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Class 9 social science

C2 : Socialism in Europe and the Russian Revolution



1. The Age of Social Change

(i) Circulation of New Ideas after the French Revolution

- After the French Revolution of 1789, **ideas of freedom and equality** spread across Europe.
- The Revolution showed that a **dramatic change in society's structure** was possible.
- Before the 18th century, society was divided into **estates and orders**, and the **aristocracy and Church** held most of the **economic and social power**.
- The Revolution brought the hope that **social power could be shifted** from these traditional elites.
- These ideas also reached Asia, including **India**, where thinkers like **Raja Rammohan Roy** and **Henry Derozio** discussed the importance of the Revolution.
- People across the world began discussing **individual rights** and **social power**, influenced by European changes.
- Colonies also reshaped these ideas based on their own contexts and experiences.

(ii) Different Opinions on Change

- Not all Europeans supported **complete transformation** of society.
- There were different views:
 - Some people accepted that **change was needed**, but they wanted a **gradual process**.
 - Others demanded **radical restructuring** of society.
- Based on their views on change, they were classified as:
 - **Liberals**
 - **Radicals**
 - **Conservatives**

(iii) What Do These Political Terms Mean?

- These terms (liberal, radical, conservative) must be understood **in their historical context**.
- They do **not always mean the same thing** in different times or places.

(iv) Focus on the Russian Revolution

- The chapter later focuses on the **Russian Revolution**.
- This revolution was an attempt to bring about a **radical transformation of society**.
- As a result of this event, **socialism** became one of the most powerful ideas shaping the **20th-century world**.

1.1 Liberals, Radicals and Conservatives

Who Were the Liberals?

- Liberals were people who wanted to **modernize society and believed in individual freedom**.
- **Liberals** wanted a **nation that tolerated all religions**.
- At that time, most European states **favoured one religion over others**:
 - **Britain** favoured the **Church of England**, while **Austria and Spain** supported the **Catholic Church**.
- Liberals **opposed the uncontrolled power** of dynastic rulers.
- They wanted to **protect individual rights** from interference by governments.
- Liberals supported:
 - **Elected, representative parliamentary government**
 - **Laws interpreted by an independent judiciary**
- However, they were **not democrats** in the modern sense:
 - They did **not support universal adult franchise**.
 - They believed only **men with property** should have voting rights.
 - They were **against giving voting rights to women**.

Who Were the Radicals?

- The radicals were the group of people who believed that the **government should be based on the majority of the population** of a country.
- **Radicals** also supported change, but their views were more **extreme** than the liberals.
- They wanted a **nation where the government represented the majority** of the population.

- Radicals:
 - **Supported women's suffragette movements** (the demand for women's right to vote).
 - **Opposed privileges** enjoyed by big landowners and factory owners.
 - Were **not against private property**, but **opposed its concentration** in the hands of a few.

Who Were the Conservatives?

- Conservatives believed in **protecting the traditional institutions of society**, such as monarchy and the Church.
- **Conservatives** were originally **against any kind of change**.
- After the French Revolution, however, even conservatives had opened their minds to the **need for change**.
- However, they believed:
 - The **past must be respected**.
 - Change should happen **slowly and carefully**, not through revolution.

Key Terms:

1. Liberals: People who wanted religious tolerance, individual rights, and a government by elected representatives (but limited voting rights).

2. Radicals: People who supported major changes like majority-based rule and rights for women; disliked wealth concentration.

3. Conservatives: Those who wanted to preserve traditional structures but gradually accepted the need for slow, respectful change.

4. Suffragette Movement: Movement to give **women the right to vote**.

1.2 Industrial Society and Social Change

(i) Features of Industrialisation

- The political ideas of liberals, radicals, and conservatives appeared alongside **deep social and economic changes** in Europe.
- A new **industrial society** was emerging. New **cities developed**, and **industrial regions expanded**.
- **Railways** were built, and the **Industrial Revolution** made a huge impact on the economy and daily life.

- With industrialisation, **men, women, and children** were brought into **factories** to work.

(ii) Living and Working Conditions of Workers

- Workers had to work **long hours**, often in **poor conditions**.
- **Wages were very low**, and during periods of reduced demand for industrial goods, **unemployment increased**.
- **Housing and sanitation** were problems since towns were growing rapidly.
- Liberals and radicals, many of whom were also industrialists or property owners, searched for **solutions to these problems**.

(iii) Role of Liberals and Radicals

- Most industries were **owned by individuals**.
- Liberals and radicals themselves were often **property owners or employers**.
- They had made wealth through **trade or industry**, and they believed in encouraging such effort.
- They felt that society would benefit if:
 - The **workforce in the economy was healthy**
 - **Citizens were educated**
- These groups opposed the **special privileges** that the old aristocracy had by birth.
- They believed in **individual effort, labour, and enterprise**.
- According to them, if **individual freedom** was protected, and **capital could operate freely**, society would develop.
- Many **working men and women** who wanted change also supported liberal and radical parties.

(iv) Nationalist Movements and Revolutions

- After 1815, many **liberals, radicals, and nationalists** took part in revolutionary activities.
- They wanted to **end the old form of monarchy** that existed in Europe.
- In countries like **France, Italy, Germany, and Russia**, these revolutionaries:
 - Opposed monarchy
 - Worked to create nations with **equal rights for all citizens**

- An important revolutionary was **Giuseppe Mazzini**, an Italian nationalist.
- He conspired with others to bring revolution in Italy.
- **Indian nationalists** also read his writings and were influenced by these ideas.

Key Terms:

1. Industrialisation: The process of developing industries in a country or region on a wide scale.

2. Unemployment: A situation where people who are willing and able to work cannot find jobs.

3. Aristocracy: A class of people holding exceptional rank and privileges, especially the hereditary nobility.

4. Nationalists: People who believe in the creation of a nation where all citizens have equal rights and share a common identity.

1.3 The Coming of Socialism to Europe

(i) Vision of a New Society

- One of the most far-reaching visions of how society should be organised came from the idea of **socialism**.
- By the mid-nineteenth century, **socialism** had become a **well-known body of ideas in Europe**.
- It attracted **widespread attention**, especially from those who were unhappy with the injustices of capitalist society.

What is Socialism?

A system of society in which means of production are owned and controlled by the state.

(ii) Socialist Views on Private Property

- **Socialists were opposed to private property.**
- They believed that private property was the **root cause of social problems** of that time.
- The reason was that **individuals owned property**, which provided employment, but they were **only concerned with personal profit**, not the welfare of workers.

- Socialists believed that if **society as a whole controlled property**, then more attention would be paid to **collective social interests**.
- Therefore, socialists **campaigned for the end of private property and collective ownership** of productive assets.

(iii) Different Visions of Socialist Society

- Socialists had **different visions** for a future socialist society.
- Some believed in the idea of **cooperatives**:
 - For example, **Robert Owen (1771–1858)**, a leading English manufacturer, tried to build a **cooperative community** called **New Harmony in Indiana (USA)**.
- Others thought cooperatives needed government help:
 - **Louis Blanc (1813–1882)** of France believed that the **government should encourage cooperatives and replace capitalist enterprises**.
 - These cooperatives would be **associations of people** who would produce goods together and **share profits based on the work done** by each member.

(iv) Marxist Socialism: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels

- **Karl Marx (1818–1883)** and **Friedrich Engels (1820–1895)** added more ideas to socialism.
- Marx believed that **industrial society was capitalist**:
 - Capitalists owned the capital invested in factories.
 - The **profit was created by workers**, but this profit was **accumulated by capitalists**.
- As long as **private capitalists-controlled property**, the **condition of workers would not improve**.
- Marx believed that workers had to **overthrow capitalism and private property**.
- He advocated the creation of a **socialist society where all property was collectively owned**.
- Marx called this a **communist society** — a society free from exploitation.

- He was convinced that **workers would eventually defeat the capitalists** and bring about a new future.

Key Terms:

1. Socialism: An ideology that opposes private property and supports collective ownership for common welfare.

2. Cooperatives: Associations of people who work together to produce goods and share profits.

3. Karl Marx: A philosopher and economist who advocated for a communist society through the overthrow of capitalism.

4. Communism: A society without private property where resources are owned collectively.

1.4 Support for Socialism

(i) Spread of Socialist Ideas in Europe

- By the 1870s, the ideas of **socialism** spread across Europe.
- Socialists felt the need to **coordinate their efforts** and formed **an international organisation** called the **Second International**.

(ii) Formation of Worker Associations

- In countries like **England and Germany**, workers began forming associations.
- These associations aimed to:
 - **Fight for better living and working conditions.**
 - **Reduction in working hours**
 - They **set up funds** to help members in times of distress and demanded a reduction of working hours and the right to vote.

(iii) Socialism in Germany and Britain

- In **Germany**, worker associations worked closely with the **Social Democratic Party (SPD)**.
- This helped the SPD to **win parliamentary seats**.
- In **Britain**, by 1905, socialists and trade unionists together formed the **Labour Party**.
- In **France**, a **Socialist Party** was also formed around this time.

(iv) Impact and Limitations

- Despite these developments, till **1914**, **socialists could not form a government** in Europe.
- However, their ideas **influenced legislation**, and they gained **strong presence in parliaments**.
- Still, **governments continued to be dominated by conservatives, liberals, and radicals**, not by socialists.

Key Terms:

1. Second International: An organisation formed by socialist groups across Europe to coordinate their activities and ideas.

2. Trade Union: An organised association of workers formed to protect their rights and interests.

3. Social Democratic Party (SPD): A socialist political party in Germany that worked closely with workers' associations.

4. Labour Party: A political party formed in Britain by socialists and trade unionists in 1905 to represent workers' interests.

2. The Russian Revolution

(i) Introduction

- In most European countries, **socialism influenced ideas and legislation**, but did not lead to a socialist government.
- However, in **Russia**, this situation changed dramatically in **1917**.
- **Socialists took over the government** through the **October Revolution of 1917**.
- This event came after the **fall of the monarchy in February 1917**, and both events together are normally called the **Russian Revolution**.
- To understand how this happened, we must look at the **social and political conditions** in Russia just before the revolution.

2.1 The Russian Empire in 1914

(i) Size and Diversity of the Empire

- In 1914, **Tsar Nicholas II** ruled the vast Russian Empire.

- It included modern-day Russia and surrounding territories:
 - **Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Ukraine, Belarus**
 - Parts of Central Asia: **Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan**, etc.
 - South Caucasus: **Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan**
- The empire **stretched up to the Pacific Ocean**.

(ii) Religion in the Empire

- The majority religion was **Russian Orthodox Christianity**, which had evolved from **Greek Orthodoxy**.
- However, the empire also included followers of:
 - **Catholicism**
 - **Protestantism**
 - **Islam**
 - **Buddhism**
- Thus, the Russian Empire was **religiously and culturally diverse**.

Key Terms:

1. Tsar: The emperor of Russia, having absolute power before the revolution.

2. Russian Orthodox Church: The dominant church in Russia, originally derived from the Greek Orthodox Church.

2.2 Economy and Society

(i) Economic Backwardness of Russia

- In 1914, the Russian Empire was **largely agricultural**.
- About **85% of the population** were **agricultural workers (peasants)**.
- Compared to **other European countries**, this was **much higher**:
 - For example, in **France and Germany**, only **40% to 50%** of the people worked in agriculture.
- Industry in Russia was **found mostly in small pockets**:
 - The **St Petersburg and Moscow** regions were major industrial zones.

- Factories were **privately owned**, and production was done with the help of **modern machinery**.

(ii) Growth of Industrial Sector

- Large factories were set up in the 1890s when **foreign investment increased** in Russia.
- **Coal, iron, and steel production** expanded significantly.
- Railway network was extended.
- Most of the factory workers were **craftsmen** who continued to **use traditional methods**.
- Many factories were **modern in machinery**, but **old in production techniques**.

(iii) Working Conditions in Industries

- **Crafts units and small workshops** - 15 hours.
- **Factories** - 10-12 hours.
- Some had strong links with the villages and others had settled in Cities Permanently.
- Workers divided by **skill**.
- Women made up **31% of the factory labour force**, but they were **paid' less than men**.
- Divisions among workers showed themselves in dress and manners too.
- Some workers formed associations to help members in times of unemployment.
- Despite divisions, workers did unite to strike work (stop work) when they disagreed with employers about dismissals or work conditions.
- Strikes took place frequently in the **textile industry during 1896-1897**, and in **the metal industry during 1902**.

(iv) Russian peasants were different from European Peasant

- Produced together and divided the profit (**commune - mir**).
- Peasants in Russia were **deeply religious**, but they had **no respect for the nobility**.
- Wanted the land of the nobles.
- Refused to **pay rent** and **murdered landlords**.
- 1905s, murders were Common in Russia.

Key Terms:

1. **Peasants:** Agricultural workers, forming the majority of the population in Russia.
2. **Craftsmen:** Skilled manual workers using traditional methods.
3. **Redistribution of Land:** The demand to divide land among those who work on it, rather than landowners keeping it.

2.3 Socialism in Russia

(i) Introduction of Socialist Ideas in Russia

- All political parties in Russia were **illegal before 1914**.
- Despite this, **socialist ideas spread quickly** in the country.
- By the 1890s, **socialist thinkers** began forming **illegal associations** and discussed the **future of socialism in Russia**.

(ii) The Russian Social Democratic Workers Party (1898)

- In **1898**, the **Russian Social Democratic Workers Party** was formed.
- The party aimed to follow the ideas of **Karl Marx** and fight for the **rights of workers**.
- However, because of **government policing**, it had to operate as an **illegal organisation**.
- It set up a **newspaper, mobilised workers and organised strikes**.

(iii) The Socialist Revolutionary Party (1900)

- In **1900**, another socialist group was formed: the **Socialist Revolutionary Party**.
- This party was mainly supported by **peasants**, not workers.
- It demanded that **land belonging to nobles be transferred to peasants**.
- Social Democrats disagreed with **Socialist Revolutionaries about peasants**.

(iv) Differences Among Socialists

- Socialists were **divided on how a socialist society should be achieved**.
- One group believed that Russia needed to **develop into a capitalist society** before socialism could be introduced.
- Others disagreed, believing that the **existing peasant community could be the base of socialism**.

(v) Split in the Russian Social Democratic Workers Party

- In **1912**, the Russian Social Democratic Workers Party split into two groups:
 - **Bolsheviks** (majority group)
 - **Mensheviks** (minority group)
- The **Bolsheviks**, led by **Vladimir Lenin**, believed:
 - The party should be **disciplined** and **controlled by a small, dedicated group**.
 - The party should **seize power quickly** in the name of the workers.
- The **Mensheviks** believed:
 - The party should be **open to all**, like a **mass organisation**.
 - They supported a **more democratic, slower path** to socialism.

Aspect	Bolsheviks	Mensheviks
Leadership Style	Small, disciplined party	Open to all, mass membership
Path to Power	Quick revolution	Gradual democratic methods
Led by	Vladimir Lenin	Julius Martov

Key Terms:

- 1. Russian Social Democratic Workers Party:** A Marxist party formed in 1898, later split into Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.
- 2. Bolsheviks:** The majority faction of the party led by Lenin, supporting a quick and forceful revolution.
- 3. Mensheviks:** The minority faction supporting gradual democratic reforms and open membership.
- 4. Socialist Revolutionary Party:** A party formed by peasants demanding land redistribution, often using violence.

2.4 A Turbulent Time: The 1905 Revolution

(i) Autocracy in Russia and Demand for Change

- Russia was an **autocracy**, meaning the Tsar held **absolute power** and was not answerable to any **elected parliament**, unlike rulers in other European countries.
- **Liberals** in Russia campaigned to end autocratic rule and demanded a **constitution** that would limit the Tsar's powers.
- They were joined by:
 - **Social Democrats** (inspired by Marxist ideas)
 - **Socialist Revolutionaries** (supported mostly by peasants)
- These groups worked together with **peasants** and **workers** during the 1905 Revolution to push for **political reforms**.

(ii) Support from Nationalists and Muslim Reformers

- The revolutionary movement also received support from:
 - **Nationalist groups** in different regions of the Russian Empire — for example, Polish nationalists.
 - **Muslim reformers** called **Jadidists** in Muslim-dominated areas.
- They wanted to **modernise Islam** and believed that **reformed religion** could lead social change in their communities.

(iii) Workers' Unrest and the Start of the 1905 Revolution

- The year **1904** was particularly hard for Russian workers:
- **Prices of essential goods** increased rapidly, causing **real wages** to fall by **20%**.
- As a result, **worker dissatisfaction** grew, and many joined **workers' associations**.
- A major incident triggered **mass protests**:
 - Four workers from the **Assembly of Russian Workers** (founded in 1904) were dismissed from the **Putilov Iron Works**.
 - This led to an **industrial strike**, and within a few days, over **110,000 workers** in **St Petersburg** joined in.

(iv) Bloody Sunday and Nationwide Unrest

- On **22 January 1905**, a **peaceful procession** of workers led by **Father Gapon** marched to the **Winter Palace** in **St Petersburg**.
- The workers demanded:

- **Reduction in working hours** to eight hours
- **Better wages**
- **Improved working conditions**
- The Tsar was not present in the palace. Instead of being heard, the procession was **attacked by the police and Cossack soldiers**.
- Outcome of the event:
 - **Over 100 workers were killed**, and **around 300 were wounded**.
 - This tragic event came to be known as **“Bloody Sunday”**.
 - It triggered a series of **strikes and protests** across the country.

(v) The Spread of the 1905 Revolution

- Following **Bloody Sunday**, **unrest** spread across Russia:
- **Universities shut down** as student bodies walked out.
- **Lawyers, doctors, engineers**, and other **middle-class professionals** joined the movement.
- They formed a new body called the **Union of Unions**, which demanded a **constituent assembly** to create a constitution.
- The movement had **broad support** from various sections of society, including **workers, professionals, peasants**, and **political groups**.

(vi) Tsar's Response and Temporary Reforms

- Under pressure from the **1905 Revolution**, the Tsar allowed the formation of a **Duma** (a **consultative parliament**, not a full legislative body).
- For a short time:
 - Many **trade unions** and **factory committees** emerged and participated in organising workers.
- However, these **democratic reforms** were **short-lived**:
 - After 1905, most of these organisations were **banned** and forced to work **underground**.
 - **Severe restrictions** were imposed on **political activities**.

(vii) Suppression of the Duma and Conservative Control

- The Tsar **dissolved the first Duma** within **75 days** of its creation.

- The **second Duma** was also **dismissed** within **three months**.
- Determined to maintain **autocratic power**, the Tsar:
 - **Changed voting laws** to reduce **liberal influence**.
 - **Packed the third Duma** with **conservative politicians**.
 - **Liberals and revolutionaries** were systematically **excluded** from participating in governance.
- This showed that the Tsar had **no real intention** of sharing power or allowing **true democratic reforms**.

Key Terms:

1. Autocracy: A system of government where one person holds absolute power without legal restrictions.

2. Bloody Sunday: A massacre of peaceful protesters on 22 January 1905 by police and Cossacks near the Winter Palace.

3. Duma: The elected consultative Parliament introduced by Tsar Nicholas II after the 1905 Revolution.

4. Jadidists: Muslim reformers in the Russian Empire who promoted modernised education and Islamic reform.

5. Union of Unions: An organisation formed by professional groups (lawyers, doctors, engineers, etc.) demanding constitutional reforms in 1905.

2.5 The First World War and the Russian Empire

(i) The World at War – Who Fought Whom?

- In **1914**, war broke out between two powerful European alliances:
 - **Central Powers** – Germany, Austria, and Turkey
 - **Allied Powers** – France, Britain, and Russia (later joined by Italy and Romania)
- Since each of these countries had **global empires**, the war was fought **not just in Europe**, but also **outside** it.
- This is why it came to be known as the **First World War**.

(ii) Initial Public Support for the Tsar

- At the start, the war was **popular in Russia**. People united behind **Tsar Nicholas II**.
- However, as the war dragged on, the Tsar **refused to involve** the main political parties in the **Duma**, which **weakened public support**.
- There was growing **anti-German sentiment**:
 - The city of **St Petersburg**, which had a German name, was renamed **Petrograd** to sound more Russian.
 - The Tsarina, **Alexandra**, had **German origins** and relied heavily on **Rasputin**, a controversial monk with poor reputation—this further damaged the image of the **Tsarist regime**.

(iii) Battles on the Eastern Front – Moving Armies, Massive Losses

- On the **Western Front** (France), armies fought **from trenches** in a fixed position.
- But on the **Eastern Front** (Russia, Germany, Austria), armies moved around more, causing **large-scale battles** with **huge casualties**.
- Between **1914 and 1916**, **Russia lost heavily** in battles against Germany and Austria.
- By **1917**, over **7 million soldiers** had become **casualties** (killed, wounded, or missing).
- As the Russian army **retreated**, they destroyed their own **crops and buildings** to prevent the enemy from using them.
- **Over 3 million refugees** fled within Russia and **public anger** increased against the government.

(iv) Impact of the War on Russia's Economy and Industry

- Russia had **few industries**, and due to **German control of the Baltic Sea**, it was **cut off** from international trade and supplies.
- **Industrial machines** and tools wore out quickly and **could not be replaced**.
- By **1916**, **railway systems** began to break down.
- **Labour shortages** worsened as most **able-bodied men** were sent to the frontlines.
- **Small workshops** making essentials were **shut down**.
- **Large quantities of food grain** were diverted to the army.

City Life Crisis: Food Shortage and Riots

- With most resources going to war, **bread and flour became scarce** in cities.
- By the **winter of 1916**, **riots broke out** at bread shops as people struggled to survive.

- This added to the **widespread discontent** against the Tsar's regime.

Key Terms:

1. **Central Powers:** The alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey during WWI.
2. **Allied Powers:** The alliance including France, Britain, Russia, and later Italy and Romania.
3. **Eastern Front:** The region where battles were fought between Russia and Germany/Austria, with mobile warfare.
4. **Rasputin:** A controversial Russian monk who advised Tsarina Alexandra, widely blamed for influencing the Tsar's decisions.
5. **Refugees:** People forced to leave their homes due to war or disaster.

3. The February Revolution in Petrograd

A. Divided Capital – Petrograd in 1917

- In winter **1917**, the Russian capital **Petrograd** was filled with tension and hardship.
- The city showed sharp **social divisions**:
 - **Right Bank of River Neva:** Industrial areas, workers' quarters, large factories
 - **Left Bank:** Government buildings, Winter Palace, elite residences, and the Duma
- **Severe frost** and snow worsened transport and food supply.
- **Bread and flour shortages** hit working-class areas hardest.
- The Duma resisted the Tsar's attempts to dismiss it, adding to unrest.

B. The Beginning of the Uprising

(i) 22–23 February: Strikes Begin

- On **22 February**, a factory on the right bank declared a lockout.
- **23 February:** Workers from 50 other factories joined in, demanding:
 - **Shorter working hours**
 - **Better wages**
 - **End to food shortages**
- **International Women's Day:** Women workers led protest marches across the city.

- This was the start of mass revolutionary action, without political party guidance.

(ii) 24–26 February: Resistance Grows

- Demonstrations expanded to **Nevskii Prospekt** near government offices.
- Police and cavalry intervened, but crowds returned daily.
- **25 February**: The government suspended the Duma.
- Many parliamentarians defied the suspension and joined the protests.

(iii) 27 February: Mass Uprising and Mutiny

- Crowds attacked **police headquarters** and took control of parts of the city.
- Soldiers refused to fire on protestors — some killed officers and **joined the uprising**.
- **Three regiments mutinied** and joined protestors.
- The **Petrograd Soviet** was formed in the same building as the Duma.

(iv) 2 March: Tsar Abdicates

- A delegation urged **Tsar Nicholas II** to resign.
- He lost support of the military command.
- **2 March 1917**: Tsar Nicholas II abdicated the throne.

(v) Formation of Provisional Government

- **Petrograd Soviet** and Duma leaders agreed to form a **Provisional Government**.
- They aimed to hold elections for a **Constituent Assembly** and establish a **new constitution**.
- **Monarchy ended**; Russia became a **republic**.

Key Terms:

- 1. Petrograd Soviet**: A council of workers and soldiers formed in Petrograd in 1917 to coordinate revolutionary activities.
 - 2. Duma**: The elected consultative parliament of Russia, created after the 1905 Revolution.
 - 3. Mutiny**: When soldiers or sailors refuse to obey orders and rebel against authority.
 - 4. Provisional Government**: A temporary government formed after the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II to lead Russia until a permanent system was decided.
 - 5. Abdication**: The act of a monarch voluntarily giving up the throne.
 - 6. International Women's Day**: Celebrated on 8 March (23 February in the old Russian calendar), it played a historic role in starting the February Revolution.
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3.1. After February

A. The Provisional Government and the Soviets

- After the abdication of the Tsar, the **Provisional Government** was formed.
- **Liberals and socialists** (including army officials, landowners, and industrialists) were part of it.
- The new government aimed to **hold elections** and set up an **elected democratic system**.
- It lifted restrictions on:
 - **Public meetings**
 - **Political associations**
- At the same time, **Soviets** (workers' and soldiers' councils) were formed in many towns.
- However, there was **no common election system** used to form them.

B. Lenin Returns and Introduces Radical Demands

(i) Lenin's Return (April 1917)

- **Vladimir Lenin**, leader of the Bolsheviks, returned from exile in **April 1917**.
- Since 1914, he and his party had **opposed the war**.
- On returning, he demanded radical changes through his **April Theses**.

(ii) Lenin's April Theses – Key Demands

- **End the War** immediately
- **Transfer land to peasants**
- **Nationalise banks**
- Lenin also proposed renaming the Bolshevik Party as the **Communist Party** to show their revolutionary intent.
- **Initially, even some Bolshevik members were hesitant.**
- They believed the **Provisional Government** needed to be supported.
- But the situation evolved rapidly over the next few months.

C. Rising Worker and Peasant Movements

(iii) Growth of Workers' Committees

- Through summer 1917, the **workers' movement** gained momentum.
- **Factory committees** began to:
 - **Question the industrialists' control**
 - **Raise workers' demands**
- **Trade unions** expanded.
- In the army, **soldiers' committees** were also formed.

(iv) Formation of National Soviet

- In **June 1917**, around 500 local Soviets sent representatives to the **All Russian Congress of Soviets**.
- This gave the **Bolsheviks greater influence**.

(v) Provisional Government Tries to Suppress Discontent

- As the Bolsheviks gained popularity, the **Provisional Government** took harsh actions:
- **Workers were prevented** from running factories.
- **Bolshevik leaders were arrested**.
- In **July 1917**, mass protests by the Bolsheviks were violently suppressed.
- Many leaders had to **go underground or flee**.

(vi) Peasant Unrest in the Countryside

- Meanwhile, in rural areas:
- **Peasants, encouraged by Socialist Revolutionary leaders**, demanded redistribution of land.
- Actions taken by peasants:
 - **Land Committees** were formed.
 - Between **July and September 1917**, peasants **seized lands on a large scale**.

Key Terms:

- 1. Provisional Government:** A temporary government set up after the abdication of the Tsar in 1917.
- 2. Soviets:** Councils of workers and soldiers that represented grassroots revolutionary power.
- 3. April Theses:** Lenin's program of radical changes demanding the end of war, redistribution of land, and nationalisation of banks.

4. Communist Party: The new name proposed by Lenin for the Bolshevik Party to reflect its revolutionary goals.

5. Land Committees: Local bodies formed to redistribute land to peasants, often led by Socialist Revolutionaries.

3.2 The Revolution of October 1917

A. Rising Tensions Between Bolsheviks and Provisional Government

- After the February Revolution, tensions between the **Provisional Government** and **Bolsheviks** grew stronger.
- **Lenin feared** that the Provisional Government might turn into a **military dictatorship** to maintain its power.
- In **September 1917**, Lenin began secret discussions for organising an **armed uprising** to overthrow the government.

B. Mobilising Support

- **Bolshevik supporters** were mobilised across the army, Soviets, and factories.
- Lenin worked carefully to build **strong grassroots support** before taking action.

C. Plans for a Seizure of Power

(i) 16 October 1917 – Final Decision

- Lenin convinced the **Petrograd Soviet** and the **Bolshevik Party** to support a socialist revolution.
- A **Military Revolutionary Committee (MRC)** was formed under **Leon Trotsky** to plan and execute the takeover.
- The **exact date** was kept secret to prevent resistance from the government.

D. The October Uprising Begins

(ii) 24 October 1917 – Armed Action

- **Prime Minister Kerenskii** left Petrograd to gather troops.
- Government-loyal soldiers **occupied two Bolshevik newspapers** and attempted to **block communications**.

(iii) Bolshevik Counter-Move

- The **Military Revolutionary Committee** responded quickly:

- **Ordered seizure** of government buildings
- **Arrested ministers**
- Sent orders to **take control** of communication and military points

(iv) Aurora Fires – Symbol of Revolution

- Late in the day, the naval ship **Aurora** fired on the **Winter Palace**.
- Other ships on the **Neva River** supported the uprising by capturing military posts.

(v) Nightfall – Victory

- By the end of 24 October:
 - **Petrograd was under Bolshevik control**
 - **Provisional ministers surrendered**
 - The **All Russian Congress of Soviets** approved the Bolshevik action

E. The Revolution Spreads Across Russia

- Inspired by Petrograd, **uprisings broke out in other cities**.
- The revolution was **not entirely peaceful** — in **Moscow**, there was **intense fighting** between pro- and anti-Bolshevik forces.
- By **December 1917**, the Bolsheviks had **full control over the Moscow–Petrograd region**.

Key Terms:

- 1. Provisional Government:** Temporary government formed after Tsar's abdication in February 1917.
- 2. Military Revolutionary Committee:** Armed group set up by Petrograd Soviet to carry out the October Revolution.
- 3. Leon Trotsky:** Bolshevik leader and head of the MRC who led the military planning.
- 4. Ship Aurora:** A Russian naval ship that fired on the Winter Palace during the uprising.
- 5. Winter Palace:** The seat of the Provisional Government; captured during the revolution.
- 6. All Russian Congress of Soviets:** Gathering of Soviet representatives from across Russia; approved Bolshevik power.

4. What Changed After October?

A. Radical Changes Introduced by the Bolsheviks

(i) Ending Private Property and Nationalisation of Resources

- The **Bolsheviks** were firmly against **private ownership**, especially of land and industries.
- In **November 1917**:
 - All **major industries and banks** were **nationalised** – the state took over their ownership and management.
 - Land was declared “**social property**”, meaning it now belonged to society as a whole.
 - **Peasants** were allowed to **seize lands of the nobility**, ending landlord domination.

(ii) Social Reforms in Cities

- **Large houses** were forcibly divided and reallocated based on family size.
- **Aristocratic titles** like ‘Duke’, ‘Count’ were **banned**.
- **New uniforms** were designed to reflect the **socialist identity**.

Interesting Fact: In 1918, the Soviet hat “**budonovka**” was chosen in a public design competition. It became a symbol of the new **Red Army**.

B. From Bolsheviks to Communists

(iii) One Party, One Rule

- The Bolsheviks renamed themselves the **Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)**.
- In **November 1917**, elections were held for the **Constituent Assembly**:
- The Bolsheviks **failed to win a majority**.
- When the Assembly rejected Bolshevik measures, **Lenin dissolved it in January 1918**.
- **Lenin’s justification:** He argued that the **All Russian Congress of Soviets** better represented workers and peasants.

(iv) New Governance Model

- In **March 1918**, the Bolsheviks signed the **Treaty of Brest-Litovsk** with Germany, ending WWI involvement.
- Though unpopular, **Lenin prioritised peace**.
- Over time, only the **Communist Party** contested elections to the Soviets.
- Russia officially became a **one-party state**.

C. Control, Censorship, and Culture

(v) Restrictions and Secret Policing

- **Trade unions** were brought under strict party control.
- A **secret police** was established to suppress dissent:
 - **Cheka** (1917)
 - Later renamed **OGPU**, then **NKVD**
- These agencies enforced **censorship** and kept surveillance on critics.

(vi) Cultural and Artistic Experiments

- Young **writers and artists** supported the Bolsheviks for promises of freedom and equality.
- This led to **experiments** in art, literature, and architecture.
- Later, **censorship increased** and **creative freedom was restricted**.
- Some artists **withdrew support**, others remained loyal to the revolution.

Key Terms:

1. **Nationalisation**: Bringing private property under state ownership.
2. **Budeonovka**: Soviet military hat introduced after the revolution.
3. **Russian Communist Party**: New name of the Bolshevik Party after October 1917.
4. **Constituent Assembly**: Elected body to draft a new constitution.
5. **Cheka / OGPU / NKVD**: Soviet secret police organisations.
6. **Censorship**: Control or restriction of access to ideas, information, or expression.

4.1 The Civil War

(i) Soldiers Deserting the Army

- After the Bolsheviks announced **land redistribution**, the Russian army began to collapse.
- **Why?** Most soldiers were **peasants**, and they wanted to go home to claim land, not fight wars.
- As a result, **mass desertions** took place.

(ii) Opponents of the Bolsheviks

- Several groups opposed the Bolshevik Revolution:
 - **Non-Bolshevik socialists**
 - **Liberals**
 - **Supporters of autocracy** (monarchy)
- These groups:
 - **Condemned** the Bolshevik uprising
 - **Formed military alliances**, especially in south Russia
 - Their goal: **Overthrow the Bolsheviks**

Formation of Factions

- **Reds:** Bolsheviks, led by Lenin
- **Whites:** Pro-Tsarists and conservatives
- **Greens:** Socialist Revolutionaries and peasants
- These factions **fought bitterly** during 1918–1919, across different parts of the Russian empire.

Foreign Involvement in the War

- The Whites and Greens were **supported by foreign powers**:
- **France, Britain, America, and Japan** sent troops.
- **Reason for support:** These countries **feared the spread of socialism** in the world.

Chaos, Famine, and Violence

- The civil war caused:
 - **Widespread famine**
 - **Looting and banditry**
 - **Lawlessness** throughout the country
- Harsh actions by the Whites, like **punishing peasants who had taken land**, made them **lose public support**.

(iii) Bolshevik Victory and Challenges

- By **January 1920**, the Bolsheviks (Reds) had **regained control** over most of the Russian empire.

- **How they succeeded:**
 - **Gained support** of non-Russian nationalities
 - **Allied with Muslim reformers** (Jadidists)
- **However:** In some areas, cooperation failed:
 - For example, in **Khiva** (Central Asia):
 - Bolshevik colonists **massacred local nationalists** in the name of socialism.
 - This caused **confusion and distrust** among local people.

(iv) Formation of USSR

- In **December 1922**, the **USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)** was officially formed.
- The Bolsheviks:
 - Gave **limited autonomy** to various non-Russian nationalities
 - Hoped this would create **unity and trust**
- **But there were problems:**
 - **Unpopular policies** were forced on local governments
 - **Example:** Discouraging **nomadic lifestyles** in Central Asia
 - So, even though autonomy was promised, **local discontent continued**.

Key Terms:

1. **Reds:** Bolsheviks – Communist revolutionaries led by Lenin.
2. **Whites:** Pro-Tsarist conservatives who opposed the Bolsheviks.
3. **Greens:** Peasant-based fighters and Socialist Revolutionaries.
4. **Jadidists:** Muslim reformers who wanted modernization in Muslim-majority regions.
5. **USSR:** Union of Soviet Socialist Republics – the new state formed in 1922.
6. **Political Autonomy:** The right of self-governance given to non-Russian nationalities.
7. **Nomadism:** A lifestyle where communities move from place to place; discouraged by Bolsheviks.

4.2 Making a Socialist Society

(i) Ownership Shift During the Civil War

- During the civil war period, the Bolsheviks continued to **nationalise banks and industries**.
- This meant:
 - **Private ownership was abolished**
 - **All key economic sectors came under state control**
- In agriculture:
 - Peasants were allowed to **cultivate land taken from landlords**.
 - The government used some confiscated land to demonstrate **collective farming** – where people worked together.

(ii) Introduction of Five-Year Plans

- A new system of **centralised planning** was introduced.
- Officials decided **economic goals** and prepared targets for a **5-year period**.
- These plans were called **Five-Year Plans**.
- The first two Five-Year Plans were launched:
 - **1927–1932** (First Plan)
 - **1933–1938** (Second Plan)
- **Purpose** of the Plans:
 - Fix prices
 - Boost industrial growth
 - Develop heavy industries like **oil, coal, and steel**

(iii) Rapid Growth but Harsh Conditions

- The Plans led to **economic growth**:
 - Between 1929 and 1933, **industrial production doubled** for oil, coal, and steel.
 - **New industrial cities** emerged quickly.
 - For example, the **steel city of Magnitogorsk** was constructed in just 3 years.
- **But working conditions were difficult**:
 - In **Magnitogorsk**, workers suffered **extreme hardships**.
 - In one year alone, there were **550 work stoppages**.

- A famous complaint said:
“In winter, at 40°C below zero, people had to climb down from the fourth floor and dash across the street just to reach the toilet!”

(iv) Education, Healthcare, and Childcare

- The Bolsheviks introduced major reforms to help **workers and peasants**:
- **However**, these improvements were not equally available to everyone.
- **Government resources were limited**, so the impact was **uneven across regions**.

Key Terms

- 1. Nationalisation:** Process of transferring private assets (factories, banks) to state control.
- 2. Collective Work:** System where people work together and share the output.
- 3. Five-Year Plans:** Government plans to set economic targets and boost industrial production.
- 4. Magnitogorsk:** A newly built industrial steel city; symbol of rapid Soviet industrialisation.
- 5. Crèches:** Daycare facilities in workplaces for children of working mothers.

4.3 Stalinism and Collectivisation

(i) Grain Shortage and State Response (1927–1928)

- By 1927–1928, Soviet towns were suffering from acute grain shortages.
- The government had fixed the price at which peasants must sell grain.
- But many peasants refused to sell at such low prices, leading to a crisis in food supply.

Stalin's View:

- Stalin, who had become the leader after Lenin's death, believed:
- Wealthy peasants (called kulaks) and traders were hoarding grain.
- They were speculating, i.e., waiting for prices to rise before selling.

Stalin's Emergency Actions Begin

- In response, Stalin launched emergency raids:
- Party workers toured rural areas
- They confiscated grain, raided kulaks, and forced grain collections.

(ii) The Collectivisation Programme (1929–1931)

- Stalin believed the only way to solve the crisis was to modernise agriculture through collectivisation.
- **What is Collectivisation?**
It is the process of combining small peasant farms into large, state-controlled farms (called kolkhoz).
- **Reasons Stalin Gave:**
 - Individual peasant plots were too small to modernise.
 - Machinery and industrial farming could only work on large farms.
 - Kulaks must be eliminated to ensure state control and equality.

(iii) Peasant Resistance and Its Consequences

- Peasants were angry:
- They burnt crops, killed livestock, and refused to join kolkhozes.
- As a result, cattle population fell by one-third between 1929 and 1931.
- Those who resisted were punished:
- Many were exiled, imprisoned, or executed.
- Peasants argued:
- “We are not kulaks, and we support socialism.”
- But we don’t want forced farming in collectives.
- **Temporary Compromise:**
The government allowed some independent farming, but such peasants were treated coldly and without support.

(iv) The Famine of 1930–1933

- Despite collectivisation, production did not increase immediately.
- Between 1930 and 1933, harvests failed, leading to:
- One of the worst famines in Soviet history.
- Over 4 million people died due to hunger.

(v) Suppression of Criticism and The Great Purge

- Some Party members criticised:
- The inefficiency of the Planned Economy

- The devastation caused by collectivisation
- In response, Stalin accused them of conspiracy:
- By 1939, over 2 million people were jailed or sent to labour camps
- Many were innocent professionals, forced to confess under torture
- A number of them were executed, despite no proof of guilt

Key Terms:

1. Stalinism: The period of Stalin's rule, marked by strong control, collectivisation, and repression.

2. Kulaks: Wealthier peasants who were blamed for hoarding grain.

3. Collectivisation: The process of combining small peasant farms into large state-run collective farms.

4. Kolkhoz: A collective farm where profits were shared among peasants.

5. Speculation: Withholding goods to sell later at higher prices.

6. Great Purge: A period of severe repression under Stalin, where critics were jailed or executed.

5. The Global Influence of the Russian Revolution

(i) The Worldwide Impact of 1917

- The Russian Revolution of 1917 deeply influenced people across the world.
- Even though many European socialist parties did not fully support the way Bolsheviks:
 - Seized power suddenly, and
 - Retained control through force,
- The idea of a workers' state inspired millions globally.
- The possibility of creating a government based on workers' needs gave hope to many struggling against inequality and colonialism.

(ii) Birth of Communist Parties Around the World

- The success of the Russian Revolution led to the formation of communist parties in several countries.
- For example, Communist Party of Great Britain was founded.

- These parties were often influenced by Bolshevik ideas and tried to replicate their model in their own countries.

(iii) Support for Colonial People and Internationalism

- The Bolsheviks did not limit their message to Russia.
- They actively encouraged colonial people (like those in Asia and Africa) to:
 - Learn from the Russian model, and
 - Fight for their liberation from imperial rule.

Key Examples of Global Solidarity:

- **1920 – Conference of the Peoples of the East:** Hosted non-Russian colonial activists who supported the Bolsheviks' vision.
- **Comintern (Communist International):** An international union of pro-Bolshevik socialist parties. It aimed to coordinate the global spread of communism.
- **Communist University of the Workers of the East:** Educated activists from colonised nations in revolutionary theory and strategy.

(iv) The USSR Becomes a World Power

- By the start of the Second World War, the USSR had:
 - Transformed from a backward economy into a major industrial power.
 - Projected socialism as a global ideology.
 - Gained symbolic leadership in the international socialist movement.
- The USSR gave socialism a global face.

(v) Decline of the Soviet Model by the 1950s–1990s

- While the USSR had made remarkable progress, it strayed from the ideals of the revolution.
- **Main Issues:**
 - The government became increasingly repressive.
 - It denied basic freedoms to its citizens.
 - Development was achieved, but often through harsh, centralised control.
- This created a gap between ideology and practice.
- By the end of the 20th century:

- The USSR's global reputation as a socialist country had declined.
- Yet, many people still respected socialist values, especially the ideas of:
 - Equality
 - Welfare for all
 - Anti-imperialism

Key Terms:

- 1. Comintern:** International organisation created by the USSR to coordinate socialist movements.
- 2. Conference of the East:** A 1920 gathering of anti-colonial activists supported by the Bolsheviks.
- 3. Workers' State:** A government formed by and for the working class.
- 4. Repressive Policies:** Government actions that suppress freedoms, speech, or opposition.
- 5. Socialist Ideals:** Principles like equality, public ownership, and anti-imperialism.

Timeline of Events – Socialism in Europe and the Russian Revolution

Date / Year	Event	Explanation
1789	French Revolution begins	Introduced ideas of liberty, equality, and fraternity; influenced Europe and inspired radicals and socialists.
1815	Congress of Vienna	Restoration of monarchies after Napoleon's defeat; return of conservative order in Europe.
1871 (March–May)	Paris Commune uprising	Short-lived socialist government formed in Paris; celebrated by socialists as a prelude to revolution.

Date / Year	Event	Explanation
1870s	Socialist ideas spread across Europe	Second International formed to coordinate socialist movements; workers formed unions.
1898	Russian Social Democratic Workers Party founded	A Marxist party formed secretly due to repression in Tsarist Russia.
1900	Socialist Revolutionary Party formed	Represented peasant interests; demanded land redistribution and used radical means.
1902	Peasant uprising in South Russia	Large-scale refusal to pay rent and violence against landlords.
1904	Formation of Assembly of Russian Workers	A legal workers' organisation formed to campaign for rights.
9 January 1905	Bloody Sunday	Peaceful protesters led by Father Gapon fired upon near Winter Palace; over 100 killed.
1905	Russian Revolution of 1905	Mass strikes, protests, university walkouts, and demand for constitution; Tsar allowed a Duma.
1905	Creation of Duma (Parliament)	First Duma created after public outcry but had limited power; was soon dissolved by Tsar.

Date / Year	Event	Explanation
1914	Outbreak of the First World War	Russia joined Allies; war caused economic crisis, death, and public unrest.
1916	Over 7 million war casualties	Russian army suffered massive losses; food and fuel shortages in cities.
22 February 1917	Lockout at Petrograd factory	Workers went on strike in protest, initiating the February Revolution.
23 February 1917	International Women's Day Protest	Women led strikes for bread and peace; movement spread across Petrograd.
25 February 1917	Duma suspended	Government suppressed political opposition during strikes.
27 February 1917	Army mutiny and Petrograd Soviet formed	Soldiers joined protestors; police HQ destroyed; revolution escalated.
2 March 1917	Abdication of Tsar Nicholas II	End of monarchy; Provisional Government formed; Soviets emerged.
April 1917	Lenin returns from exile and issues April Theses	Called for peace, land to peasants, power to Soviets, and renaming of party.
June 1917	All-Russian Congress of Soviets held	Around 500 soviets sent representatives; Bolsheviks' influence rising.

Date / Year	Event	Explanation
July 1917	July Days	Pro-Bolshevik demonstrations crushed; leaders arrested or fled.
September 1917	Bolsheviks gain majority in Soviets	Bolsheviks dominate Petrograd and Moscow Soviets; plan for uprising.
16 October 1917	Petrograd Soviet approves uprising	Lenin persuades party; Military Revolutionary Committee formed under Trotskii.
24–25 October 1917	October Revolution	Bolsheviks seize control of Petrograd; Provisional Government arrested.
25 October 1917	Bolshevik Rule declared	Council of People's Commissars formed; Soviet rule begins.
November 1917	Elections to Constituent Assembly	Bolsheviks lose majority; Assembly rejected by Lenin in Jan 1918.
January 1918	Assembly dissolved by Lenin	All Russian Congress of Soviets recognised as the true democratic body.
March 1918	Treaty of Brest-Litovsk	Russia withdrew from World War I; harsh terms accepted.
1918–1920	Russian Civil War	Red Army (Bolsheviks) vs White & Green forces; foreign intervention worsened conflict.

Date / Year	Event	Explanation
January 1920	Bolsheviks win Civil War	Controlled most of the former Russian empire; established USSR.
December 1922	Formation of the USSR	Soviet Union officially created as a federation of Soviet republics.
1924	Death of Lenin	Stalin eventually emerged as the new leader.
1927–1928	Grain procurement crisis	Peasants refused to sell grain; Stalin blamed kulaks and initiated collectivisation.
1928	Forced grain requisition and raids	Party members confiscated grain from kulaks.
1929	Forced collectivisation begins	Peasant lands merged into state-run kolkhoz farms; widespread resistance.
1929–1933	Industrial growth under Five-Year Plans	Oil, coal, and steel production doubled; new industrial cities built.
1930–1933	Famine due to collectivisation	Over 4 million deaths; livestock destroyed; food shortages.
1932–1937	Heavy taxation on independent peasants	Property and homes of resisting peasants confiscated or auctioned.
1936	Stalin's Great Purge begins	False accusations, imprisonments, executions of critics; 2 million sent to labour camps.

Date / Year	Event	Explanation
1920 (India)	Shaukat Usmani visits USSR	First Indian to see socialist Russia and witness the revolution's effects.
1925 (India)	Communist Party of India founded	Inspired by Russian Revolution; began spreading socialist ideology.
