

Russian Revolution

- A dictator is a powerful ruler who rules his country directly.
- The two outstanding types of government that arose in the 20th century are: **communism and fascism**.
- Communism adopted a number of new economic, political and social ideas and it emphasized internal changes (changes within its own borders). **A Communist government is a political system where there are no social classes and a common ownership of industries and farms, as well as a sharing of work and of the goods produced from this work.**
- Fascism began in Italy, and then spread to Germany and a few other countries.

Russia:

- The other names for Russia during this time were the Soviet Union or USSR- Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
- Russia was ruled at the beginning of the 20th century by an absolute monarch, called a **czar or tsar** (both meaning the same thing)
- The common people in Russia made up most of its society. They were poor and oppressed peasants, who suffered greatly.
- Most shopkeepers in Russia during this time advertised their supplies in the forms of pictures and not words because most of the people were illiterate.

Overthrowing the Czar:

- There were 2 revolutions where the czar was overthrown. The first one took place **1905**.
- On **January 22, 1905** thousands of workers, women and children marched to the czar's palace in St. Petersburg. They were demanding better working conditions, more freedom and a voice in the government.
- They came in peace, but the czar ordered his soldiers to open fire on the crowd and hundreds of people were killed. The people of Russia still call this day **Bloody Sunday**.
- As tragic as this day was, it still did not weaken Czar Nicholas II's absolute power over his people.

March 1917 - 2nd Revolution:

- During World War I, the Germans were slaughtering the Russians. Many of the country's railroads broke down and people were starving everywhere.
- The people forced the czar to abdicate (give up his power). This second outbreak is known as the March Revolution.

Gregory Rasputin (1872-1916)

- During Czar Nicholas' reign, a very strange man became an important figure in his family's life. Gregory Rasputin was a Siberian peasant who became a monk and healer.
- Later in his life, he moved to St. Petersburg and soon became entangled in the Russian royal family.
- The royal heir, Alexei, had hemophilia. With this disease, even minor bumps can cause severe bleeding. At this time in history, medical doctors could not control this severe bleeding.
- Czar Nicholas and his wife Czarina Alexandra began taking Rasputin's advice about Alexei's condition. Soon they were even taking his advice about Russian officials and policies.
- However, Rasputin's advice was not very good and it caused many problems.
- To end Rasputin's influence, some Russian nobles assassinated him. First, they poisoned him, but he survived, then they shot him several times and drowned him.

Political Parties in Russia:

Socialism - an economic and political system where the government owns and controls all industry.

- Karl Marx, a German thinker of the 1800s.
- The political party known as the Communists was founded by a brilliant revolutionary, Vladimir Ilich Ulyanov, better known as **Lenin**.
- Lenin formed his own branch of the party called the **Bolsheviks**.
- Lenin believed that Socialism would lead to a more perfect society called **Communism**. In this society, everyone would share in the work and the products on an equal basis.
- Gradually, Lenin had many Russian workers and peasants following him.
- Lenin dies in 1924 and was remembered as the "Father of the Revolution". After his death, Joseph Stalin took control.

Russian Time of Troubles:

STALIN

- Stalin was a well-known member of the Communist party.
 - Stalin read the works of Karl Marx and believed in what Marx taught about Socialism and soon Stalin put these beliefs into the Russian society.
- He forced the peasants to work on farms run by a group who worked for the government, called collective farms.
- Stalin made himself strong by destroying anyone who was against him. Suspected enemies of the government was often shot or exiled to Siberia.
- Stalin was a tyrant - he censored newspapers and radio programs. These media sources only told what Stalin wanted the people to know.
- He did not allow the people to travel outside the Soviet Union. This is the reason why it was said that the Soviet Union was surrounded by an IRON CURTAIN. This curtain referred to the invisible boundary between Western Europe and Eastern Europe after WWI.
- Stalin put statues up of himself all over Russia, making them look more powerful and handsome than he actually was. He also rewrote Russian history making it sound like the people had chosen him for a leader.
- Even today, many people believe that Stalin was the most destructive dictator Russia ever had.