Work of one person
- iii. Pre-planned
- iv. Marx, Engels and interpretation of Lenin
- v. End of Pre-history and beginning of History

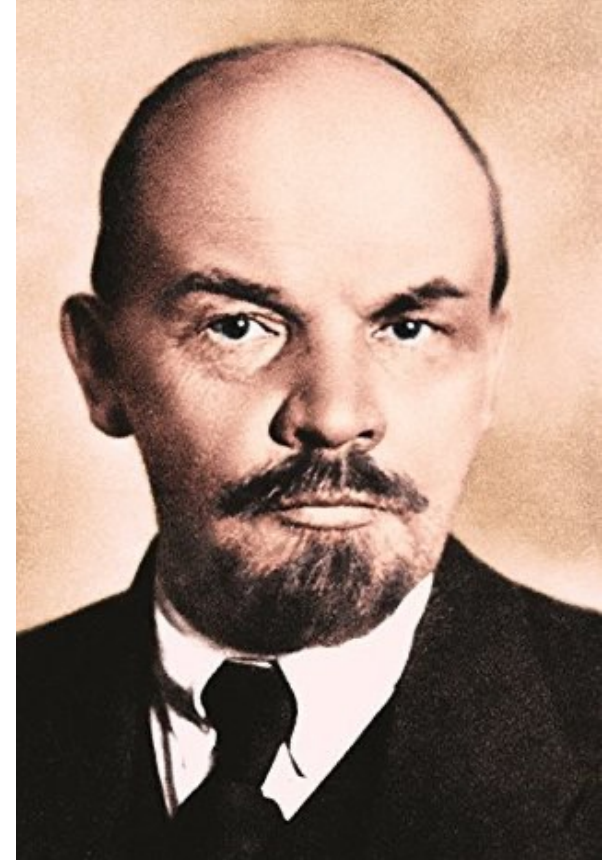
Friedrich Engels



Karl Marx



Vladimir Lenin



C.FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OUTBREAK OF THE REVOLUTION

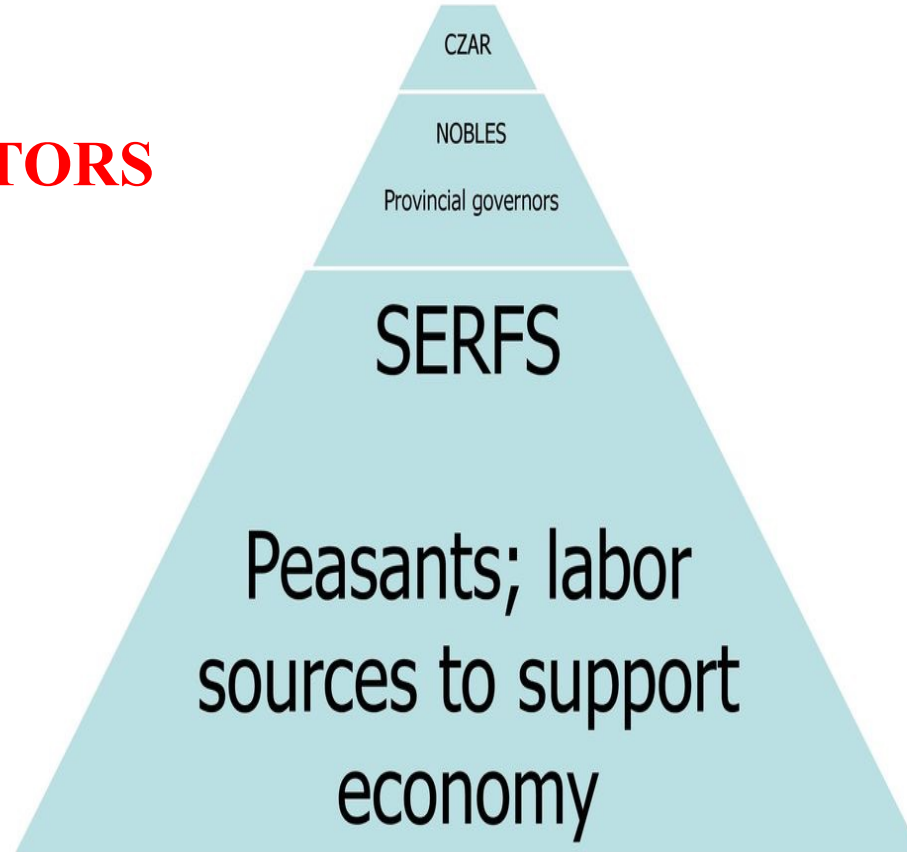
1. Social Factors
2. Industrialization and emergence of Middle class & Working Class
3. Reactionary rule of the Czars
4. Revolution in the realm of Ideas
5. Rise of radical political parties and Socialism
 - **1905 Revolution**
6. Immediate Cause

House of Romanov (Coat of arms of Russia)



Social System of the Russian Empire

1. SOCIAL FACTORS



- General discontentment
- Upto 1850-Nobles & Serfs
 - a. **Nobles**-Privileged, lands, posts
 - b. **Serfs/peasants**-Bound to land owned by nobles, Free labour, couldn't marry without permission of noble.
- **1850:45 million serfs**
 - Crown
 - Nobles, Church etc

- Peter the Great & Catherine the Great-Demand Freedom
- Czar Alexander II (1855-81)



- 1) 1858-Freed serfs from crown lands
- 2) 1861-**Edict of Emancipation**-Abolition of serfdom throughout the empire
 - Edict progressive-nobles lost part of property (50%) & control over peasants
 - But it **did not reduce tax burden** of peasants, increase their income or improve working conditions
 - **1/3rd peasants were landless** and continued to work on the land of the landlords.

- Peasants had to pay several types of taxes which made their economic condition miserable
- Peasant revolts broke out in various parts of the empire- Harkov, Poltava, Ukraine, Caucasus, Poland, Volga river zone etc.
- The ‘Policy of Russification’ followed from the time of Czar Alexander III also led to discontentment among the minorities such as Poles, Finns, Uzbeks, Tartars, Kossacks etc

2. INDUSTRIALIZATION & EMERGENCE OF MIDDLE & WORKING CLASS

- Peter the Great-Founder of Modern Russia
 - Modernised, Industrialised
 - Opened the doors for foreign trade
 - Worked in dockyards, industries-England, Holland
- Catherine the Great
- Czar Alexander II
- Czar Alexander III

Peter the Great



Catherine the Great



Alexander II



Alexander III



Nicholas II



Alexandra Feodorovna



Czar Nicholas II and Empress Alexandra in coronation robes, 1894.



- **Nicholas II (1884-1917)**
 - S/o Alexander III
 - Industrial, commercial
 - **Oil-Caucasus, Black, Caspian**
 - Factories-Petersburg, Moscow etc



- Ship building-**Riga, Odessa, Vladivostok, Archangel**
- Protection to local industries
- **Count Sergei Witte**: Industrialist-modernisation

Count Sergei Witte



- Transport & Communication: **Trans-Siberian & Trans-Caspian Railway lines**
- French capital & cheap labour of ex-serfs
- **Post-1871**: Textile & Metallurgy
- **1900**: 269 foreign firms
- **1904**: 4th industrial country in the world

Trans-Siberian Railway Route



Trans-Caspian Railway Route



■ Result-Industrialization

- i. Rapid increase in productivity and Cultural advancement
- ii. Birth of 2 new classes
 - a. Industrial Capitalist Class (Bourgeoisie)
 - b. Working Class (Proletariat)
 - Squalid, insanitary conditions
 - Exploitation by employers
 - Unions disallowed-state helped employers
 - Labour unrest-strikes common Post-1870
 - Agitation against employers turned against Czars

iii. Industrial Capitalist Class or Middle Class-

Merchants, Industrialists, Factory owners, Businessmen

- Economically strong
- Did not enjoy political & social privileges
- Joined intellectual liberals and demanded Representative Govt
- Through Zemstovs (local assemblies) Middle class demanded-

- Free elected National Assembly
- Responsible Ministry
- Equality of all citizens
- Freedom of press, speech, religion

- Czar Nicholas II-Conservative, Reactionary, Deaf

3. REACTIONARY RULE OF CZARS

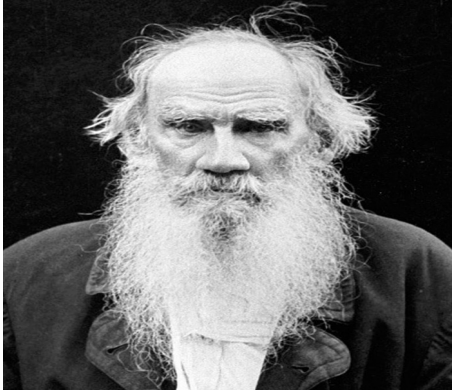
- Czars-Autocratic,despotic,tyrannical,aristocratic
- Enjoyed absolute & unlimited powers
- Believed in 'Divine Right Theory' of Monarchy
- Till end of 19th c-People kept out of political responsibility;No Parliament
- Military disasters in the 19th & 20th centuries-4 wars

- i. Napoleonic war
- ii. Crimean War- Alexander II (issued 'Edict of Emancipation' but opposition of feudal chiefs pushed him back to adopt reactionary policy)
- iii. Russo-Japanese war (1904-05)-Czar Nicholas II-Duma (did not allow Duma to become real representative of the people and established reactionary rule once again)
- iv. World War I -end of Czardom

4.REVOLUTION IN THE REALM OF IDEAS

- Intellectual revolution preceded material revolution-influence of political thinkers on people's minds
- Influence of Western European Thought-Russian literature
- Novelists-Tolstoy,Turgenev,Chekhov,Gorky,Dostoievsky
- Tolstoy-Renouncing Private property, extolled kind of communist and anarchist Christianity
- Chekhov-simple peasant life

Leo Tolstoy



Turgenev



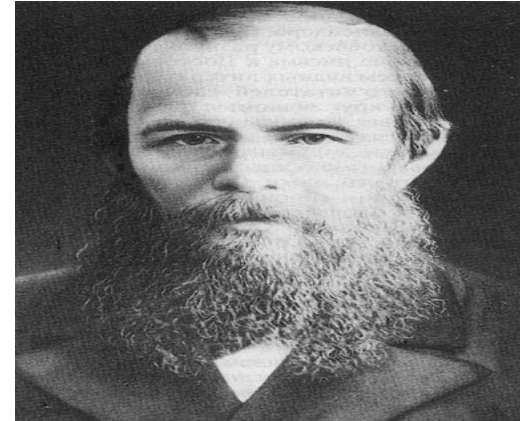
Chekhov



Maxim Gorky



Dostoievsky



These writers stressed-

- i. Uplift labour classes
 - ii. Women emancipation
 - iii. Social evils, ending wars
 - iv. Land to landless
 - v. Stress on human emotions, people's welfare
- Used legends/folk tales of Russia for their themes
 - Stimulated young Russians
-
- **Intelligentsia**(liberals, educated)-Political reforms on western lines
 - **Radical intellectuals**(Marx, Bakunin)-Socialism, Anarchism
 - **Nihilists**-destroy the old order and create everything afresh

5. RISE OF RADICAL POLITICAL PARTIES & OF SOCIALISM

- 1825 onwards-rapid industrialization>Rise of radical political parties and spread of Socialism
- 1890's:Marx's teachings popularized/spread by radicals(Maxim Gorky)-Industrial Workers

- **1898: Russian Social-Democratic Worker's Party**

1903: Bolsheviks
(Radicals)

Vladimir Lenin

Mensheviks (tactics, party discipline)
(Moderates)

Aleksandr Kerensky

- **1902: Socialist Revolutionary Party** (Peasants)

Vladimir Ulyanov Lenin



Bolsheviks

Meant ‘a member of the majority’

Believed in a highly centralized party of professional revolutionaries

Not willing to work with Middle Class for their revolutionary aims

Drew less public attention than Mensheviks

Scorned other ideologies; didn't recognize any other class than industrial workers

Believed that Russia could directly transform from an absolute monarchy to a **communist society**

Mensheviks

Meant ‘a member of the minority’

Believed in a more Democratic party structure that allowed disagreements

Willing to work with middle class for their revolutionary ends

Drew more public support because of their inclusive ideas

Inclusive in their approach to other political parties

Believed in going ahead step by step to make the country **communist**

❑ 1905 Revolution:

- In 1905, the first attempt was made to dislodge the traditional regime but it failed.

■ Reasons for 1905 Revolution-

- i. Utterly corrupt regime of Czar Nicholas II and his degraded and depraved court
- ii. Widespread repression by the army/secret police
- iii. Russia's defeat at the hands of Japan
- iv. Growth of Industrial working class
- v. Formation of Socialist parties & Communist party.
- vi. Coming together of Liberals, peasants, workers and middle class intellectuals.

- The incident of **January 1905** at **St.Petersburg** where the **army** **opened fire on lakhs of workers** led to widespread **unrest and mutiny**-But it was **ruthlessly put down** by the Czar with the help of the army.
- The **1905 Revolution** wrested a major concession-a democratically elected **Duma** (legislature) came into being.
- But Nicholas ignored his promises and **dismissed the Duma** which led to **restlessness** among the masses.

6.IMMEDIATE CAUSE

- Exposition-WW I
- Demonstrations of national patriotism
- Duma-supported war, Red Cross activities
- 1917:15 million ;1st yr-3.8 million casualties
- Reason-Inadequate supply of munitions & food stuff
- Shortage of farm workers,food,essentials-fuelled discontent
- Mid-1915:Duma-Right | Left>moderate reforms

- a. Demanded increase in power of Zemstovs
- b. End of discrimination against minorities(Poles,Finns,Kossacks,Tartars etc)
 - Czarina Alexandra opposed measures, urged husband to act autocratically
 - 1915:Nicholas prorogued Duma,took personal command of army
 - Supremacy of Empress & Rasputin (illiterate,adulterous monk)-hemophilia

Grigori Rasputin



Alexei Romanov



- Scandals, Buying/selling offices, Speculation in military supplies, appointment of puppets as ministers
- 1916: Confusion, strikes, defeatism
- Murder of Rasputin
- Duma-warned that Govt itself was creating conditions for a revolution by failing to create a responsible ministry
- Apathy of Czar Nicholas II
- 1917: Conditions favorable for revolution

D.Course of the Revolution

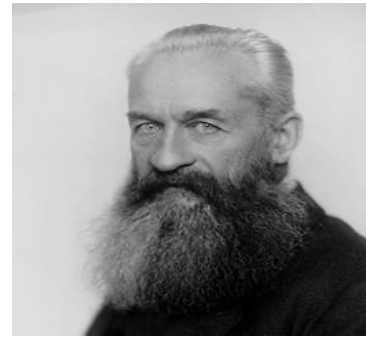
- 1. 1917:March Revolution**
- 2. Provisional Government**
 - A. Moderate Republicans or Constitutional Democrats**
 - B. Moderate Social Democrats (Mensheviks)**
- 3. 1917:November Revolution (Bolsheviks)**
- 4. Causes for success of the Bolsheviks**

1. 1917: March Revolution-Petrograd



- **8 March, 1917: Petrograd**-strikes, bread riots, workmen struck work
- Czar ordered firing-refused
- Mutinous Russian Army forces sided with revolutionaries.
- **Soviet** (Council of workers and soldiers) set up-to run local govt
- Duma set up Provisional Govt & forced Czar to abdicate
- **16 March, 1917: Czar Nicholas II abdicated**, Michael-end of Romanovs
- Romanovs had ruled from **1613**
- Social revolutionaries, Bolshevik's & Menshevik's-Surprised
- Revolution>Leaderless, spontaneous, anonymous
- Liberal govt-Prince Georgy Lvov>Alexander Kerensky

Prince Georgy Lvov



2. Provisional Government

A. Moderate Republicans or Constitutional Democrats

- Leader: Prince Georgy Lvov - prof, politician
- Outlook, composition - Middle class govt, liberalism

Reforms:

- National Constituent Assembly to be elected to determine the form of permanent govt.
- Freedom - Press, Speech, Religion, Association
- Continuation of war

- Russia-Politically backward
 - People wanted rapid **socio-economic changes; not political Revolution.**
 - **Peace, Land, Bread**
 - Liberalism>drifted towards Socialism
- a. Local **Soviets** of **workers and soldiers** set up all over Russia
 - b. **Workers**-refused work, demanded higher wages, less hours of work
 - c. **Peasants**-seized nobles lands & distributed among themselves
 - d. Minorities such as **Poles, Finns** etc-began to assert their freedom to break away
 - e. War Policy-Unpopular.....hence, Moderate Republicans turned out of govt.

Aleksandr Kerensky



B. Moderate Social Democrats (Mensheviks)

Leader: Aleksandr Kerensky

Policy:

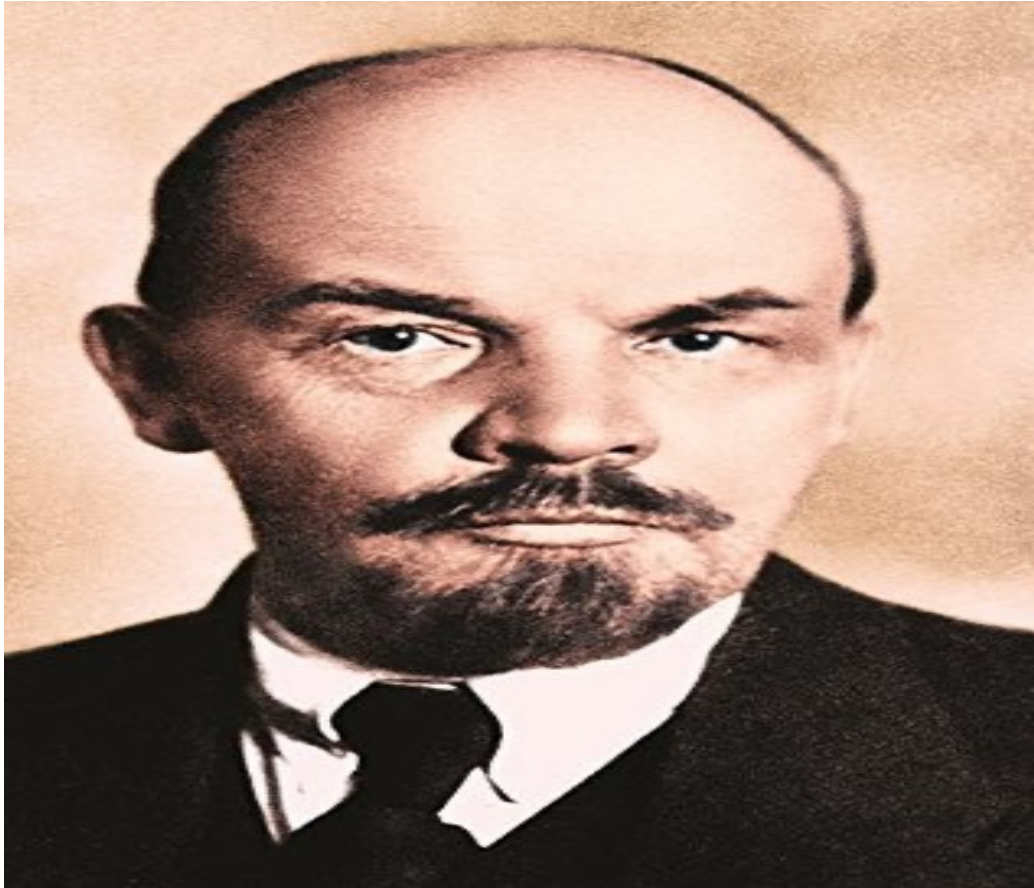
- i. Continuation of war & speedy, honourable conclusion
 - ii. Guide the revolution into safe channels
 - iii. Promised political, democratic & social reforms
- All above through constitutional methods, gradual stages

3. 1917:November Revolution (Bolsheviks)

❑ Kerensky opposed by **Bolsheviks**(extreme socialists)

- i. Led by **Lenin and Trotsky**
- ii. **Opposed war**
- iii. Bring **peace** on basis of **no annexations, no indemnities**
- iv. Establish '**Dictatorship of Proletariat**' at once by violent overthrow of existing order

Vladimir Lenin



Leon Trotsky



- ❑ Soldiers refused to fight-pacifist propaganda
- Germany-captured Riga,threatened Petrograd
- Bolsheviks improved organisation,swelled ranks
- Controlled Petrograd Soviet
- Nov 1917-saw end of Provisional Govt.
- Aleksandr Kerensky fled from country
- Thus,Bolsheviks carried out November (6-7) Revolution,1917

4. Causes for success of the Bolsheviks

- i. Provisional govt (MRs & Mensheviks) failed to meet demands of masses-**workers,peasants,soldiers**
- ii. **Workers**-immediate improvement working conditions-Radical govt>radical reforms, not Moderate govt>constitutional reforms
- iii. **Peasants**-land immediately; Provisional govt>deliberation,law-refused peasant seizure-**commission** to collect material on which future agrarian legislation to be based.
- iv. **Soldiers**-Peace without delay; Provisional govt-continuation of war. Bolsheviks-peace immediately, conclude treaties with Germany/allies

v. **Personality of Lenin:**

- a. **skilful tactician**, judge accurately political possibility
- b. Abolition of Provisional govt > **Republic of Soviets**
- c. Confiscation of estates & **nationalization** **factors production**
- d. Saw **end of war**

■ **Hurdles-Bolsheviks**

1. Bolsheviks-minority, had to secure their acceptance in & out of Russia
2. Organize govt & rebuild socio-economic life-Communist principles

E. BOLSHEVIK GOVT AT WORK

1. Treaty of Brest Litovsk (March 3, 1918)

- a. Peace treaty signed b/w new Bolshevik government of Russia & Germany and Central Powers-Russia withdrew from WW I
- b. Humiliating treaty-Russia lost all territories acquired since Peter the Great (By this treaty, Russia recognized the independence of Ukraine, Georgia and Finland; gave up Poland and the Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to Germany and Austria-Hungary; and ceded Kars, Ardahan and Batum to Turkey).



2.Domestic front-Lenin gave effect to principles of Marxian Socialism-WAR COMMUNISM (1918-21)

- i. Abolition of private property, lands to peasants to be cultivated for benefit of state
- ii. Factories, workshops seized by state and given to worker management-no compensation
- iii. Labour-compulsory
- iv. All public debts contracted by previous govt repudiated
- v. Orthodox Church-disestablished

- Bolshevik support base- **workers,peasants,soldiers**
 - **Effect:** Opposition by **landlords, businessmen,clergy,Mensheviks and others**.They protested against

- a. Confiscation of property
- b. Abolition of special privileges
- c. Sacrifice of individual liberty and political democracy at the altar of Dictatorship of the proletariat.

3. Reign of White Terror

- Terrorist methods by Bolsheviks to suppress anti-bolshevik forces
- **Cheka** (political police)-tribunal-arrests, executions
- **July 17, 1918**: Czar Nicholas II and family executed-**Yakov Yurovsky** (who personally oversaw the murder was recognized by Lenin)

Reign of White Terror



July 17, 1918-Execution of the Romanov family



The front page of French newspaper Le Petit Journal Illustre in,1926, depicting the massacre of Czar Nicolas II of Russia and his family by the Bolsheviks in the half-basement room of the **Ipatiev house,Yekaterinburg.**



4. Foreign Intervention in Russia

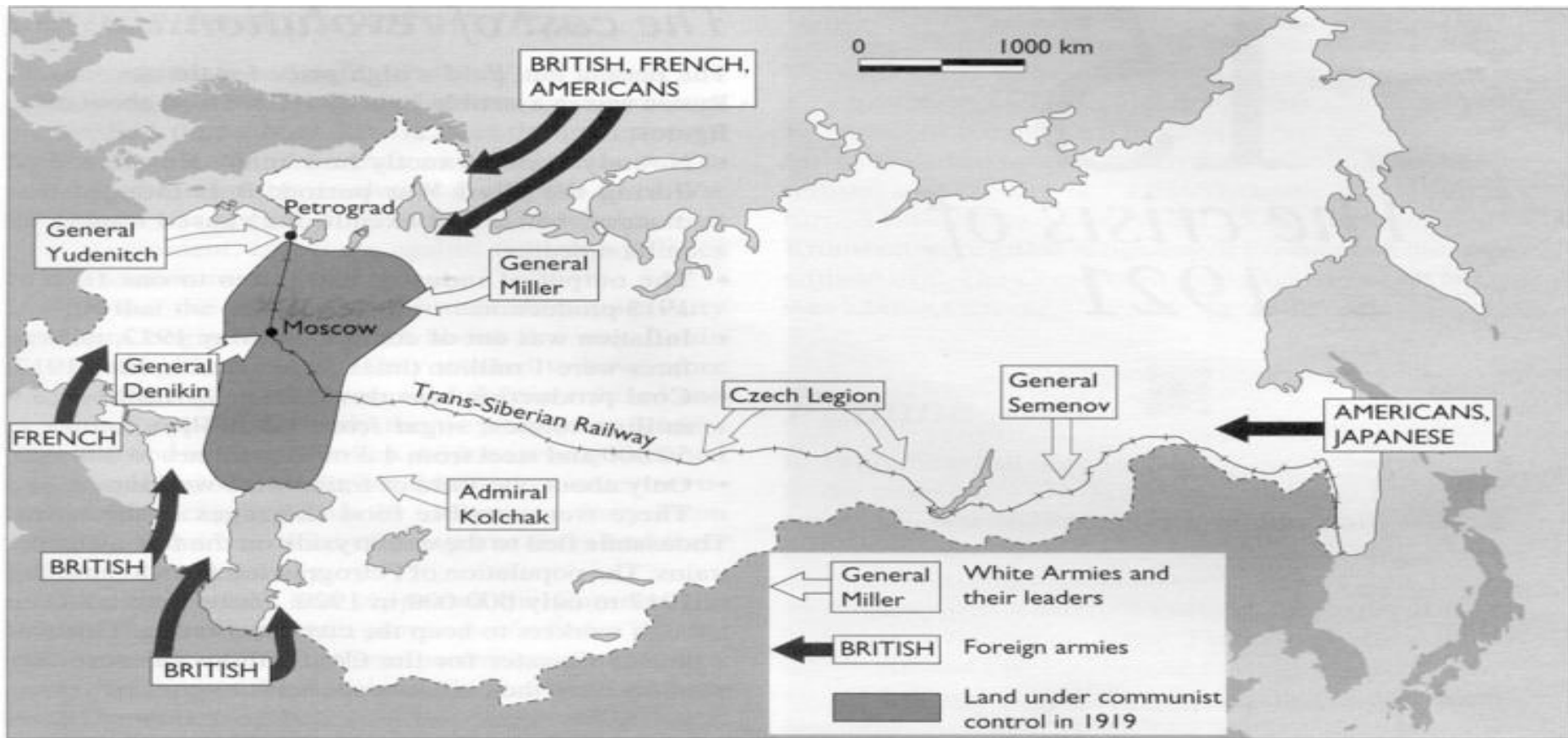
- i. Feared example of Russia-working classes within
- ii. Bolshevik propaganda for a world-wide Socialist Revolution
- iii. Lenin's repudiation of foreign debts

Objective:

- i. To overthrow Bolshevik govt: counter-revolutionary forces
- ii. To prevent Germany from exploiting disturbed situation in Russia to her advantage

- **Allied intervention** (Japan, England, France, USA, Poland)
 - Allied expeditionary force-**Archangel**-to support anti-bolshevik forces in Russia
- **Japan**-Vladivostok
- **French**-Parts of S.Russia
- **Poland** (France)-declared war on Russia

Allied intervention in the Russian Civil War



Territory controlled by the Communist Government in 1919.

- **Bolsheviks won:**

- i. Dissensions among counter-revolutionaries
(**Royalists X Republicans**; Military leaders X Politicians)
- i. Peasants and workers did not support counter revolutionaries
- ii. Allied intervention-inadequate, half hearted (strain WWI, post-war problems unsolved, extensive military)-**withdrew by 1919**
- iii. Overwhelming power of **Red Army of Trotsky**

1922:Communist Dictatorship in Russia established

1922:Germany recognized

1924:France & Italy

1934:USA

F. MARXIAN SOCIALISM-CHALLENGES

- Bolshevik-nationalisation, state ownership-tested Marxian Socialism

i. Peasants

- a. Wanted land for themselves
- b. Cultivate it from view of profit motive
- c. Reluctant to hand over surplus produce to state
- d. Cut down production

ii. Workers

- Factories, large industries-nationalised-workers in charge
 - a. Not trained in management
 - b. Not disciplined, efficient, hard working
 - c. Production reduced, prices increased

- ❑ To solve the above problems, Lenin introduced the **New Economic Policy (NEP)** in **1921**.
- The **NEP** represented a **temporary retreat** from its previous policy of extreme centralization and doctrinaire socialism.
- The **Policy of War Communism** in effect since 1918 had by 1921 brought the national economy to the point of **total breakdown**.
- The **Kronstadt Rebellion (Mar 1921)** convinced the Communist Party and Lenin of the **need to retreat from socialist policies** in order to maintain the party's hold on power.
- Accordingly, the 10th party Congress in **March 1921** introduced the measures of the '**New Economic Policy**'.

IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW ECONOMIC POLICY (NEP):1922-28

■ FEATURES

- i. Property rights-Peasants-small holding recognized-Allowed to sell surplus produce in open market after payment of tax
- ii. Private enterprise allowed in Small Scale Industries
 - Large scale industries, transportation, public utilities, financial system and major natural resources kept under state control
- iii. To secure capital, Foreign capitalists-profit sharing concessions-large scale agricultural and engineering projects.
- iv. Private retail trade permitted; state set up retail stores by way of competition
- v. State encouraged Consumer Cooperative Societies

- ❑ **NEP**-departure from Marxian Communism, not complete return to Capitalism (make shift)
- Stimulated production, brought it to pre-war levels
- NEP reintroduced a measure of stability to the economy and allowed the Soviet people to recover from years of civil war and governmental mismanagement.
- It averted a great catastrophe-saved Bolshevik govt
- Flexibility of Lenin-success of Bolshevism

❑ Bolshevism: A political and economic movement

i. Political creed:

- a. Dictatorship of the urban Proletariat
- b. Doesn't recognize any class other than workers
- c. Rule of working class and not Political Democracy

ii. Economic creed

- a. Overthrow social order based on Capitalism
- b. Abolition of private property
- c. Nationalization of land & other instruments of production

❑ Lenin

- Father of Bolshevik Revolution & creator of Soviet Republic of Russia
- Driving force, iron will, fanatical faith in Communism
- To save revolution-reversed policy, averted catastrophe
- Lenin could not implement Marxian Socialism completely. But worked hard for it
- Tremendous pressure of work-health, died in 1924

Lenin's embalmed body (Red Square-Moscow)



❑ Contribution of Lenin:

- 1) Consolidation of the victories of Bolsheviks and providing leadership in the initial stages.
- 2) His NEP allowed some private enterprise in trade and agriculture but state control was extended to iron, coal, heavy industry & banking; he revived a falling economy.

G. Impact of Russian Revolution on India

- 1) Indian leaders realized that nothing can be gained by constitutional methods or through politics of the bomb. Led to intervention of the masses in political struggle.
- 2) Led to propagation of socialist ideas in India.
- 3) Due to the growth of left, national movement was also radicalized.
- 4) INM-part of world wide struggle against imperialism led by the Soviet Union
- 5) Due to success of RR-India Communist Party saw the Indian peoples struggle as a struggle of a 2-stage revolution-a struggle against forces of class and against British Imperialism.

- 6) Montague Declaration-manifestation of the RR
- 7) RR changed British policy towards India-British became increasingly repressive towards the Communists in particular and the nationalist upsurge in general-led to radicalization of the INM.
- 8) RR led to growth of strong anti-imperialist perspective.
- 9) Led to new questions such as: What kind of development? Devt for whom?

END