

to accept poor wages and conditions as the peasants were.

When forced to do so, Nicholas would make changes. After an unsuccessful revolution in 1905 Nicholas paid attention to some of his more sensible advisers. He allowed a Parliament, or *Duma*, to be elected in 1906. But as soon as it began to criticise the lack of freedom Nicholas shut it down. However, Nicholas did allow one man, Peter Stolypin, to make some important

changes. Between 1906 and 1911 Stolypin introduced a series of reforms which made it easier for peasants to own their own land. But even by 1916 only 24% of peasants owned any land – the rest still worked for wealthy landowners. Stolypin was assassinated in 1911. Some historians suspect that the Tsar may have been involved because the assassin was later discovered to be a police agent who was posing as a revolutionary.

## Exercise 1

### Russia's industrial growth

Study the following groups of statistics about Russia in the years before the revolution:

#### SOURCE A: Population 1900 (in millions)

Russia	103	France	39
Germany	56	Great Britain	41
Austria-Hungary	45	Italy	32

#### SOURCE B: Railways – kilometres of track in 1900 (in thousands)

Russia	53	France	38
Germany	52	Great Britain	35
Austria-Hungary	36	Italy	16

#### SOURCE C: Coal production in 1900 (in million tonnes); figures in brackets refer to percentage increase in production since 1890

Russia	16 (170%)	France	33 (28%)
Germany	149 (67%)	Great Britain	225 (24%)
Austria-Hungary	39 (50%)	Italy	(0.5%)

#### SOURCE D: Steel production (in million tonnes)

	1890	1900	1890	1900
Russia	0.4	1.5	0.7	1.6
Germany	2.3	6.7	3.6	4.9
Austria-Hungary	0.5	1.2		

(Sources A, C and D from A.J.P. Taylor, *Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1918*, 1971)

- Which two countries, on the basis of Sources C and D, had the biggest industrial output?
- Of the five countries listed in both Sources C and D where would you rank Russia in terms of output?
- Which of the nations listed in Sources C and D was growing the most quickly in terms of output? Support your answer with evidence from the statistics.

d Source B shows Russia as having the largest railway network.

- Why is this a misleading statistic?
  - How does Source A put Source B and the other sources concerning Russia in a more accurate position?
- e What do you think this exercise tells you about the dangers for historians of using statistics?

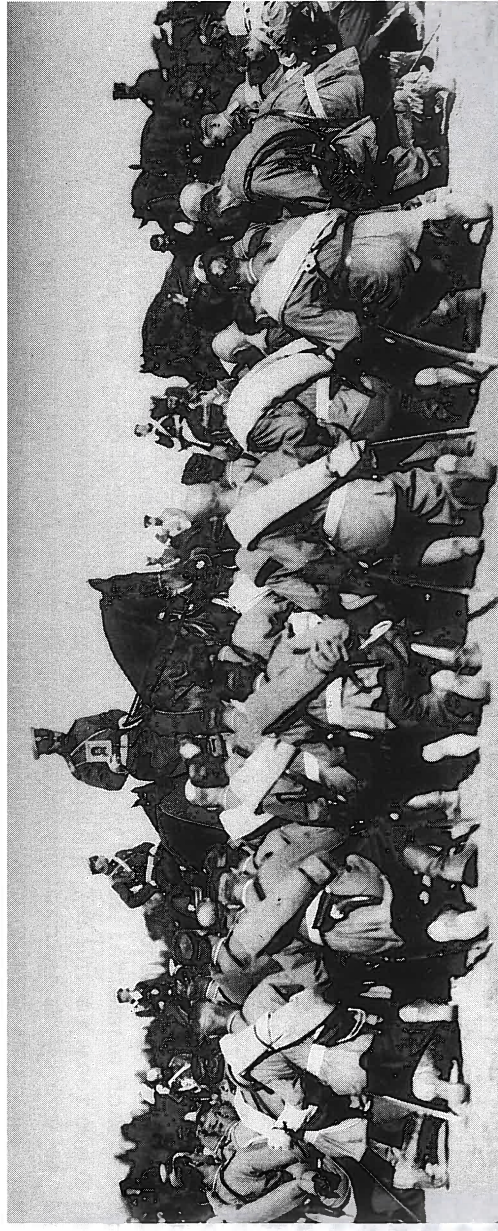
## Russia and the First World War

The military aspects of Russia's involvement in the First World War are dealt with in the first chapter. What concerns us here is how that war affected the country and made certain that there would be a revolution. There is enough evidence to suggest that there would have been a revolution in Russia to overthrow the Tsar sooner or later. The First World War simply made it happen sooner. Stolypin's intelligent reforms to improve the lot of the peasants had not gone far enough and made little impression on the sense of anger and frustration felt by most of Russia's peasants. Russia's industrial workers were becoming more and more involved in confrontations with the government over wages and conditions. In 1912 there were over 2000 separate strikes – ten times as many as in 1910. In the

seven months before the outbreak of war in 1914 this number had risen to 4000. In 1912, 270 miners had been shot dead during a strike in the Lena gold-fields. But the lack of freedom also affected and angered middle class people in Russia, who found that because they did not belong to the wealthy nobility their chances of rising to important posts in the government and civil service were very slim. There was also little work for lawyers in a legal system in which the decision of a policeman was enough to send a man or woman to imprisonment in Siberia.

These problems were all made worse by the war. In the first place, after a few minor victories at the very start of the war, the Russian armies suffered terrible casualties in a series of defeats. Those that survived had to put up with hunger and lack of equipment. This demoralisation soon filtered back to the villages and towns where anti-war feeling steadily grew. Russia's economy

Tsar Nicholas blesses his troops as they kneel in respect. Within a few months they were to help overthrow him





was a long way behind her enemies. **Industrial output** actually fell by 50% as peasants were brought into the factories lacking the right skills to work the machinery. At the same time there were fewer labourers to work the land - some 15 million peasants were conscripted during the war. Agricultural production dropped. The shortages of food led to rapid **inflation**: prices rose by some 700% between 1914 and 1917. The Tsar foolishly made himself supreme commander of the armed forces (August 1915) and therefore

became responsible for the string of defeats. Nicholas and his family were further criticised because of their strange relationship with an unpleasant 'monk' named Rasputin. This man had a powerful influence over the Tsar's wife, the Tsarina, because of his ability to ease the suffering of her sick son. Rasputin's influence soon extended to government affairs - which greatly angered the court nobility. Eventually he was murdered in December 1916 but by then the damage to the Tsar's image had been done.

## Exercise 2

- What is an autocrat?
- How had Stolypin tried to modernise Russian agriculture?
- What evidence is there in the text that industrial workers were becoming increasingly discontented?
- Why were middle-class people also angry?
- Which two issues brought personal criticism for the Tsar?

## The March Revolution 1917

In Russia the events which led to the overthrow of the Tsar are called the February Revolution. The old Russian calendar ran 13 days behind the calendar used by the rest of Europe. For us the revolution began on 8 March (23 February in the Old Style). It began with a strike by 90 000 textile workers, protesting about the shortage of bread and fuel. Soon they were joined by other workers. The banners became more political: 'Down with the War' and later 'Down with the Tsar'. By the end of the week 400 000 workers were on strike in Petrograd. Troops sent by the Tsar to put down the demonstrations mutinied, shot their officers and joined in. On 15 March the Tsar abdicated and gave up the throne in favour of his brother who refused the throne. The Romanov dynasty was at an end. The Duma stepped in. The Duma, the Rus-

sian Parliament, was elected by a small minority of wealthy Russians. However, it was the closest Russia had to a voice for the people. Several leading members of the Duma were chosen to become a 'Provisional Government' to run the country until new and more democratic elections could be held to decide on a proper government. The Provisional Government was led by a liberal aristocrat, Prince Lvov.

The **revolution** had not been planned by anybody. Nobody had expected it. Yet within a week one of the world's most repressive governments had been swept aside and replaced by a government that soon introduced wide, democratic freedoms. But the Provisional Government was not the only source of power in Petrograd. From the very start of the revolution another body had been set up - the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Soviet is Russian for council; the Petrograd Soviet had first appeared in 1905. It represented the views of the city's workers and tried to

direct the course of the unsuccessful revolution then. As soon as the events of the March began it set itself up and soon established the total support of key workers in the transport, railway and communication industries. Nothing could happen in the city without the permission of the Soviet. However, there was no conflict between the Soviet, led by moderate socialists called Mensheviks, and the Provisional Government. They quickly agreed on two issues: to make Russia a democracy and to carry on with the war.

## Exercise 3

### An eyewitness account:

#### Extract One

This is taken from an account by N.N. Sukhanov, a Menshevik, who became a member of the Petrograd Soviet.

Tuesday March 6 [New Style dates are given]. I was sitting in my office. Behind a partition two typists were gossiping about food difficulties, rows in shopping queues... 'Do you know', suddenly declared one of these young ladies, 'if you ask me, it's the beginning of the Revolution'...

On Friday, the 9th, the movement swept over St. Petersburg (Petrograd) like a great flood. Fugitive meetings were held in the main streets and were dispersed by Cossacks and mounted police - but without any real energy... A few of the biggest factories had been occupied, others were besieged by troops. Here and there the attackers had met with some resistance - some pistol shots from young workers...

The unforgettable 12th of March came. There were no officers visible at all with the patrols... they were disorderly groups of grey greatcoats, mingling and openly fraternising with the working class crowd... willingly giving up their rifles...

I elbowed my way through to the rooms occupied by the Soviet... standing on stools... one after another the soldiers' delegates told of what was happening in their companies... 'They told us not to serve against the people any more, to defend the people's cause'... 'Long live the Revolution'... (Adapted from N.N. Sukhanov, *The Russian Revolution, 1917: A personal record*, 1955)

### An eyewitness account:

#### Extract Two

This is taken from an account by Alexander Kerensky - at that time a socialist deputy in the Duma. He was later to become leader of the Provisional Government.

The stage had been set for the final crash, but as is usually the case in such events, no one expected it to come precisely on the morning of March twelfth. How could I... have guessed as I rushed out of my apartment in what a different position I would be when I returned to it?... We had one common inspiration - Russia! Russia in peril... Russia betrayed by the old regime, Russia prey to the blind raging mob...

I learned that Rodzianko, President of the Duma, had received an order from Nicholas II dissolving the Duma at midnight... I rushed to the telephone and urged some friends to go to the barracks of the insurgent regiments and direct



the troops to the Duma ... I addressed the troops and asked them to follow me into the Duma and take over the defence of the building from the Tsarist troops ...

(A. F. Kerensky, *The Catastrophe*, 1927)

- Why do you think there are so many references to soldiers in the text of Extract One?
- Explain why 'rows in shopping queues' (line 2, Extract One) would have been quite common at this time.
- What evidence is there in Extract One that the soldiers were not with the revolution from the very start?
- Explain the reference to 'the Soviet' (line 15, Extract One). Why do you suppose Sukhanov made his way to the Soviet rather than the Duma to find out about the events of the revolution?
- What date do both these extracts agree on as being very important?
- What evidence is there that Kerensky in Extract Two was not especially sympathetic to the people involved in the revolution?
- What impression does Kerensky give of his role in the events of the revolution?
- Which of these two accounts do you think historians would consider more reliable and why?

## Exercise 4

Source One is a German cartoon of July 1917. It shows an imprisoned Tsar and, from left to right, Lloyd-George, Wilson and Ribot (prime minister of France). The three are saying:

'We never deal with autocratic government, never.' Nicholas thinks to himself: 'Once these rascals were like brothers to me.'

- Who is the Tsar shown imprisoned?
- Why do you think the three were 'once like brothers' to the Tsar?
- Why are these three men now turning their backs on the Tsar?
- What do Lloyd-George, Wilson and Ribot all have in common as government leaders which the Tsar did not share?
- Give two reasons why these three leaders were likely to get on well with the Provisional Government.
- Explain in a paragraph of 20 lines how the Tsar came to be no longer the ruler of Russia.



Source One German cartoon

## Enter the Bolsheviks

So far one political party has been mentioned – the Mensheviks. The term *Menshevik* means minority and it dates from 1903 when the Russian Social Democrat Party split into two groups. The Mensheviks believed that the party should have an open membership which would allow anyone to join as long as they sympathised with the party's ideas. They also wanted co-operation with wealthy factory owners and other middle-class groups to overthrow the Tsar. The other, **Bolshevik**, group (the majority), led by Lenin, wanted the party membership to consist only of dedicated, professional revolutionaries. He did not see the point of co-operating with the wealthy groups (or **bourgeoisie** as the Bolsheviks called them) against the Tsar.

Lenin was forty-seven at the time of the March Revolution. He came from a comfortable middle-class background and had been well educated. Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, Lenin's real name, was seventeen when his brother, Alexander, was hung for his part in a plot to assassinate Tsar Alexander III. Lenin was as fiercely opposed to the Tsar as his brother but he believed that terrorism could never be a permanent solution to Russia's problems. Lenin wanted the workers in alliance with the peasants to seize power and establish **socialism**. Both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks claimed that their policies were those of the nineteenth century German revolutionary, Karl Marx. But after the Social Democrat Party split in 1903 these two groups were bitterly hostile to each other. By 1917 the Mensheviks, despite the origin of their name, were a much bigger party than the Bolsheviks.

There was another left wing party called the Socialist Revolutionaries. Their basic policy was that the peasants

should own the land. This gave them a great deal of support from the biggest group in Russia – the peasants. Kerensky was a member of the SRs. Wealthy business and professional people also had a party known as the Cadets – short for Constitutional Democrats. They were not socialists but they did want to see an end to the Tsar's autocratic rule and the setting up of a parliamentary system like the one in Britain.

None of these parties played a major role in the March Revolution but the Mensheviks and the SRs quickly won a majority of the delegates to the Petrograd Soviet. Of the 1500 soldiers' and workers' delegates in the Soviet the Bolsheviks had only about 40. They were a tiny, rather unimportant revolutionary organisation with perhaps only 23000 members in the whole of Russia. At first, the Bolsheviks, led by Stalin because the other leading Bolsheviks such as Lenin were still in exile and had not returned to Russia, followed the policies of the Mensheviks and supported the Provisional Government which was led by Cadets. When Lenin, who was in Switzerland when the Tsar was overthrown, heard what Stalin was doing he was furious. But how could he get to Russia across Germany, a country still at war with Russia? The German government knew Lenin was against the war and would, if he came to power, pull Russia out of the war. This would be a great help to Germany. So the Germans provided Lenin and about 100 other Bolsheviks with a special train to take them across Germany. It was an unlikely alliance and Lenin was later accused by his enemies of being in the pay of the Kaiser and of being a German spy.

Lenin arrived in Petrograd early in April, 1917. Straight away he told the cheering crowd that the Bolsheviks should organise to overthrow the Provisional Government, end the war and hand over the land to the peasants.





Trotsky

'Peace, Land and Bread' and 'All Power to the Soviets' were his simple and very effective slogans. Most people thought he was mad and paid him little attention. Russia had just had a revolution and now she was a democracy - why have another? Another Marxist revolutionary arrived in Russia shortly after Lenin. He was Leon Trotsky (real name Bronstein). Trotsky had also been a member of the Social Democratic Party and had opposed Lenin after the split in 1903. Despite an often very bitter quarrel about the best way to bring about a revolution in Russia, Trotsky quickly settled his differences and joined the Bolsheviks in 1917. Lenin was very pleased to have a man of Trotsky's ability in the party. He was to prove an invaluable asset.

## Exercise 5

- a Into what two groups did the Russian Social Democrat Party split in 1903?
- b What policies did the Bolshevik group call for?
- c What were the policies of the other three major political parties in Russia?
- d Why was Lenin so angry when he learned of the policies Stalin was following while he was in Switzerland?
- e Do you think the Germans' decision to help Lenin get to Russia was a shrewd one? Explain your reason.
- f Explain how Lenin's policies were designed to appeal to (i) the soldiers; (ii) the workers; (iii) the peasants.

## The Provisional Government's mistakes

The Provisional Government made some popular decisions to begin with. It released all political prisoners, legalised political parties, introduced the right to strike and an eight-hour working day. It also called for the election of a Constituent Assembly to decide Russia's new constitution. All the Tsar's estates were confiscated, but because many wealthy landowners supported the new government no-

thing was done to provide the peasants with any other land. That was to prove a fatal error. The decision to continue the war against Germany was another mistake which was to lead to the end of the Provisional Government. Prince Lvov, and later Kerensky, made the mistake of thinking that the Russian people would be willing to fight for a free and democratic Russia now that the Tsar had gone. Furthermore, Kerensky believed that, by continuing to fight with democratic nations such as Britain and France, Russia had a better chance of surviving as a democracy herself. But the Russian people wanted only peace, bread and land. One man - Lenin - was prepared to promise them these.

A new offensive was launched at the end of June. It went the way of most other Russian offensives and failed. But it was a serious setback for the government. In June alone there were 30 000 desertions and numbers were increasing all the time. As Lenin put it, they were 'voting with their feet'. Once these peasants in uniform made their way back to the villages they began seizing the land which they believed rightfully belonged to them. Kerensky became Prime Minister in July. Criticism of the government increased as the war went on and the government still stalled on transferring land to the peasants. The promised election for a Constituent Assembly was continually put off. The Mensheviks and SRs began to lose support in the Petrograd Soviet, as they had from the start supported the increasingly unpopular Provisional Government. Support for the Bolsheviks, on the other hand, who had constantly condemned the government, rapidly began to increase. Before the March Revolution the Bolsheviks numbered only 2000 in Petrograd and 600 in Moscow. By the end of July the membership had grown to 36 000 for the capital and 15 000 for Moscow.

In July Lenin nearly suffered a fatal blow to his hopes of another revolution. In that month the 'July Days' occurred in which massive demonstrations against the government took place. Many of the 500 000 demonstrators were armed sailors from the Kronstadt naval base. They marched on the government but Kerensky had enough support to crush them and 400 were killed. Lenin had argued that the time was not right for a revolution but Kerensky seized his chance to order the arrest of the leading Bolsheviks. Trotsky was arrested and Lenin forced into hiding. That might have been the end of the Bolsheviks but events soon turned in their favour again.

At the beginning of September, General Kornilov, commander-in-chief

of the Russian armies, ordered his troops to march on Petrograd, crush the Soviet and cleanse the government of socialists. It seemed a serious threat. Kerensky released the Bolsheviks from gaol when they offered to help defend the government. Over 20 000 Bolshevik Red Guards ('Reds') organised the defence of the city and infiltrated Kornilov's army, urging the men to desert. They did just that and the march fizzled out. The popularity of Lenin and his party received a massive boost. In September Bolsheviks won a majority of delegates in both the Moscow and Petrograd Soviets. With the support of Russia's workers and soldiers behind him, Lenin decided that the time to move against Kerensky had come.

## The November Revolution

On 20 October 1917 the Bolshevik Central Committee supported Lenin's call to plan for a seizure of power. Trotsky, now chairman of the Soviet, was given the job of working out the details for the take-over. The revolution was planned for the night before the All Russian Congress of Soviets was to meet in Petrograd. This meeting was to have present all the delegates from all of the city and village soviets in Russia. On the night of 6-7 November the Red Guards in Petrograd seized control of the stations, telegraph office, bridges and government buildings. Kerensky fled the city. The Provisional Government crumbled away. Five people were killed in Petrograd - all Bolsheviks. In Moscow it took a week's bitter fighting, with 200 killed before the city was taken. By the end of it Lenin controlled the heartland of Russia - but little else. The ease with which Kerensky's government was toppled showed how little real support the Provisional Govern-





Red Guards in St  
Petersburg,  
November 1917

ment had and how well Lenin had judged the moment to seize power. Kerensky had known that the Bolsheviks were planning against him. In October he ordered the Bolshevik-

dominated Petrograd garrison to the front, hoping to weaken the Bolsheviks' armed support. The garrison simply refused to go and there was nothing Kerensky could do about it.

## Exercise 6

- Why did the Provisional Government not decide to hand over all land to the peasants?
- What do you think Lenin meant by the phrase that the soliders were 'voting with their feet'?
- What evidence is there in the text that support for the Bolsheviks increased rapidly after the March Revolution?
- How did General Kornilov's attempted march on Petrograd help the Bolsheviks?
- What evidence is there in the text that Kerensky had little real support in Petrograd?
- What evidence is there in the photograph above of the Red Guards that many were former soliders?
- How would you describe the Red Guards' means of transport in the photograph? Can you suggest a reason for the fact that although many of the Red Guards had joined the Bolsheviks already equipped with weapons they seemed unable to use more military types of transport?

## Exercise 7

### City council elections

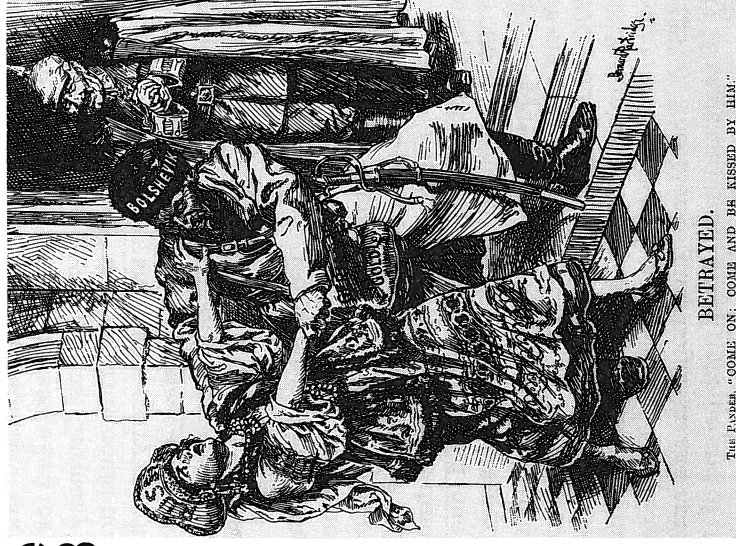
The following are the election results to the Moscow city council in 1917. Study them and then answer the questions which follow.

Parties	Councillors elected	June votes	%	Councillors elected	September votes	%
Cadets	17	109 000	17	30	101 000	26
SRs	58	375 000	58	14	54 000	14
Mensheviks	12	76 000	12	4	16 000	4
Bolsheviks	11	75 000	11	47	198 000	51

(From: J. Reed, *Ten Days that Shook the World*)

- Which parties (i) lost the most votes; (ii) gained the most votes; (iii) kept more or less the same number of votes?
- What sort of people would have voted for the Cadets? Were there likely to be more or less of these people in a big city like Moscow than in the countryside?
- Large numbers of peasants had been drafted into the cities to work in the factories. Which party was most likely to benefit from this? Do the voting figures for June confirm this?
- How do you explain the tremendous drop in popularity of the Mensheviks and SRs?
- Which party picked up many of these votes? How do you explain this large increase in votes won? (Note the date for the second election and remember an important event early in that month).

## Exercise 8



BETRAYED.  
THE PUNER "COME ON: COME AND BE KESSED BY HIM."  
J. Reed

Source Two Punch  
cartoon, 12 December 1917

- Identify the figure rubbing his hands, standing in the doorway.
- Which person would best represent the Bolshevik dragging the woman?
- Explain the reference to 'German Gold' on the bag around the Bolshevik's waist.
- Why was this figure in the drawing rubbing his hands and were his hopes proved justified?
- This is a British cartoon, published in December 1917. Why do you think the cartoonist is so obviously hostile to both the Bolsheviks and the figure in the doorway?
- A 'pander' is somebody who helps another person carry out an immoral or low act. Why is the Bolshevik shown by the cartoonist as a 'pander'? Who or what is being 'betrayed' as it says in the title?



- c** Assess the problems facing Lenin and his prospects of survival.
- d** Make a recommendation to Lloyd-George on whether the British government should recognise the new Soviet Government or give support to the White Russians organising opposition to Lenin. Outline the good and bad points of both courses of action, e.g. supporting the Whites might lead to Lenin's overthrow and the re-entry of Russia into the war (how much help would Russia be?) but if the Whites lost then Britain would make an enemy of the new government.

## The Civil War: 1918-1920

Foreign powers, especially Britain, France, the USA and Japan, were keen to see the Bolsheviks overthrown but their troops played little part in the Civil War. Most of their support for the Whites was in the form of weapons. The United States gave the Whites 200 000 rifles and Britain gave a further 100 000. Though the Reds were outnumbered and less well-equipped they did have some advantages. The Communists controlled the industrial centres and the extensive railway network which enabled the Reds to rush supplies and troops to any part of their front under threat. This advantage is known as 'inner lines of communication'. In the east the Bolsheviks faced a twin threat from Admiral Kolchak's forces and from the Czech Legion. The Czech Legion consisted of 40 000 former soldiers in the Habsburg armies, taken prisoner by the Russians. Their basic aim was to make their way back to the new state of Czechoslovakia but they soon found themselves involved in fighting against the Red forces. In the south-west stood the armies of General Denikin and those of his successor, General Wrangel. In the north-west the forces of General Yudenich threatened Petrograd. The decisive year was 1919

when Kolchak's forces were crushed and their leader taken prisoner and later shot. That year also saw Denikin's advance on Moscow checked and, in March 1920, his forces finally destroyed – apart from a small portion later commanded by Wrangel. Yudenich came within a few miles of Petrograd and was only driven back after a personal appearance at the front by Trotsky, now the leader of the Red Army. Wrangel's forces in the Crimea were the last serious obstacle and these were overwhelmed in November 1920.

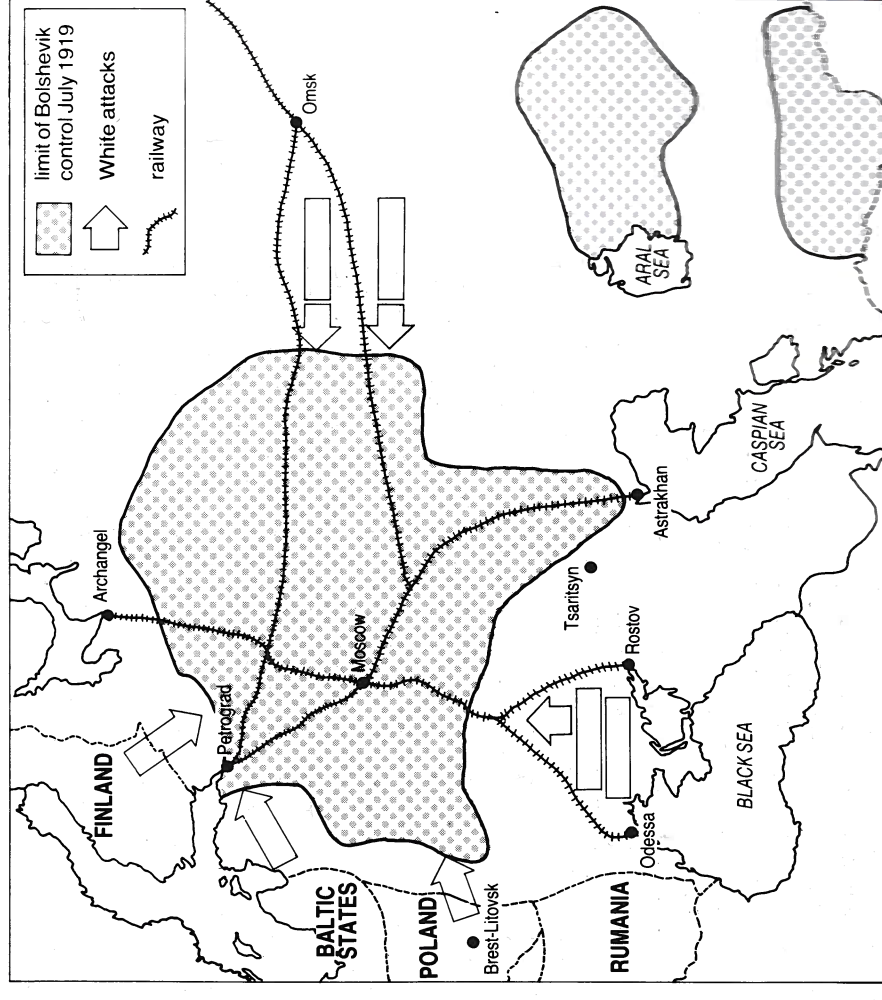
Amidst this civil war another war was being fought, this one against the new state of Poland. The Poles, anxious to seize further territory from their traditional enemy, had invaded Russia in the spring of 1920 led by General Pilsudski. Their plan to take advantage of the Soviet Republic's problems with the Whites went seriously wrong. The Poles were driven back to the gates of Warsaw and only a failure of planning and co-operation between two Red generals allowed the Poles to save their capital and drive the Red Army back. A military historian, J. F. C. Fuller, has described the Battle of Warsaw as one of the most important battles ever. If the Bolsheviks had won and conquered Poland they would have been in a position to come to the aid of German Communists and, perhaps, ensure the success of a soviet revolution in

Germany. The Treaty of Riga (March 1921) led to an expansion of Poland and the addition of some 6 million Ukrainian and Russian subjects.

Apart from having inner lines of communication, another decisive Red advantage was the superior morale and determination of their troops. This was largely due to Trotsky's skills as an organiser and motivator. The White Armies suffered from a total lack of unity. The White generals were jealous of each other and refused to co-ordinate their offensives and therefore the Reds never really had to face an attack by all of their enemies at the same time. Some White leaders, such as Kolchak, were brutal and established a harsh rule over their territories. Land-

loyal service.

Western support also had the effect of making the Whites appear as tools of foreign governments while the Red Army could claim to be fighting for a Russia free from foreign control. To begin with, the Red Army was desperately short of officers – most of these sided with the Whites. Trotsky's solution was to force some 30 000 former Tsarist officers to work for him by taking prisoner their families as 'insurance' for loyal service.



Russian Civil War:  
1918-20



## Exercise 10

### Map work

- Copy the map on page 51 into your book. Read through the section on the Civil War and then mark inside the arrows, or the boxes next to the arrows, the names of the generals who led the attacks in that area.
- Explain the importance for the Bolsheviks of the railway network.
- Explain how Rostov and Odessa would have been useful to the White forces in the area for their campaign against the Reds.
- Can you think of any reason why the Bolshevik-controlled areas south and east of the Aral Sea were left alone by the Whites?
- How would the capture of Astrakhan by the Bolsheviks have put the Whites in an even more difficult position?

## Lenin's economic policies

### 'War Communism' and the NEP

At first Lenin had intended to move slowly as regards the Russian economy, and only the big industries like the banks, railways, steel, iron and coal were nationalised or taken over by the State. But the urgent needs created by the Civil War led to a more drastic policy called 'War Communism'. Peasants were forced to give up all their surplus crops to the government to feed the Red Army. Workers were told where to work and often forcibly moved hundreds of miles to a new factory.

All firms employing more than 10 workers were nationalised but many workers seized control of firms with only one or two employees. Of the 37 000 taken over by the state in 1920, 5000 had only one employee. Industrial production fell sharply as the economy was plunged into chaos. In 1920 large-scale Russian industry was producing only 18% of its 1913 output. Some Bolsheviks, including Trotsky, argued that 'War Communism' should be continued after the Civil War was won because it meant a more equal Russia. But Lenin disagreed and the Kronstadt Mutiny in March 1921 convinced him it

had to be replaced. In March the sailors of the Kronstadt naval base rose up in revolt against the banning of all political parties except the Communist Party. They demanded the free election of soviets and an end to the harsh policies of 'War Communism'. The rising was crushed by Trotsky with great bloodshed. In the same month the new Economic Policy (NEP) was approved by the party. In this Lenin proposed that peasants should hand over a fixed proportion of their crops as a tax to the state. Anything above that they could keep and sell privately. Many small firms were returned to their former owners and incentive schemes set up to encourage more production. Agricultural output increased rapidly so that in 1925 the grain harvest yield was 72 million tonnes - 22 million tonnes up on the 1922 figure of 50 million.

## The emergence of Stalin

The banning of political opposition during the Civil War seemed unavoidable but after the Red Army victory Mensheviks and SRs continued to be arrested by the OGPU (the successor to the Cheka). In 1921 opposition within the Communist Party itself was banned and the control of Lenin and the Party

over the affairs of the Soviet Republic was complete. But Lenin himself was increasingly ill and played practically no role in political matters for the last year of his life. One man, Stalin, was already making sure he would be in a good position to become Lenin's successor. In 1922 he was appointed General Secretary of the Party and this gave him control of the appointment of people to key jobs inside Russia.

Lenin was well aware of the power Stalin was beginning to acquire and it worried him. In January 1923 he wrote an addition to his political will or testament. In it he advised the Central Committee to replace Stalin as General Secretary of the Party. He recommended they find someone 'more tolerant, more loyal, more polite and more considerate'. Earlier Lenin had written of Stalin that he had 'unlimited authority concentrated in his hands and I am not sure whether he will always be capable of using that authority with sufficient

caution'. He also criticised Trotsky for his excessive 'self-confidence' but said that he was the 'most capable man in the present Central Committee'. If Lenin's Testament had been made public Stalin's chances of becoming leader would have been ruined, but the Bolshevik leaders only discussed it among themselves... and did nothing.

When Lenin died on 21 January 1924 Stalin was already too powerful to be challenged by Trotsky. Within four years of Lenin's death Trotsky was expelled from the Party and Stalin was master of Russia. Lenin's death at the age of 53 was a blow to the Soviet Republic because it was now deprived of its most able and undisputed leader. Lenin had governed Russia firmly but without cruelty. He was a modest man who shunned public attention and had always been concerned with the welfare of ordinary Russians. He was replaced by a man who possessed none of these qualities.

## Exercise 11

- What effect did 'War Communism' have on industrial production in Russia?
- Why did the NEP please the peasants so much?
- How was Stalin able to concentrate 'unlimited authority' in his hands?
- Whom do you think Lenin preferred as his successor and why?
- Other Bolsheviks at the time mocked Stalin, calling him "Comrade Card-Index" and a "grey blur". What do you think they meant?
- Write a 20 line statement from Trotsky to the Central Committee outlining why he ought to be the man to succeed Lenin in 1924, giving details of his role as a Bolshevik since joining the Party in May 1917.

## Exercise 12

Study the cartoon on page 54 and then answer the following:

- Give the name of one possible 'Russian Bolshevik' mentioned in the cartoon.
- Who were the 'bourgeoisie' referred to by the Bolshevik?
- Name one political party in Russia which would have agreed with the view of this *Punch* cartoon.
- In what ways had the Bolsheviks dug 'a grave for the bourgeoisie' by the time this cartoon was published (November 1920)?
- What is the cartoonist implying about the chances of Russia recovering from her problems?
- To what extent, if at all, do you think the Bolsheviks had managed 'to get out' of the grave and put Russia back on its feet by the time of Lenin's death?