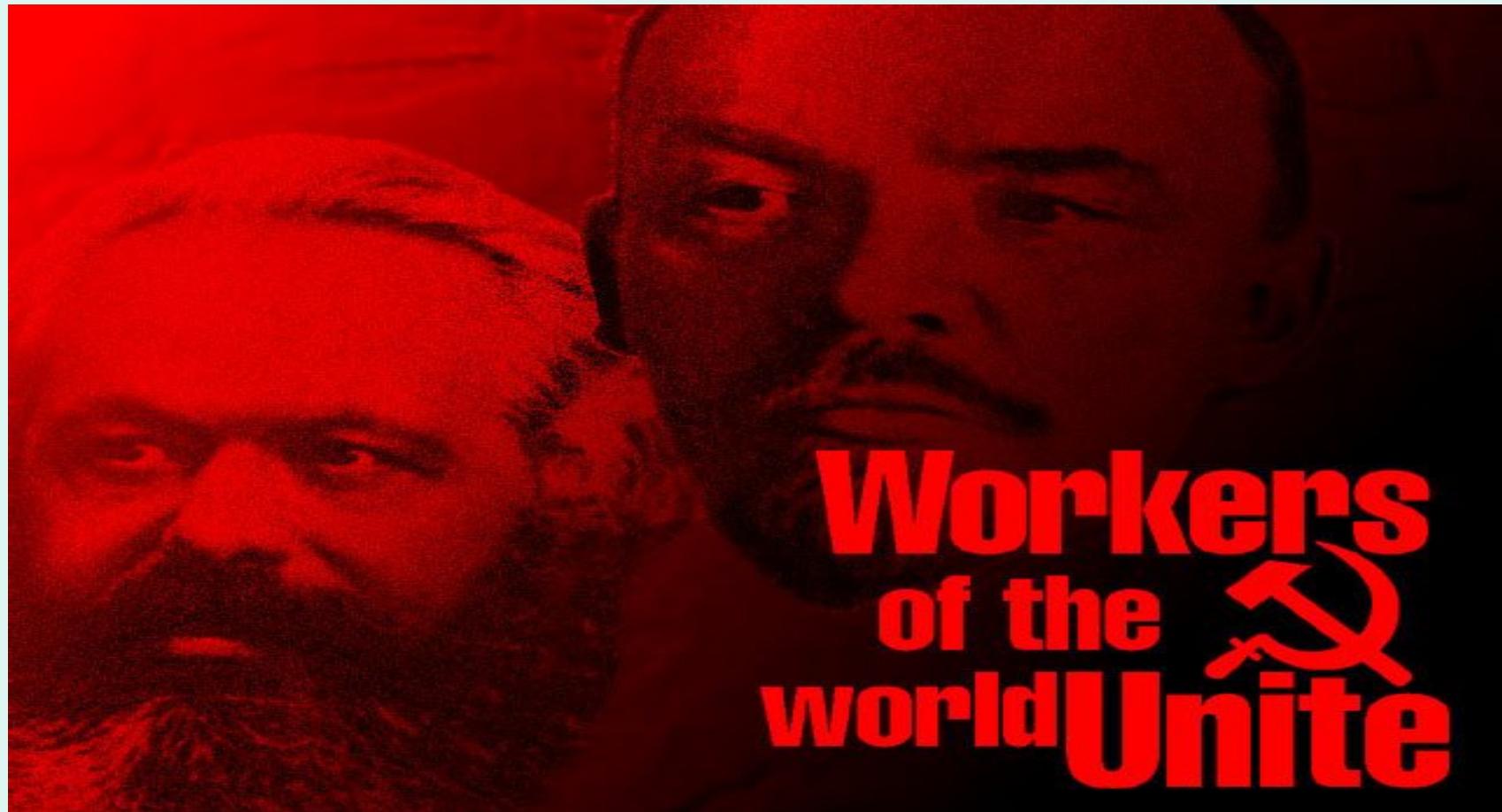


The Russian Revolution:

A short history and analysis of the
world's first communist state.



The collapse of the Romanov autocracy in March 1917 was one of the most leaderless, spontaneous, anonymous revolutions of all time. While almost every thoughtful observer in Russia in the winter of 1916-1917 foresaw the likelihood of the crash of the existing regime, no one, even among the revolutionary leaders, realized that the strikes and bread riots which broke out in Petrograd would culminate in the mutiny of the garrison and the overthrow of the government four days later.

— Neville Chamberlin

Three Themes in Russian History

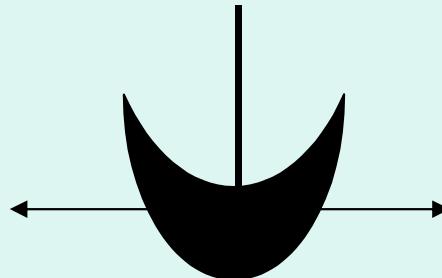
- ✳ The necessity of a strong, central government. Why?
- ✳ Struggle to embrace or scorn relations with West.
- ✳ Expansion by Conquest
 - ✳ Need for warm water ports

History of Russia timeline

- Volga Bulgaria 7th-13th c.
- Kievan Rus 9th-12th c.
- Novgorod Republic 12th -14th c.
- Mongol Invasion 1220-1240's
- Golden Horde 1240's -1480's
- Muscovy 1340-1547
- Khanate of Kazan 1438-1552
- Tsardom of Russia 1547-1721
- Russian Empire 1721-1917

Empire of the Czars

The Pendulum of Russian History



Pro-West
For Progress & Change
Encourage New Ideas,
Technologies, etc.

Anti-West
Isolationist
Xenophobic
Ultra-Conservative

- A few Tsars
- Intellectual elites
- Merchants/businessmen
- Young members of the middle class

REFORM-MINDED
LEADER

- Most Tsars
- Russian Orthodox Church
- Military
- Boyars
- peasants

DEMAGOGUE

Geography of Russia

- Early 1800s
 - 60 nationalities
 - 100 different languages
 - Slavs, Europeans, Middle Easterners, & Asiatic peoples
- A feudal agricultural economy (serfdom)
- Autocracy
 - Government in which one person rules with unlimited authority

Societal Composition in Russia

- Aristocracy
 - Landowners
 - Intellectuals
 - Urban Workers
 - » Peasants

Rule of Alexander I

- Ruled from 1801 – 1825
- Victory in Napoleonic Wars quelled all hopes of reform for lower classes
- After death, struggle for power ensued (Revolutionary Decembrist Revolt)

Rule of Nicholas I

- Ruled from 1825 – 1855
- Strengthened autocracy & suppressed all opposition
- Established secret police with unlimited power

Rule of Alexander II

(Czar Liberator)

- Ruled from 1855 – 1881
- Mid 1800s → Russia lacks industrialization
- March 3, 1861: Emancipation of serfs
 - Peasants granted 50-year mortgage
- Many peasants migrated to cities
- Local governments established (zemstvos)
 - Representative Council + Executive Board

Rule of Alexander II

(Czar Liberator)

- Reformed many aspects of society, yet still ruled as an autocratic
- Anarchists, Nihilists, & Populists called for an end of autocracy in Russia
- Revolutionaries used violence to spread message
- Assassinated in 1881

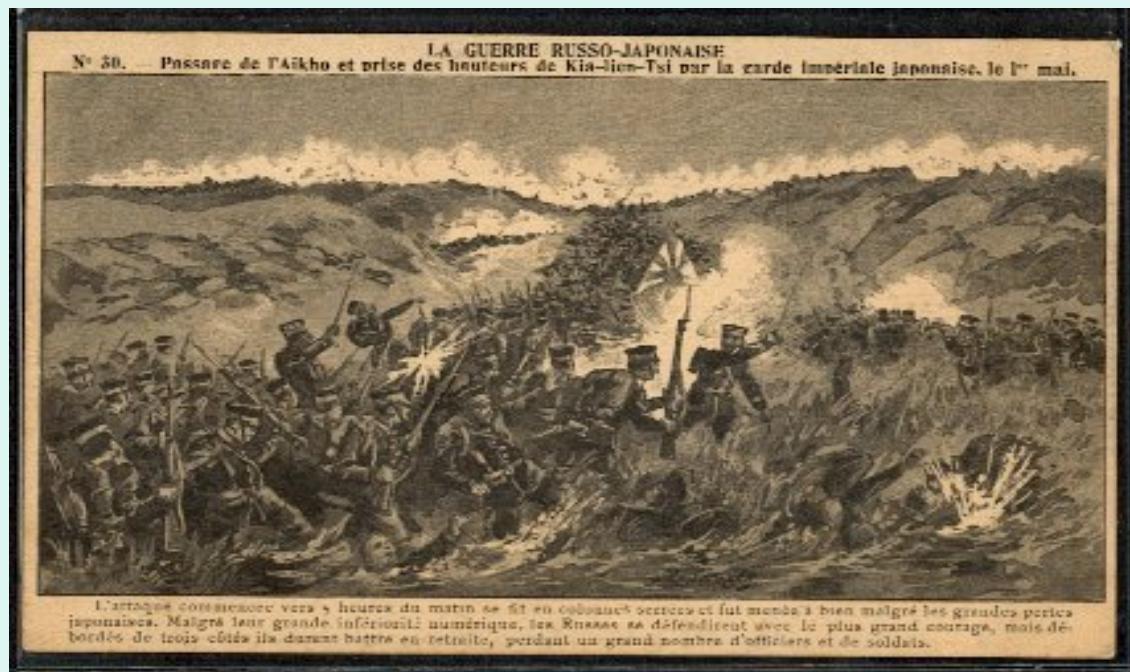
Rule of Alexander III

- Ruled from 1881 – 1894
- Son of Alexander II
- Used extremely oppressive force to maintain autocracy (encouraged genocide)
- Son Nicholas II adopted rule with autocratic Russia on the verge of collapse



Russia & Japan At War

- 1903 → Russia and Japan negotiate over claims to land in Korea and Manchuria
- 1904 → Russia & Japan go to war (Russo-Japanese War)

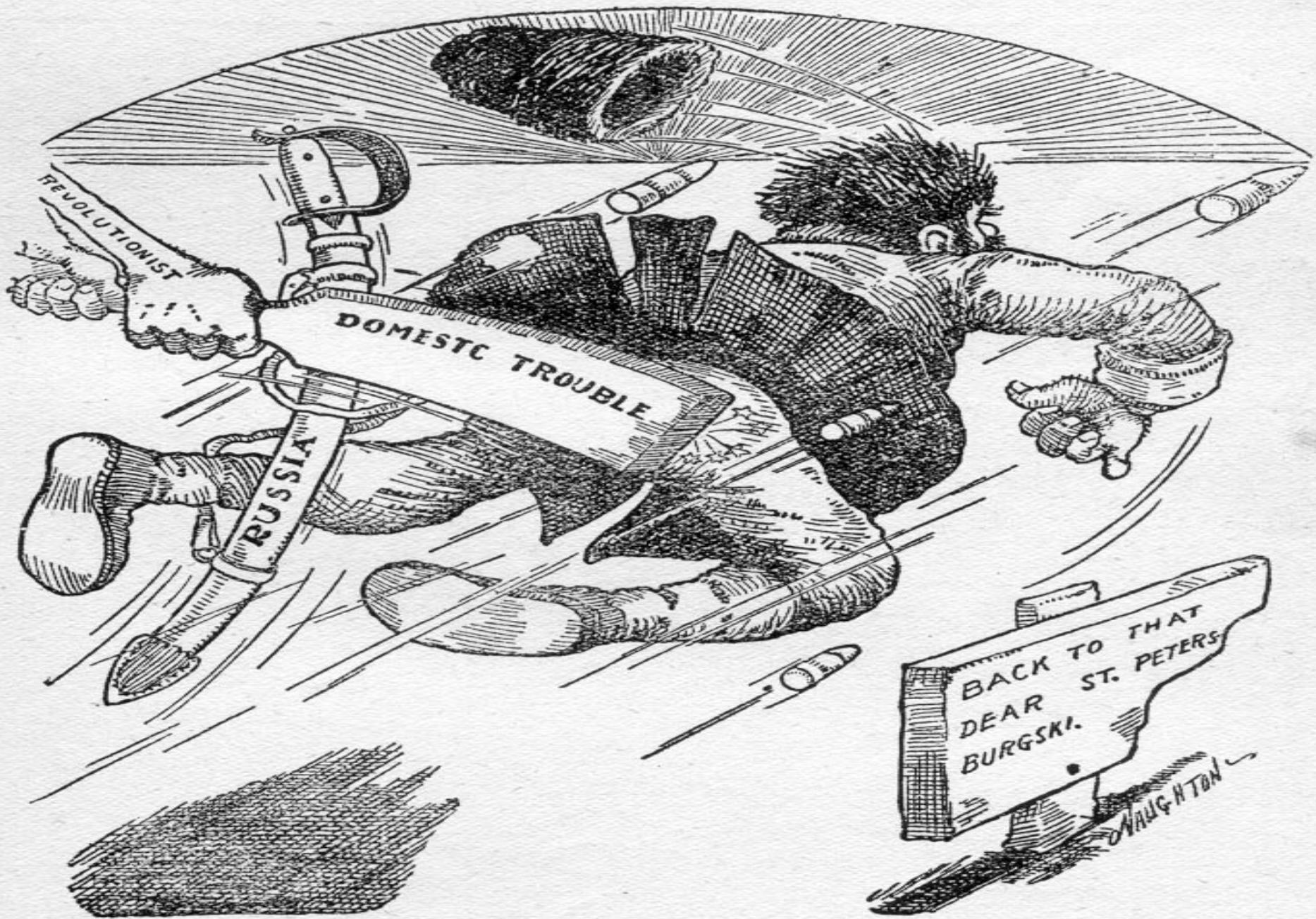


The War In Brief

- February 8, 1904 → Japanese surprise Russian Naval Fleet at Port Arthur
- Two days later Japan declares war
- Major Battles:
 - Land (Russian forces destroyed at Mukden)
 - Water (Battle of Tsushima → Russian Baltic Fleet destroyed in the Sea of Japan)
- Russia forced to abandon war practices

Treaty of Portsmouth

- Negotiated by Teddy Roosevelt in New Hampshire
- Japan gains:
 - “Predominance” in Korea
 - Lease of Port Arthur & Liatung Peninsula
 - Southern half of Sakhalin Island
- Historical significance → Never before in modern times had an Eastern nation defeated the West



**RUSSIA—“THIS ATTACK IN THE REAR, WITH MY TROUBLES AT THE FRONT,
IS PRETTY TOUGH.”**

While Russia was wildly rushing to the front in the Far East, the revolutionists were busy at home; and Finns and Poles also threatened to take advantage of her plight.

Drawn by C. F. Naughton, of the Minneapolis Tribune.

Significance of Japanese Victory in 1905

- Exposes a BAD internal Russian government:
 - Corrupt
 - Inefficient
 - Oppressive
- Russian citizens embarrassed, critical, and angry!

Growing Dissent

- Rapid industrialization led to growing number of urban working class
- Revolutionary mood encompassed Russia (Socialism based on Karl Marx):
 - Mensheviks → Sizable working class = socialist revolution
 - Bolsheviks → Revolutionary leaders could bring socialist revolution

Revolution of 1905

- “Bloody Sunday” → January 22, 1905
- Outside of Tsar Nicholas II’s Winter Palace in St. Petersburg, Father Gapon leads protest of working-class citizens calling for better pay and working conditions



Bloody Sunday

- Grand Duke Vladimir, chief of Security Police, ordered his troops to open fire on the unarmed, peaceful demonstrators (500 innocent individuals killed)
- Event takes place only 3 weeks after conclusion of Russo-Japanese War



Civilian Response

- Urban Workers & Peasants revolt
- Grand Duke Sergei assassinated by terrorist bomb
- Peasants seized land and livestock from landlords
- Army & Navy mutinied

Results of the Revolt

- Nicholas II promises to meet the needs of urban workers and peasants (October Manifesto)
- Drafts a constitution with regards to civil liberties
- Organized democratically elected *duma* (national assembly)
- Organized democratic election of a prime minister

January 1, 1906 → Final Revolts Crushed

- Human Costs:
 - 15,000 dead
 - 75,000 arrested
 - Countless displaced from homes

Results of 1905 Revolution

- Was Russia democratized? → NO
- Once order had been restored, the *duma* was dismissed and Nicholas II returned to autocratic rule
- Revolutionary/Socialist leaders leave Russia and seek safety abroad to escape persecution
- Stage set for future revolutions in Russia

On the eve of World War I, growing numbers of peasants, workers, national minorities, and middle-class reformers supported an immediate end to the autocracy. Their demands and the stress of war would soon bring revolution to the Russian Empire.

The Russian Revolution

1917 - 1921

Russia & World War I

- Military was ill-equipped & inefficient
- Losses:
 - 1.7 million soldiers dead
 - 5 million soldiers wounded
 - 2 million civilians dead
- Food supply within Russia scarce → soldiers & civilians starving

Spring 1917

- Demonstrations commemorate
 - Soldiers & peasants protest & revolt
- March 15, 1917
 - Czar Nicholas II abdicated (step down from rule),
 - Romanov dynasty over

The Provisional Government

- Established in 1917 with Alexander Kerensky as prime minister
- Unpopular with masses due to preoccupation with World War I
- Failed to deal with social reform
 - Life in Russia did not improve!



Response to Provisional Government

- Rival Power:
 - Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies
 - Mild Revolutionaries = Petrograd Soviets
 - Socialists = Mensheviks
 - Radical Socialists = *Bolsheviks*
- Gained wide support among the masses
- Called for peace, land reforms, & better working conditions

Lenin Biography

- Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov = V.I. Lenin
- Intelligent, radical, & passionate
- Middle-class background (studied law)
- After brothers execution by regime of Alexander III, he dedicated his life to radical revolution (Bolshevik)
- Exiled for beliefs



Тов. Ленин очищает
землю от нечисти.

Return of Lenin

- 1917 → Lenin returns to Russia (escorted by the Germans)
- Goals:
 - Organize Bolsheviks
 - Seize power from provisional government
- **“Peace, Land, and Bread”**

Bolsheviks Seize Power

- Effects of World War I worsen
- November 6, 1917
 - Bolsheviks overthrow provisional government
 - “Bloodless” coup d'état
- Kerensky → resigns; Lenin → assumes control
- Bolsheviks assume absolute power

From the War-Revolutionary Committee of the Petrograd
Soviet of Workmen and Soldiers Deputies.

To the Citizens of Russia:

The Provisional Government is deposed. The State power has passed into the hands of the organ of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the Military Revolutionary Committee, which stands at the head of the Petrograd proletariat and garrison.

The aims for which the people were fighting — immediate proposal of a democratic peace, abolition of landlord property-rights in the land, labor control over production, creation of a Soviet Government, — these aims have been achieved.

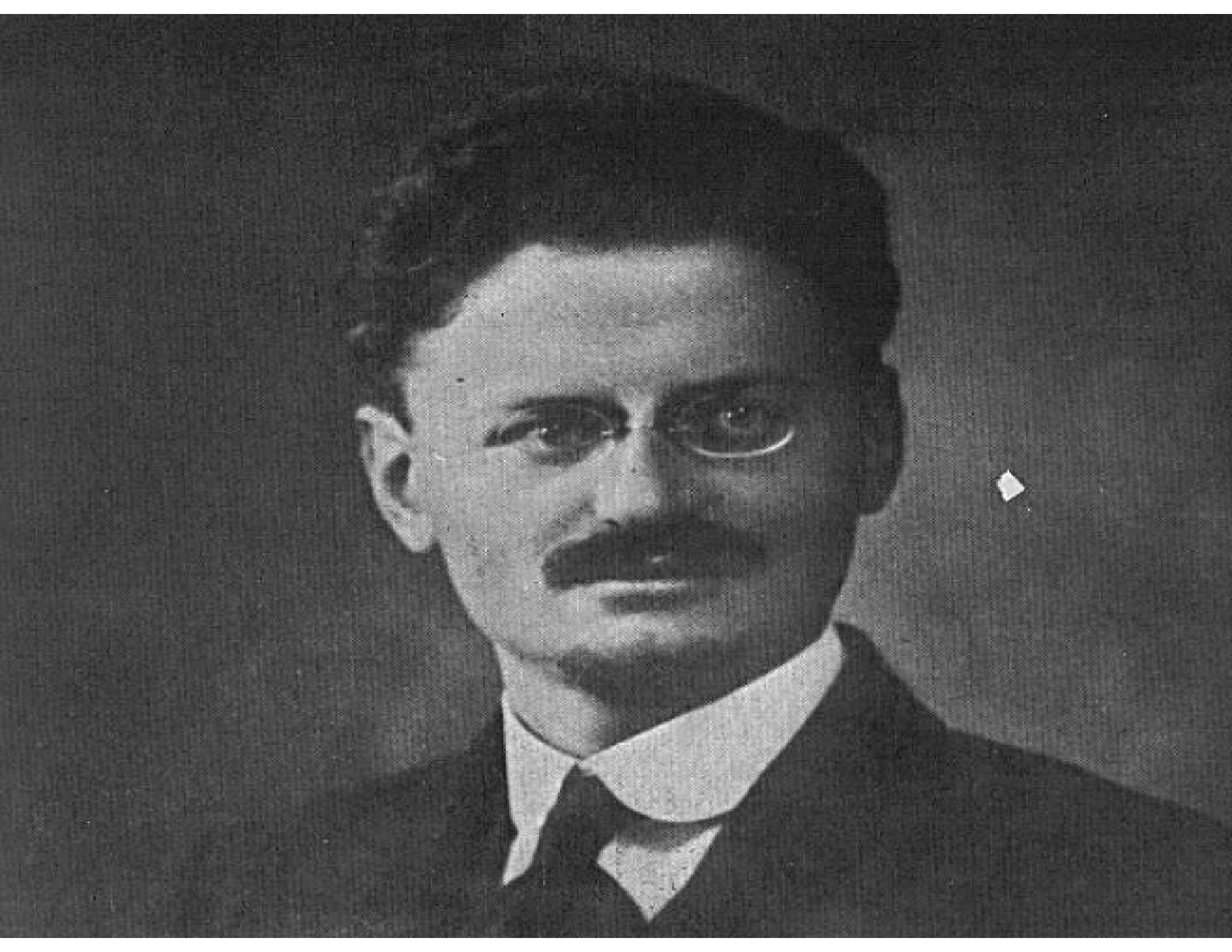
LONG LIVE THE REVOLUTION OF WORKMEN, SOLDIERS AND PEASANTS!

Military-Revolutionary Committee
of the Petrograd Soviet of
Workers and Soldiers' Deputies.

NOVEMBER 7, 1917

A Socialist State

- **Bolsheviks become the Communists**
 - End private ownership of property
 - Distribute land among the peasants
 - Workers control factories & mines
- Officials:
 - **Leon Trotsky** = Foreign Affairs
 - **Joseph Stalin** = National Minorities





Russia Leaves World War I

- March 1918 → Lenin seeks peace with Germany
- Treaty of Brest-Litovsk
 - Russia accepts terms of Germany
 - Loses Poland, Ukraine, Caucasus, etc.
 - Loses $\frac{1}{4}$ of land, $\frac{3}{4}$ of iron & coal, 40% of population

Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, March 1918



Russian Civil War

- 1918 → Political opponents contest Communists
- Taking Sides:
 - Reds = Communists
 - Whites = Moderates (assistance from Allies)
- Fighting destroys Russia for 3 years
 - Starvation & economic depression

Outcome of Civil War

- Lenin & Communists maintain power & defeat the Whites in 1921
- 1922 → Communists rename Russia the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R. or Soviet Union)
- Communists remain in power until end of the Cold War (1989)

Reforms of Vladimir Lenin

- New Economic Policy
 - Creates limited capitalist reforms in order to promote agricultural and industrial development
- Dies in 1924
 - Battle for succession between Leon Trotsky and Joseph Stalin

Reforms of Joseph Stalin

- Goal was to create communist state envisioned by Bolsheviks
- Collectivization
 - Eliminate private farms in favor off collective farms
 - Kills millions of peasants
 - Secures Soviet control of countryside

Five-Year Plans

- First Five-Year Plan (1928) focuses on iron, steel, machine tools, and electricity
 - Called for 1115% increase in coal production, 200% increase in iron, and 335% in electric power
 - Posted worker production in factories
 - Workers who failed to meet production quotas were shot or imprisoned in the Gulag

Great Purge (1936-1939)

- Attempt by Stalin to eliminate political opposition
 - Leading members of the Bolshevik party were executed or sent to labor camps
- Stalin purged prominent military officials
 - 50% of military officers were purged
- Historians estimate 10 to 20 million people died during the Great Purge