



Fourth Imperial State Duma (FISD)

# Reforming the Russian Political System in Post-February Revolution Russia

## CHAIRS

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## COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

Due to the historical nature of the committee, some things need to be considered. Firstly, because of the disproportionate character of the committee composition, regarding political parties and ideologies, some deputies present in this committee may not have been official members of the State Duma. However, they were carefully selected due to their relevance to the political scenario in Russia as well as to diversify the ideological scope present in this simulation.

Furthermore, some deputies in the Duma, officially or not, may have stated intolerant or offensive opinions in the past. In PosiMUN 2025, such rhetoric will not be accepted under any circumstances. Participants who find themselves enunciating any kind of comments of that nature or hate speech will be asked to leave the simulation.

Thank you for your understanding,

Laura M. C. Tamessawa

*Vice Secretary-General and Fourth Imperial State Duma Chair*

## 1. COMMITTEE DESCRIPTION

### 1.1. WHAT IS THE IMPERIAL STATE DUMA?

The Imperial State Duma was created during Tsar Nicholas II's reign as a part of a series of measures established by the October Manifesto, following the Russian Revolution of 1905. The Duma served as the lower house of a bicameral legislature established by the Tsar, with the State Council acting as the upper house. Throughout its history, there have been four iterations of this regulatory entity before the collapse of the autocratic Tsarist regime in February 1917.

The Duma had the main role of overseeing the legislation of the Tsar's reign, drafting, debating, and proposing laws. Further, it could revise proposed legislation and discuss matters regarding public policy. However, although the Imperial State Duma acted as an extremely significant first attempt at a representative legislative body in Russia, it was considerably limited in its powers due to the Tsar's moderating power, authority to dissolve the house, control over elections, and final say on the legislation that was effectively enacted, as was established by the Fundamental Laws of 1906.

Additionally, the council served as a forum for public debate in several spheres, such as the economic, political, and social sectors. Through these discussions, even without ultimate authority, the Duma could greatly influence the political and social scenario in Russia. Further, the Russian legislative body often emerged as a mediating body between the demands for reform from the lower social classes and the autocratic rule of Nicholas II. This was particularly true for the first two iterations of the Duma (1906 and 1907 respectively), which were more ideologically radical in nature but were dissolved in a matter of months. The two subsequent iterations were more conservative compared to the first two, though the

fourth iteration of the legislative body became increasingly critical of the Tsar's handling of WWI and of the domestic socio-economic crisis as 1917 approached.

Most importantly, the Imperial State Duma had the ultimate role of representing the interests of a vast range of social groups, varying from the highest ranks of nobility to the poorest of workers and peasants. Despite its limited powers, the State Duma became a prominent battlefield for a vast scope of political parties to express their views and criticize government policies in the dawn of revolution in late Imperial Russia.

## 1.2. FUNCTIONING, PROCEDURE AND COMPOSITION

As the Fourth Imperial State Duma is one of the special committees in this year's PosiMUN, some rules of procedure will differ from those detailed in the Rules of Procedure Guide. Those differences will be stated in section 1.2.1. through 1.2.4.

### 1.2.1. The Fourth Imperial State Duma's Chairman and Deputy Chairman

The Duma Chairman presides over its sessions, this role includes calling sessions to order, ensuring that debates run smoothly, enforcing the established rules of parliamentary procedure, and making sure decorum is maintained during all sessions. Furthermore, the Chairman has the authority to grant or deny speaking privileges to members during debates and also represents the assembly in official meetings with the Tsar and other governmental organs. Hence, this role will be assigned to the Committee's chair.

The Duma's Deputy Chairman, on the other hand, has the primary role of assisting the Chairman in carrying out the duties of managing the legislative body's sessions and ensuring the legislative sessions run efficiently, also maintaining the continuity in leadership in case the chamber's superior authority is absent. Furthermore, the Deputy Chairman also plays a

major role in coordinating the work of political factions within the house, working to mediate disputes and ensure legislative priorities are met. Given that, the role of Deputy Chairman will be assigned to the co-chair of this Committee.

### 1.2.2. Opening the Session

The Imperial State Duma sessions, as usual, start with a roll call to ensure that a quorum is present. Once the quorum is confirmed, the setting of the agenda is the next step. The agenda plays a major role in the development and flow of the debate, therefore it is the second stage in the initiation of the session, coming directly after the roll call. Deputies may present an agenda and later propose amendments if deemed necessary. It is important to note that the issues relevant to the current situation at the time of this committee are properly addressed in the agenda. Following the setting of the agenda, the Chairman will declare the session officially open, followed by the deputy's opening statements.

### 1.2.3. Voting Procedures in the Duma

In the Imperial State Duma voting is open, making results public and allowing deputies to see where each political faction or individual deputy stands on all matters. This encompasses the following modalities of open voting for this committee:

- a. *Vote by Raising Placards*: Deputies raise their respective placards to signal either approval or opposition to the matter being debated by the Duma.
- b. *Signal Opposition by Standing*: While those in favor remain seated, those deputies opposing the proposition stand up to signal their opposition.
- c. *Vote by Roll Call*: Each deputy's vote is recorded individually as their names are called out one by one. Typically used for more significant or controversial matters.

Further, most decisions carried out by the Duma require a simple majority to pass. If a decision is passed by the assembly under a simple majority however, under regular circumstances, which is *not* the case of this committee, the Tsar retains the power to veto any and all decisions made by the legislative body.

#### 1.2.4. Composition of The Fourth Imperial State Duma

The Fourth Imperial State Duma was composed essentially of three political factions: the *Conservatives*, *Reformist Liberals*, and the *Socialist and Revolutionary Faction*. The Conservative Faction encompassed Monarchists, Octoberists, Rightists, and the Progressive Bloc, focusing primarily on their loyalty to Tsar Nicholas II, and maintaining order with some level of reform in a few selected matters. The Reformist Liberals, mostly composed of the members of the Kadet party, sought greater democratic freedoms and constitutional reform in Russia. On the other end of the spectrum, the Socialist and Revolutionary Faction, encompassing the Trudoviks, Socialist Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, and Bolsheviks advocated for more radical change, though within the faction there were various degrees of commitment to Marxist ideals and revolution itself.

#### 1.3. FREEZING DATE

Due to the events of the Russian Revolution, the freezing date for the Fourth Imperial State Duma will be September 9, 1917. Therefore, deputies may not refer to any event that happened after this date, including referencing any and all events and/or data after this time, as well as hindsight-driven perspectives in the course of the debate.

## 2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

This committee takes place in the transitional period between the February Revolution of 1917 and the October Revolution of the same year. This is a time of incredible political and social instability, where political leaders are fighting for power in Russia. For deputies to better understand the current situation being faced at the time of this committee, this section will encompass all the main events that occurred before September 1917 that shaped the ongoing scenario.

### 2.1. TSARIST RUSSIA

In 1913, Tsar Nicholas II celebrated the tercentenary of Romanov rule in Russia. The Emperor ruled one of the grandest empires in the history of the world, stretching from central Europe to the Pacific Ocean and from the Arctic Circle to the borders of Afghanistan. Covering one-sixth of the land surface of the globe, the Russian Empire housed almost 150 million people of more than a hundred different nationalities making Nicholas II the absolute ruler of almost 8% of the world's population in 1917.



The Romanov Dynasty was the longest dynasty to rule Russia. Its rise to power took place in the early 15th Century with Tsar Mikhail Romanov in 1613, and the fall of this 300-year-long royal house takes place amidst the reign of Nicholas II during the Russian Revolution of February 1917. The history of the Romanov's is filled with figures of the likes

of Catherine the Great (1762-1796) and Peter the Great (1682-1725), but its latter history is filled with considerable struggles to conciliate the challenges of modernization of the late 19th and early 20th Century and the ever-present unsatisfaction of the lower classes with the strains of maintaining a traditional autocratic tsarist regime at all costs, in a rapidly and drastically changing world.

The reign of Tsar Nicholas II (1894-1917), was marked in history as one ruled by unpreparedness and an unwavering attachment to autocratic traditions. Hence, Nicholas II's legacy was forever stained by the ending of 300 years of the Romanov dynasty's tsarist rule and of the Russian Empire once and for all.

## 2.2. THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR (1904-1905)

Considered one of the precursors of World War One, even considered by some historians World War Zero, the Russo-Japanese War was a military conflict with its outbreak in 1904. The impact of Russia's defeat marked the beginning of a new era in the early 20th Century: the era of global conflict. The outcomes of this war reshaped geopolitics in a way that bred the global scenario to a series of conflicts such as the First World War.



The map illustrates the territorial changes and key events during the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). It shows the Russian Empire (light green), Japanese Empire (brown), and Manchuria (yellow). The map highlights the extent of Russian control before the war, Japanese territory before the war, and various demands made by both sides. Key locations include Port Arthur, Mukden, LiaoYang, Changtu, Kwangchengze, Vladivostok, S. of La Perouse, Bakhailin or Karafuto, St. of Okhotsk, Kurile Islands, Beiring Sea, Pacific Ocean, Korea, Seoul, Chemulpo, TakuShan, Pitzhuu, Taliu, Tsinshing, Tsinan, Osaka, Tokyo, and Quelpart. The map also shows the 1904 Japanese landing sites and major battles. A legend provides a detailed key for the symbols used.

For Japan, the war was a resistance to Western colonialism, while for Russia, this campaign was a continuation of an expansionist policy in East Asia dating back to Ivan the Terrible. However, the hostility faced by former Tsars from the Russian population regarding

war with the East, surprisingly, was not faced by Nicholas II, as Russia was faced with an overwhelming wave of ultra-nationalism. Nevertheless, the Tsar squandered this support through his reckless government establishment. Nicholas II's inability to firmly control the expansionist policies of the Russian Empire avidly demonstrate why all layers of Russian society lost faith in their supposedly godly governor, particularly after the Empire foolishly entered a war against Japan and was humiliatingly defeated.

In the Russian domestic sphere, the losses of the Russo-Japanese War increased exponentially the political pressure on the Tsarist government, as the ordinary folk were not willing to support the socioeconomic burden of an imperialist war, which had the sole purpose of bringing fame and fulfilling the expansionist dreams of the Tsar. Consequently, the revolutionary trends observed in Russia in the following years were highly related to the conflict itself.

Another significant aspect of this war was the clear weakness of the Russian military and navy. This military unpreparedness, along with the massive death rates of foot soldiers, made the Russian army incredibly unprepared for the new modality of war waged in the early 20th century. This weakness, led, consequently, to yet another significant downfall in the support of the Russians for their Tsar.

The mishandling of the war effort in East Asia by the Russian Empire, henceforth, led to an increasing opposition to the autocratic ways of the Tsarist regime among the Russian population. This trend was particularly noticeable amidst the peasantry and proletariat, who constantly demonstrated against the policies implemented by Nicholas II.

### 2.3. THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION OF 1905

The Russian Revolution of 1905 was a social and political unrest that swept the Russian Empire in 1905, forcing the acting autocratic tsarist regime to create the Imperial

State Duma and declare basic civil rights to the Russian people, of the likes of freedom of speech. However, the regime did not fall under the 1905 uprisings, which is mostly due to the fact that a large parcel of the army remained loyal to Tsar Nicholas II.

Starting in the mid-19th century, the Russian government started promoting rapid economic modernization while trying to maintain traditional social order and absolutism simultaneously. This state-led reform, however, caused the creation of new social groups, most prominently the urban workers, also known as the proletariat. Further, these changes also increased the taxation on workers and the peasantry. Herein, this newly-found hardship exacerbated long-standing peasant discontent with the terms of their emancipation and increased the aspirations of the nobility and intelligentsia for political participation.

The definite onset of the 1905 revolution is debated among historians of different branches, but generally, it is considered that the unrest began after Bloody Sunday (detailed explanation in section 2.3.1) in January 1905. At that point in time, the disastrous Russo-Japanese War along with the replacement of the recently assassinated “hard-line” Minister of Internal Affairs, Viacheslav von Pleve, prompted Russian liberals to launch their campaign for political reform, which united Liberals and the urban population as well as the provincial peasantry.

### 2.3.1. Bloody Sunday, January 1905

Organized by Orthodox Priest and head of the Assembly of Russian Factory and Mill Workers, Father Georgy Gapon, some 150,000 people gathered outside the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg on the morning of Sunday, January 22nd, 1905, to present a petition to their godly governor, Tsar Nicholas II.

Dressed in their best Sunday clothes, with women and children at the front of the demonstration, marchers carried icons, crosses, and pictures of the Tsar, calling him their

“little father”, and sang hymns as if in a religious procession. Their petition, inspired by the Union of Liberation, asked for the working day to be cut to eight hours, for the right to strike, for universal suffrage, and for the election of a constituent assembly. Besides the people’s efforts, the procession never reached the Winter Palace, and even if they had reached the Imperial residence, they wouldn’t have found the Tsar, as he had gone to the country earlier, not thinking much of the protest.

Meanwhile, the Tsar’s ministers decided to block the march short of the Palace. Thousands of troops were stationed at key points, although there was not expected to be any need for force. Nonetheless, when the



marchers appeared on the horizon, while some soldiers fired warning shots into the air, some fired straight into the packed crowds. At the Narva Gate, forty people were shot dead, and the horrified leading Priest proclaimed: ‘There is no God anymore, there is no Tsar’. Further, at the Troitsky Bridge, the people were slashed to death with sabers by the Cossack cavalry, and on the Nevsky Prospect cannons were used against the crowd. Bloody Sunday’s total death toll is put at around 200 with more than 800 wounded.

The actions taken by Nicholas II government officials would prove to be fatal to the Russian autocracy, as the former support yielded by Nicholas from the population, mostly due to his godly claim to the Russian throne, and influence on the Orthodox church, soon turned into hatred and mistrust due to his new-found murderous reputation.

### 2.3.2. Political Concessions: The October Manifesto of 1905

On October 30, 1905, Tsar Nicholas II signed the October Manifesto, known in Russia as the Manifesto “On the State Order and Perfection”, granting certain freedoms to the Russian people. The document was the first victory of the Russian Revolution and was written by Alexis Obolensky under the guidance of Sergei Witte. Nevertheless, while some considered the Manifesto the first step to restrain the Russian autocratic government, some believe that the fundamentals of the autocracy were unphased by the fact.

The Manifesto proclaimed a “stable basis of civil freedom on the basis of personal immunity, liberty of conscience, freedom of speech, of assembly, of unions”. Further, steps towards a constitutional monarchy were being taken, with the creation of this committee, the Imperial State Duma, to work along with the State Council in a three-chamber system. Further, the Manifesto disclosed the creation of The Council of Ministers, the most powerful of the three chambers, being a government body composed of Nicholas's most trusted advisors. The document closed by appealing “to all faithful sons of Russia to help to stop an unheard-of revolt” and together with the Tsar “strain every nerve in order to reestablish the silence and peace in the motherland”.

As a direct effect of the issuing of the Manifesto legal political parties started to form, as well as trade unions and other social organizations. Most importantly though, legal opposition forms of press started to emerge in Russia in the early 1900s. Those who adopted a liberal-driven stance on the evolution of the Russian political system viewed the issuing of the document as a victory, and henceforth formed two political parties, the first one composed



of the Liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie, The Constitutional Democrats, popularly known as the Kadets, and the party of the officials, landowners and big bourgeoisie, The Union of October 17, or the Octobersits.

Nonetheless, the million-people mass of peasants and urban workers along with leftist parties such as the Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, and the Socialist Revolutionaries, continued to be unsatisfied with the political, social, and economic situation in the Empire, building up to the October Revolution of 1917. Herein, the October Manifesto succeeded in dividing the opposition that had mobilized the 1905 uprisings, making Nicholas' monopoly of power more secure.

### 2.3.3. Political Concessions: The Fundamental Laws of 1906

The Fundamental Laws of 1906, also known as the Constitution of 1906, was a set of laws promulgated by Tsar Nicholas II to carry out the governmental reforms promised in the October Manifesto, but at the same time asserted further the Tsar's ultimate powers over the Duma. Proclaiming that Nicholas II had the:

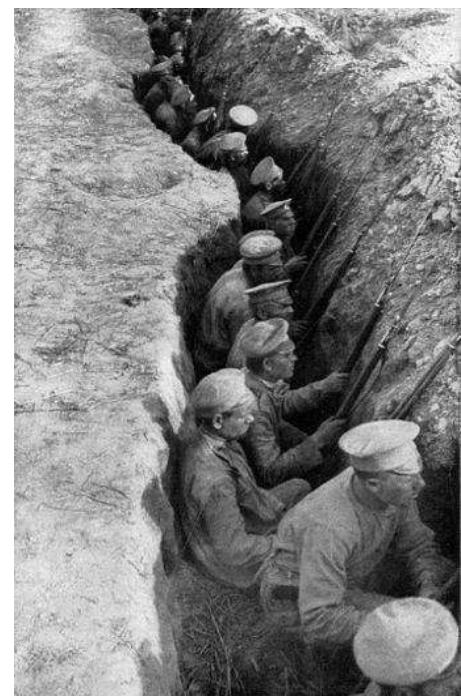
- a. Right to rule independently of the Duma when not in session;
- b. Right to dissolve the Duma at any point;
- c. Power to change the electoral system
- d. Power to appoint the ministers he deemed appropriate to the Council of Ministers
- e. Sole command of the army and navy (giving the Tsar the power to crush any uprisings)

With the creation of these laws, supposedly aimed at reinforcing the October Manifesto, the Tsar ultimately regained his position as supreme leader of All Russias.

## 2.4. RUSSIAN ENTRY IN WORLD WAR I (1914-1916)

The Russian Empire's entry into the Great War unfolded gradually, eventually leading up to the Empire's definite entry on July 28, 1914. However, in 1914, Russia was hardly prepared for a conflict that scale. Just nine years earlier, Russia was defeated in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), and further, the Revolution of 1905 had also shaken the domestic stability of the country.

In an Empire with half-done reforms and rebuilding itself after a period of revolts and uprisings, national unity could only be achieved with victory on the Eastern front, in that regard the Russian's hopes were crushed early on in the conflict. As casualties built up in 1914 and 1915, besides the advancements in the Eastern front in 1916, the country's political and economic problems grew more prominent by the minute. Many factors, such as the militarization of industry, but most importantly the ever-growing crisis in food supply



gravely threatened disaster on the home front. Added to this deadly concoction were the rumours that the Tsarina, Alexandra Ferodovna (néé Princess Alix of Hesse and by Rhine, who was of German origin), and the infamous unofficial royal healer, Grigori Rasputin were German spies and involved in a extra-marital affair. The rumours, though unfounded, caused increased speculation over the failures of the military, with influential critics of the regime by November 1916 asking whether Russia's misfortunes – including the 1,700,000 death toll and 5,000,000 wounded – were a consequence of “stupidity or treason”. The outdated military strategies of the Russian command had cost hundreds of thousands of casualties, while the head of government seemed careless of such appalling losses.

Furthermore, conscriptions among the common folk of the Empire were routine. That, along with the exponentially increasing number of casualties in the front, food shortages, and mass army desertions, created a rising popularity issue for the monarchy, especially among the poorer sectors of the population.

## 2.5. THE FEBRUARY REVOLUTION

The demise of Tsar Nicholas II's rule began in February 1917, after almost three years of total war and more than two decades of the folk's widespread dissatisfaction with the tsarist regime. Similarly to the Russian Revolution of 1905, the February Revolution began spontaneously, as a popular revolt rather than an organized insurrection. At the nucleus of the uprising were food as well as fuel shortages. The Russian people had begun suffering from food scarcity just a few months after Russian entry into WWI. The war had increased food demand, but production had fallen significantly, as conscriptions had dragged most of the manpower of the countryside off to war, prompting the government to authorize grain requisitioning in 31 different provinces. Hence, by 1916 riots in the streets of St. Petersburg and Moscow were routinely, as the crisis worsened incessantly.

By winter-time of 1916-1917, these shortages had become deadly: Severe weather cut railway connections between the motherland and the front, though this deficiency in supply was most keenly felt in the cities. Food shortages, not unknown by Russians even at the most prosperous of times, became endemic in early 1917. Government ministers



responded to the crisis of early February by rationing bread, triggering an increase in unrest, protests, looting, and striking. The sheer nature of the situation should have caused great concern for the Tsarina, who, with Nicholas away at the front, effectively controlled the Russian government. However, Alexandra was quick to dismiss the demonstrations as “a hooligan movement”, even writing to her husband that “if the weather was cold they would probably stay at home”. This calamitous lack of judgment would prove to be fatal to the whole establishment of the Russian Empire.

For days on end, the Tsar ignored panicked and distraught messages and reports, pleading for his return to the capital. Unphased, Nicholas responded as he often did: by ordering the Petrograd garrison into the streets to enforce order. At the same time, the State Duma, with its growing anti-tsar belligerence and confidence, insisted on the replacement of government ministers. Mikhail Rodzianko, the Chairman of the Duma, telegrammed the Emperor and informed him that “there is anarchy in the capital. The government is paralyzed. It is necessary immediately to entrust a person who enjoys the confidence of the country with the formation of the government. Any delay is death”. Irritated with what he considered to be an overreaction from Rodzianko, the Tsar made his last fatal mistake: he ordered the dissolution of the Duma. However, unlike its previous iterations, the house refused. This time, not only did it continue meeting, it also formed a provisional committee of 12 men responsible for formulating plans for a provisional government. On the same day, the 28th of February, the Petrograd Soviet, which first met in the turmoil of 1905, decided to reform. Assembled mostly of Mensheviks and members of the SRs, the Petrograd Soviet pledged to represent the interests of the lower classes. In late February 1917, Russia had two main political entities: one unelected but given authority by the Duma and another with no official authority but fiercely backed by the working masses.

Nonetheless, the importance of both the Duma and the Petrograd Soviet were overpowered by the Russian Imperial Army. That is, if the army had decided to obey the Tsar's orders, the February Revolution would be crushed. However, few soldiers intended to carry out the Tsars' command in February 1917. Garrison battalions sent to deal with rioters did effectively nothing, some even dismounted or broke ranks and joined the demonstrators they had been ordered to shoot, with some soldiers even shooting their commanding officers instead.

Finally, Nicholas II boarded a train back to St Petersburg, however, his journey was stalled by breakdowns in the railway infrastructure, with the Tsar's train being delayed in



Pskov, near the Estonian border. On March 2nd, the restless Duma sent a delegation to meet the Tsar in his railway car, which insisted on nothing less than Nicholas II's abdication. Though still reluctant and clinging to the idea that the Romanov dynasty could still be saved by force, eventually Nicholas relented and signed the abdication letter, surrendering his autocratic leadership to his brother Michael. Michael however, refused the crown unless an elected constituent assembly directly offered it to him. The throne of all Russia was therefore empty and with the stroke of a pen, Tsar Nicholas II signed away more than three centuries of Romanov rule in Russia while stranded in a carriage of his own royal train in Pskov.

### **3. CURRENT SITUATION**

#### **3.1. DVOYEVLASTIYE**

Dvoyevlastiye, or Dual Power, refers to the power-sharing of the two unofficial governments as a result of the February Revolution. In September 1917, the power of the Provisional Government was challenged by the authority of the Petrograd Soviet Council of Workers, claiming to represent the will of the Russian people, which could in fact mobilize and effectively control the mass of workers during the early period of the uprising. The term Dvoyevlastiye first appeared in an article in the Pravda by the communist Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin entitled “The Dual Power”. In the text, Lenin argued that this essentially unstable situation formed an unique opportunity for the Soviets, more specifically the Bolsheviks to seize power, by smashing the weak Provisional Government and establishing themselves as the basis of a new form of state power.

The Provisional Government was composed of members of the State Duma with the approval of the Petrograd Soviet, whereas the Petrograd Soviet was made up of socialist leaders elected by a constituency. Therefore, at this point in time there was much confusion on how both could coexist peacefully and govern Russia effectively. Amidst the confusion of mid-1917, the Russian Provisional Government realized that the Petrograd Soviet had the masses trust and support, hence, in the hopes of appeasing the council and keeping popular support, the Provisional Government launched a number of bold liberal acts and measures. Furthermore, the Provisional Government was aware of the illegitimacy of their power, and therefore, started to establish a Constituent Assembly.

Additionally, shortly after the February Revolution, Lenin published his April Theses, where he clearly expressed his discontent with the February Revolution, as he described it as a “Bourgeois Revolution” and promoted the slogan “All power to the Soviets”. Further, in the

publication, Lenin also mentioned the necessity of a Proletarian Revolution and proclaimed he had no interest in cooperating with the Provisional Government or other soviet leaders who were willing to compromise to it. Not satisfied with criticizing the Provisional Government, Lenin criticized the lack of commitment to the pure socialist ideas and proletarian revolution from a number of his counterparts. However, other soviet leaders were skeptical of these ideals, due to its inherently radical nature.

### 3.2. ALL POWER TO THE SOVIETS: ECONOMIC & SOCIAL SCENARIO

Under the leadership of Alexander Kerensky, the Provisional Government faced a number of challenges, such as the heavy military losses, the increasing demoralization of soldiers, who quickly started to desert, protests for the end of the war effort, and the food and supplies shortages, which were aggravated by the wartime economic conditions. These factors quickly bred the scenario in Russia for the revolution to come, with the people enunciating “All power to the Soviets” as October approached.

Increasing popular dissatisfaction with the Provisional Government had turned the masses to more radical parties, especially the Bolshevik Party. In the aftermath of repeated offenses on the German front, the July Days confirmed the anti-war sentiments of the masses as well as popular support for the more radical Bolsheviks, though their unpreparedness at the moment of the attempted take-over ended in a gaffe, which lost the party valuable support from both workers and soldiers. Nonetheless the failure of July Days did prove to be temporary. The growth of the membership of the Bolshevik party was nothing short of spectacular. While in February 1917 the party counted with only 24,000 members, by September the faction had 200,000 members.

In early September, the Petrograd Soviet freed arrested Bolsheviks, making Trotsky the chairman of the organization. As the lower sectors of the Russian population were

convinced of the disinterest of the Provisional Government in meeting their needs, the Bolsheviks benefited as the only major organization in Russian politics to directly oppose and refuse to support the Provisional Government.

Further, the Provisional Government had had very limited success in dealing with the economic crisis inherited from Nicholas II's governmental policies. These challenges encompassed the short supply of food, fuel shortages, that proved to be deadly during the winter, and the lack of security for grain and ammunition in the front. Additionally, the Provisional Government had failed to solve the land issue in the Russian countryside, and the peasants' wishes for control of the land were not met. This resulted in constant and widespread seizures of land from landlords in the Russian countryside.

Hence, the social issues faced by Kerensky's government, as well as the Provisional Government's failure in dealing with the economic crisis in Russia, will play a central role in the discussions played out in the State Duma, with Bolsheviks holding most of the popular support while the government struggles to mediate the power of the Petrograd Soviet.

### 3.3. INDIVIDUAL DEPUTY'S POLITICAL STANCE

#### 3.3.1. Alexander Ivanovich Guchkov



Alexander Guchkov served as the leader of the Octobrist Party in the midst of the 1905 Revolution. Guchkov generally held a moderate political position, arguing in favour of constitutional reform both prior and during the Great War. Born into a wealthy family, Guchkov fought during the Second Boer War (1899-1902), and experienced the Russo-Japanese (1904-1905) war first hand. After the

1905 revolution, Alexander Guchkov was central in establishing the middle ground Octobrist party, which was dedicated to making sure that the Tsar enacted the rules stated by the October Manifesto. Overall, Alexander Guchkov would have held a moderately conservative position, in favour of the establishment of a constitutional monarchy rather than a republic, and highly opposing a socialist takeover. Regarding WWI, Guchkov, would have been for the staying of the Russian army in the conflict.

### 3.3.2. Alexander Fyodorovich Kerensky



As the leader of the Trudovik faction of the Socialist Revolutionary (SRs) Party, Alexander Kerensky held a moderate left ideological position. When the February Revolution broke, Alexander Kerensky was one of its most prominent leaders, being a member of the Duma as well as being elected vice-chairman of the Petrograd Soviet. Simultaneously, Kerensky was also acting as the Minister of

Justice of the Provisional Government, and later was appointed Minister of War. Hence, Kerensky was an extremely important figure for the time of this debate, acting as one of the leading figures of both the Petrograd Soviet as well as of the Provisional Government. His ideas would surround moderate socialist ideas, contrasting with the radicalism of some Bolsheviks and rightist ideals, also defending Russian stay in World War I

### 3.3.3. Boris Viktorovich Savinkov



Boris Savinkov was a revolutionary, as well as a writer, associated with the Socialist Revolutionaries, particularly the SRs Combat Organization, being involved in the murder of several high ranking imperial officials between 1904 and 1905. After returning to Russia in 1917 after fleeing to France in 1908, Savinkov was appointed Deputy Minister of War until August 1917. Savinkov was a known anti-Bolshevik politician besides his terrorist approach to

socialism. In late August 1917, Savinkov had to resign from his post as Deputy Minister of War and was expelled from the SRs due to his involvement in the Kornilov Affair. Therefore, although a prominent member of the left-wing movement, particularly the terrorist arm of the SRS, in Russia, Savinkov held an anti-Bolshevik stance, also having a controversial role in the supposed betrayal of his fellow party member, Kerensky.

### 3.3.4. Fyodor Ilych Dan



Fyodor Dan was born in St. Petersburg in 1871, and as a young man he joined the Union of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class, and in August 1896 he was arrested and sent to exile in Orlov Kirov Oblast for three years. Upon his release from exile, Dan joined the Social Democratic Labour Party. When the party split, Fyodor Dan sided with Martov in the Menshevik Party, arguing for a more moderate approach to revolution. After

he came back to Russia in 1913, Fyodor Dan was the editor for a number of Menshevik

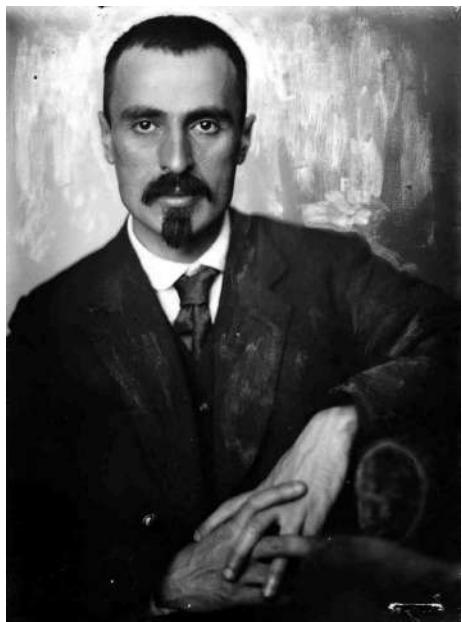
periodicals, though he was arrested again in 1915 during the outbreak of WWI, only returning from exile after the February revolution. During the period between revolutions, Dan was a vocal critic of the Bolsheviks mainly for his views on the continuation of the war effort against the Central Powers.

### 3.3.5. Gregory Yevseyevich Zinoviev



Grigory Zinoviev was a prominent member of the Bolshevik Party and a loyal follower of Lenin. When the Social Democratic Party split, Zinoviev sided with Lenin, taking a more radical approach to revolution, even campaigning against Mensheviks in St. Petersburg during the 1905 Revolution. After the overthrow of Nicholas II, Zinoviev returned from exile to Russia to plot against the Provisional Government and was made editor of the *Pravda*. Even though Lenin and Zinoviev seemingly agreed on almost all aspects, they did disagree regarding their approach to the October revolution. Hence, Zinoviev's position in the debate will mostly follow a traditional Bolshevik line of thinking, embracing a more radical approach to Marxism, but also going against Lenin's "rushed" approach to the October Revolution.

### 3.3.6. Irakli Tsereteli



Born in Georgia in 1881, Irakli Tsereteli was a revolutionary during the Russian Revolution associated with the Mensheviks. After being released from five years of exile in Siberia, Tsereteli joined the SDLP in 1903, after the split in the party he eventually joined the Menshevik faction. Irakli Tsereteli then became the editor of the pro-Menshevik "*Kvali*" while living in exile in Germany. He returned to Russia during the 1905 Revolution, when he was elected for the second iteration of the Duma and became one of the main figures among the Mensheviks. When the Duma was dissolved in 1907 however, Tsereteli was sent into exile again in Siberia, where he remained until the February Revolution. During the transitional period in Russia, Tsereteli was an important member of the Provisional government, and supported Russia's stay in WWI.

### 3.3.7. Julius Osipovich Martov



Born in Istanbul, Julius Martov was a committed political activist and communist revolutionary. An old partner of Lenin, Martov was sent into exile along with the Bolshevik leader and soon joined the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. In 1903 disagreements with Lenin caused the split of the RSDLP into two factions, Lenin's Bolsheviks and Martov's Mensheviks. The split was officialized in 1907. Hence, along with Plekhanov, Martov was one of the key Menshevik

leaders. As the leader of the political faction, Martov edited the Menshevik publication, Iskra, where he openly criticized Vladimir Lenin and bolshevism. After the February Revolution, Martov was not able to stop Menshevik entrance into the Provisional Government, which he criticized due to their stance on the war effort. In the debate, Martov's stance would be directed to anti-Bolshevik socialism, advocating for a less abrupt transition into communism and defending Russia's retreat from WWI.

### 3.3.8. Lavr Georgiyevich Kornilov



Lavr Kornilov was a general in the Imperial Russian Army in World War I and became infamous for his attempt to perform a coup d'etat amidst political tensions in 1917. His military achievements between 1914 and 1917 granted Kornilov a rapid ascent under Kerensky's Provisional Government. Kornilov held a "strongman" reputation, further enforced by his orders to fire on demonstrators protesting the government's war policies in Petrograd as well as unsanctioned application of capital punishments to fleeing soldiers. Hence, Kornilov's position in such a debate would be composed of a militarist take on the political scenario, slightly tipping towards more fascist and authoritarian ideals, going fiercely against left wing ideas in the Duma, besides his association with SRs's Alexander Kerensky's government.

### 3.3.9. Leon Trotsky



At first associated with the Mensheviks, Leon Trotsky, born Lev Davidovich Bronstein, was a key figure in the Bolshevik seizure of power in Russia. In 1903, while abroad, Trotsky, then a member of the RSDLP, associated himself with the Mensheviks, and developed his own theory of ‘permanent revolution’. After the outbreak of the February Revolution, he returned to Russia, joining Lenin’s Bolshevik party, where he played a decisive role in the consolidation of Bolshevik power as the leader of the Red Army. Due to his role in keeping Bolshevik power amidst Civil war and overall instabilities, Trotsky saw himself as heir-apparent to Lenin, but his self-assurance and intellectual arrogance did not make him popular among fellow party members, therefore when Lenin fell ill and died in 1924, Trotsky was outmaneuvered by Joseph Stalin. In 1927 he was thrown out of the party and sent into exile, though Trotsky continued to write and criticize Stalin. Trotsky died in Mexico, where he had settled in 1936, in 1940, murdered under Stalin’s orders. Hence, Trotsky’s position would be characterized by an intellectually driven self-assurance and arrogance, evidencing his very own branch of Marxism, Trotskyism-Marxism.

### 3.3.10. Lev Borisovich Kamenev



Lev Kamenev, born Lev Rosenfeld, was a prominent Bolshevik revolutionary and Soviet politician. Kamenev was a founding member and chairman of the Politburo. An early joiner of the Bolshevik party, Kamenev met Lenin while living in exile in 1902, later in mid-1908, Kamenev and Grigori Zinoviev became Lenin's main assistants abroad, helping the Bolshevik leader expel Bogdanov and his Otzovist followers from the faction in 1909. In January 1914, Kamenev was sent back to St. Petersburg to direct the work of the Pravda and the Bolshevik faction of the Duma. In 1917, Zinoviev and Kamenev had a fallout with Lenin over the Bolshevik seizure of power, being the only two Central Committee members to vote against the armed revolt. Therefore, Kamenev's stance in September 1917, would be one of support for Lenin, along with Zinoviev, but opposed to the rapidness of the armed October Revolution.

### 3.3.11. Maria Hryhorivna Nikiforova



Maria Nikiforova was a Ukrainian anarchist and guerilla fighter who fought with the Revolutionary Insurrection Army of Ukraine. Nikiforova was a self proclaimed terrorist from the age of 16, and was imprisoned for her revolutionary activities in the Russian Empire before escaping to Western Europe. During WWI she joined the French Foreign Legion on the Macedonian Front, before returning to Ukraine during the February Revolution. In

Oleksandriivsk, she established an anarchist combat detachment, and attacked the forces of the Russian Provisional Government. Hence, during this debate, Maria Nikiforova would advocate for counter-revolution, particularly focusing on the independence of the Russian Empire's territories, such as Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, etc, going against both the left and right leaning deputies in the debate.

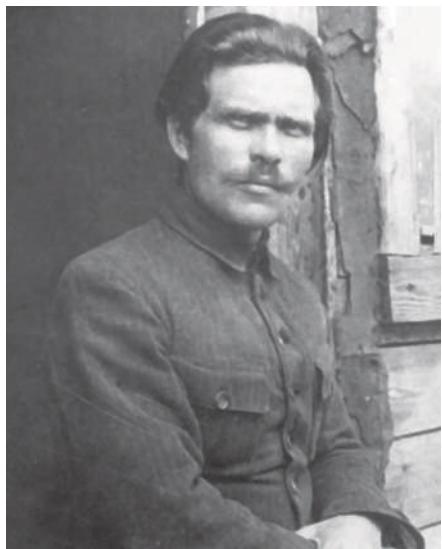
### 3.3.12. Mikhail Ivanovich Tereschenko



Mikhail Tereshchenko was elected to the Duma as a representative of the Russian Progressive Party in 1912. During WWI, Tereshchenko became the Chairman of the Military Industry Committee and gave high praise to the government in the years shortly before the February Revolution. In the provisional government, Tereshchenko was appointed Finance Minister. After Milyukov's forced resignation, Tereshchenko became Foreign Affairs

Minister, continuing Russia's military campaign in the War. Therefore, Tereshchenko held a conservative approach to Russia's government, sustaining the country's stay in WWI. Additionally, to some extent, the conservative wing of Russian politics even desired an authoritarian solution to the revolutionary crisis all over Russia.

### 3.3.13. Nestor Ivanovich Makhno



Born in Ukraine, Nestor Makno, popularly known as “Father Makhno”, was an anarchist revolutionary and the commander of the Revolutionary Insurrectionary Army of Ukraine from 1917 to 1921. The Revolutionary Insurrectionary Army of Ukraine, commonly referred to as the Makhno Movement (Makhnovshchina), was a predominantly peasant phenomenon that grew into a mass social movement. Makhno was an anarcho-communist, aggressively opposing all political factions that sought to impose their authority over Ukraine, especially during the Civil War. Along with his supporters, Makhno attempted to reorganize social and economic life along with anarchist ideologies. Hence, Maknho did not affiliate himself with either of the political factions in the Duma, aiming to destroy all forms of government according to his anarchist views.

### 3.3.14. Pavel Nikolaevich Krupensky



Pavel Krupensky was a conservative Russian politician, notably one of the leaders of the All-Russian National Union and a member of the second, third and fourth iterations of the Duma. Krupensky came from a lineage of hereditary nobles of the Bessarabia province, and later became its provincial governor. After retirement, Krupensky was part of the Tsar's court under the rank of chamberlain. He was a hardline monarchist in the Duma, being a foreman of the Club of Moderate and Right-Wing Parties and

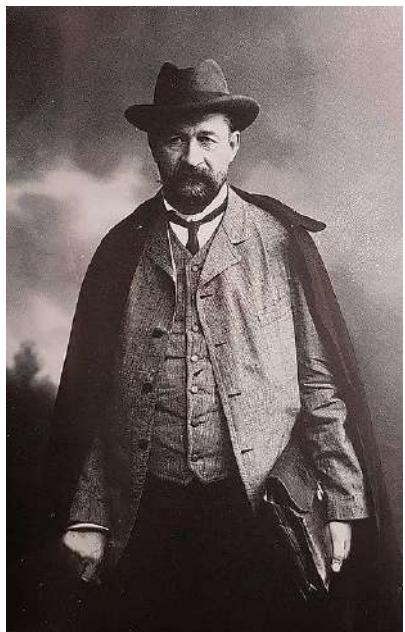
founder and chairman of the Center-right bloc that counted with the participation of Octrobrists and Nationalists alike. After the fall of the tsarist government in February, Krupensky was discovered to be a paid agent for the Police Department. Until the end of his life, Krupensky continued to be an advocate for monarchism while in exile in Paris. Hence, Krupensky would be a very vocal and influential figure within the right-wing faction of the Duma, advocating for the reestablishment of the monarchist regime.

### 3.3.15. Pavel Nikolaevich Milyukov



Leader of the Kadet Party, Pavel Milyukov was born into a noble family and soon became a leading member of the Constitutional Democratic Party in the fourth and third iteration of the Imperial State Duma. Until March 1917, Milyukov was the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Provisional Government, working tirelessly to prevent Russia's exit from World War I. At first drawn to moderate socialist camps aiming to promote an united political front through the union movement, he became increasingly disillusioned with the growing radicalism of the unions and revolutionary socialist parties. From March 1907 to May 1918, Milyukov was the Chairman of the Central Committee. Aside from his political career, Pavel Milyukov was one of Late Imperial Russia's most widely read historians and principal theorist of liberalism in Russia, authoring some sixteen books and hundreds of articles. Widely anti-Bolshevik, Milyukov held a conservative stance regarding politics, defending a highly liberal-driven ideology.

### 3.3.16. Prince Georgy Evgenevich Lvov



Prince Georgy Lvov was a prominent Kadet political leader during the years of the Russian Revolution. Lvov was the first leader of the Provisional Government, from March 1917 until he relinquished control to Alexander Kerensky in July 1917. During the Romanov rule, Lvov served as Minister of the Interior and was a member of the Duma from its first iteration. As head of the All-Russian Union of Zemstvos and later chairman of the Zemgor, Lvov held a moderate political position, with a background as a liberal monarchist, advocating for the protection of rural and urban interests. Later, as revolution approached, Lvov believed that unless Nicholas II abdicated Russia would lose WWI, propelling the new Provisional Government. Herein, Lvov's position would not be aligned with socialism or monarchism, but a moderate middle ground with a special attention to rural interests.

### 3.3.17. Viktor Mikhailevich Chernov



Viktor Chernov was the founder of the Socialist Revolutionary Party (SRs). He was an advocate for land reform and, in the SRs' newspaper, Revolutionary Russia, he argued against the Marxists who claimed that the peasants were a totally reactionary class. George Buchanan said once: "Chernov was a man of strong character and considerable ability. He belonged to the advanced wing of the SR party and advocated the immediate nationalization

of the land and the division among the peasants awaiting the decision of the Consistent

Assembly. He was generally regarded as dangerous and untrustworthy". After living in exile, Chernov returned to Russia during the 1905 Revolution, being appointed Minister of Agriculture of the Provisional Government. Chernov was vehemently opposed to the Bolsheviks' radicalism. Hence, Viktor Chernov's stance in the committee would be mostly based on agricultural reform as well as opposition to radical marxist thinking.

### 3.3.18. Vladimir Lenin



Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, later known as Vladimir Lenin was arguably the most important figure of the Russian Revolution. As a leading political figure, and revolutionary thinker of the 20th Century, he was exposed to radical thinking early in life through his elder brother, who was executed for being a member of a revolutionary group. Like many of his contemporaries, Lenin was sent into exile in Siberia, where he married and adopted the pseudonym Lenin.

He spent most of the subsequent years in Western Europe, where he emerged as a prominent revolutionary and leader of the Bolshevik faction of the RSDLP. In 1905, Bloody Sunday sparked even more civil unrest in the Russian Empire, hence, Lenin urged the Bolsheviks in St. Petersburg to take greater part in the Revolution of 1905, adopting philosophies of armed insurrection, mass terror and the expropriation of gentry land. Aided by the Germans, who had hoped he would undermine the Russian war-effort, Lenin returned to Russia in 1917. As soon as he returned, he started working against the Provisional Government. Later in October 1917, the Bolsheviks led the October Revolution, and the three years of Civil War that dawned in Russia soon showcased Lenin's disregard for the suffering of fellow countrymen,

mercilessly crushing any opposition. Herein, in a debate regarding the future of Russian politics, Lenin would avidly advocate for a prompt proletarian revolution, and achieve this goal through whatever means necessary. Further, in his views regarding Russian stay in WWI, Lenin proposed the country's immediate withdrawal from what he called the Tsar's imperialist war, regardless of the consequences of the fact for Russian diplomacy.

### 3.3.19. Vladimir Mitrofanovich Purishkevich



Born into a landowning family, Vladimir Purishkevich was a Russian political activist, writer and one of the main leaders of the Black Hundreds and chairman of the Mikhail Archangel Russian National Organization. In St. Petersburg, Purishkevich was appointed official of the Economic Department of the Ministry of Interior and the General Administration of Press. Later, he was also elected deputy of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th iterations of the Duma. Being a convicted monarchist, Purishkevich took an active part in far-right organizations, being a founding member of the Union of the Russian People, known as Black Hundreds, though after a fallout he left the Union to form the Mikhail Archangel Russian National Organization (RNSMA) with the financing of Tsarist circles, which later became one of the most prominent monarchist organizations in the nation. Therefore, Purishkevich, held a monarchist stand in the Duma, and stood actively against revolutionary trends in the country, further, Purishkevich was in favor of Russian stay in the Great War.

### 3.3.20. Vasily Vitalyevich Shulgin



Born in 1878 in Kyiv, Vasily Shulgin is often considered the “Grandfather” of the Russian nationalist movement also being recognised as the embodiment of monarchism and the White movement not only during Imperial Russia, but also in the Soviet Union. In the start of his career, Shulgin advocated for the spreading of Russian identity in ethnically diverse regions. Shulgin, due to his upbringing believed vehemently in the cult of ‘Russianness’, autocracy and orthodoxy. For him, the Revolution of 1905 was almost the breaking of a sacred vow that was taken at the Tsar’s coronation: to never abandon the principles of autocracy. When Nicholas II’s abdication was imminent, Shulgin was one of the few to try and save the country from a republic, aiming at securing the place of the autocracy in the Russian political landscape. In regards to the war, Shulgin believed that Russia should remain in the war effort.

## 4. GUIDING QUESTIONS

Guiding questions are prompts designed to assist deputies, explore key aspects of the topic at hand, and stimulate the flow of ideas. These questions serve as an offset for discussions to develop around in a deeper sense. However, deputies are not required to strictly follow the questions presented below and are free to develop the topic assigned according to their will, arguments, and perspectives.

*1. What should be the political and economic system in Russia?*

Deputies should discuss the most suitable political system (monarchy, democracy, etc.) and economic structure (capitalism, socialism, mixed economy) most suitable for Russia's stability and development. It is essential that deputies consider how each option could affect society, the economy, and class relations.

*2. What is the role of the government, and how should the power structures be set in post-Tsarist Russia?*

Deputies should outline how government authority should be distributed, such as whether Russia should have a centralized or federal government, and the extent of power held by the executive, legislative, and judiciary powers. Members of the Duma should address how this distribution could ensure effective governance while preventing autocracy.

*3. What should be the approach taken by the government regarding Russia's permanence in World War I?*

This section of the debate should encompass whether Russia should remain in or withdraw from the war, considering the war's toll on the population, economy, and military. Further, deputies should weigh potential consequences for national security, diplomatic alliances, and internal stability, as well as the impact each approach could have on domestic politics and revolutionary sentiments.

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