FACT SHEETS:

1. The backdrop for the 1905 Revolution:

The major threat against the Tsar’s authority occurred in 1905.

There are several reasons why the 1905 revolution took place.

The first came from the peasant population. They make up over ¾ of the Russian population. The Tsar taxed the produce peasant farmers grew to uphold the regime. This was such a burden on the shoulders of the poor that riots had become common.

They were also laden with paying their previous land owners ‘loans’ to compensate the abolishment of Serfdom which was revoked in 1861 by Alexander II.

The peasant farmers were also forced to produce a surplus of grain for export despite the fact that famines were becoming quite common.

Information cited: BBC Bitesize. (n.d.). Russia (1881-1921) - Higher History Revision. Retrieved 19 January 2021, from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zwxv34j/revision/3>

Another reason for the 1905 revolution had been the plight of the workers.

Industrialisation of Russia increased the population in cities and towns. As you can imagine, the sharp spike caused a shortage of housing which caused atrocious living conditions and high mortality rates.

Many lived in communal houses where kitchens and bathrooms were shared. Some were made to sleep in factories where they’d work in.

The economy plummeted in the early 1900s creating a lack of jobs and regular income, all of which sowed the seeds for the revolution.

During this time strikes had spread across Russia creating a rise in illegal trade unions and the Tsar’s own uncle – Grand Duke Sergei was assassinated next to the Kremlin in Moscow.

1. 1905 Bloody Sunday & Father Gapon: Discontent among workers led to the introduction of a legal trade union in St Petersburg led by a priest called Father Gapon. This union would then trigger the 1905 revolution into full motion.

It began in 1904 when the organisation was dismissed. Father Gapon called for action and over the following days over 100 thousand workers began a mass strike.

Father Gapon also created a petition detailing the concern about working conditions. The petition was signed by over 150 thousand people across St Petersburg.

He marched onto the streets to deliver this petition to Tsar Nicholas II.

The people demanded change and although their plea had been largely peaceful it was met by Russian troops whom opened fire at the unarmed protesters.

The exact number of deaths is uncertain; however, many moderate estimates say around 130-1000 people had been killed during the shooting. Led to

Information cited: BBC Bitesize. (n.d.). Causes of the 1905 Revolution. Retrieved 19 January 2021, from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zwxv34j/revision/6>

1. Barnaul:

Barnaul is a city and an administrative centre in Southern Siberia. The city is known for mining, particularly silver. By the mid-19th century it was considered as a major trade centre in the region.

Siberia:

Siberia is a huge geographical region which covers much of Northern Asia.

Although all of Siberia is located in Asia, culturally much of it is Russian as the population settled there in the 18th century.

Siberia also has an exhaustive amount of natural resources which saw large scale exploitation during the 20th century.

It’s a place so far away and unpopulated that many prisoners came here.

Wikipedia contributors. (2021, April 1). Siberia. Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siberia>

1. Conscription:

Men who reached the age of 21 were conscripted in the army.

Men with a higher education tended to serve less compared to those who had no education at all.

There were also certain categories of men who were not subject to draft. These included:

* Those who were the only sons in the family.
* Those who were the sole bread winner in their family.
* Younger brothers of a man who is already serving in the army.

During 1816-1834 especially, conscription gave many of the peasant class a path out of serfdom. They could join the army and return from the army as a free man. This made conscription a social ladder for poorer men.

Manaev, G. (2020, December 25). How soldiers were DRAFTED into the Imperial Russian Army. Russia Beyond. <https://www.rbth.com/history/333202-how-soldiers-were-drafted-into-russian-army>

1. Romanov Tercentenary

The Romanov Tercentenary in 1913 celebrated the house of Romanov, their history and their rule. The event was a display of wealth and power. The Tercentenary was also used as a massive propaganda exercise to instil a sense of patriotism amongst the masses.

Many still believed the Tsar was appointed by God and so a huge importance was placed upon the Tsar himself. He appeared to the masses as God on Earth.

Wikipedia contributors. (2021, March 8). *Romanov Tercentenary*. Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romanov_Tercentenary>

1. Left Hand

Left handedness has been stigmatised in history, many were forced to relearn and retrain their writing hands by swapping for the right.

Some of the stigmatisation held its root in Christianity as the right had been associated with Dexterity and God whilst the left with the hand of judgement and even the devil himself. Those who went against God were known to walk left. The Russian word ‘Levyy’ derives from the words counterfeit and of poor quality.

It came to the extent to which writing became banned in schools under the Soviet Union. Students were retrained using their ‘proper hand’.

The tale of ‘The cross-eyed left hander from Tula’ known as ‘Levsha’ or ‘Left hander’ is a story written by Nikolai Leskov. It is a rare case where left handedness is portrayed in a positive light.

It tells the story of a left handed craftsmen who manages to surpass his English colleges by creating fleas using horseshoes. Inscribed were the names of the gunsmiths involved.

Rubene, Zanda & Daniela, Linda & Medne, Dace. (2019). Wrong Hand, Wrong Children? The Education of Left-Handed Children in Soviet Latvia. Acta Paedagogica Vilnensia. 42. 10-28. 10.15388/ActPaed.42.1.

Sindelar, D. (2013, August 13). *Remembering When Right Was Right And Left Was Wrong*. RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty. <https://www.rferl.org/a/left-handers-day-forced-right-handedness/25074425.html>

McDonnell, S. (2017, April 6). *The men who shoe fleas*. BBC. <http://www.bbc.com/travel/story/20170331-where-fleas-wear-shoes>

1. Russo Japanese war

The Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905 caused major defeats in Russia’s part both at land and on sea. The massive humiliation catalysed the revolution which would occur almost directly after the war.

Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia (2021, February 1). Russo-Japanese War. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Russo-Japanese-War>

1. Franz Ferdinand assassinated!

- Today on the 28th of June 1914 Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the throne of Austria and his wife were shot dead on the streets of Sarajevo. The attacks had been carried out by a Bosnian Serb named Gavrilo Princip, a member of the infamous Black hand, a secret military society.

It is said with Germany’s support; Austria has been using this event for a chance to crush Serbia.

We the Russian nation must not allow this. Russia must be prepared for battle at any cost.

BBC Bitesize. (n.d.). Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand (subtitled) - KS3 History. Retrieved 3 April 2021, from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zmyqhyc>

1. Austria declares War on Serbia

Today, on the 28th of July Austria has just declared war on Serbia after sending an ultimatum to Serbia. Tensions are running high as Austria has broken all their diplomatic connections to the opposing country.

We are still waiting for Russia’s stance on this though it is likely that Russia will be there for our fellow Slavic brothers and sisters.

britannica. (n.d.). Austria - Conflict with Serbia. Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved 5 April 2021, from <https://www.britannica.com/place/Austria/Conflict-with-Serbia>

1. Germany declares war on Russia

Incoming news! Russia has declared war on Germany after having been received an ultimatum. We have taken measures and begun our military mobilisation early. Troops will be sent to defend the Tsar and his empire.

We call upon the public to remain calm and stay alert for any updates.

Amt, A. (2014, July 22). The July Crisis: an ultimatum and an unexpected response. German Federal Foreign Office. <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aamt/politiscal-archive/-/215216>

1. Homosexuality in the War

Not much is known about Homosexuality during WW1, especially within the armed forces since it was outlawed. Those who were caught were subject to corpral punishment.

Most of the evidence are found in letters and autobiographies.

For example, one letter writer by a Russian war veteran goes as follows:

“…After some time, I started experiencing attraction toward men, trying to seduce them, not understanding this terrible vice. Of course, I did this with great caution. At 18, I left for Petrograd and enlisted at one of the local sawmill factories. I’d then repeat my abnormal acts, because I had an irresistible attraction to this. It never once occurred to me that this condition was an illness that needed to be treated, and so day after day, year after year, I continued on this downward spiral.

Then I was drafted for military service, where I found a convenient setting for my fulfilment. I’ve never felt any attraction toward women. At the end of my draft service, I started feeling weak and experiencing nervous irritability, after which I became prone to pessimism. I often fought with myself, and frequently entertained thoughts of suicide.

But then war was declared and I was mobilized. I was stationed in Krasnoye Selo [outside Petrograd] to train new soldiers, but I volunteered for the front line. In combat, of course, I had to forget about everything, because I was caught between life and death at every moment. I wasn’t afraid of death because I’d found no joy in life. Heavy thoughts weighed me down, and it seemed to me that I was one of very few unhappy people. My experiences at the front made me forget about my rotten past and this was comforting for me. When I became a hero, that is, when I was awarded the St. George’s Cross, I was ashamed of myself, remembering my base and vile private life…”

The Central State Historical Archive of St. Petersburg, fond 2265, opis 1, delo number 510. 1921

Being gay in revolutionary Russia A WWI veteran’s letter to a psychiatrist asking to be cured of his ‘terrible vice’. (2017, August 21). Meduza. https://meduza.io/en/feature/2017/08/21/being-gay-in-revolutionary-russia

Exploring Surrey’s past. (n.d.). *Homosexuality and the First World War*. Retrieved 3 April 2021, from <https://www.exploringsurreyspast.org.uk/themes/subjects/diversity/lgbt-history/fwwhomosexuality/>

11.5- 2 Armies invaded German east Prussia during the beginning of the war in 1914. Rennenkampf’s army was to join with General Samsanov’s to give a numerical boost. However, the Germans decoded a Russian message stating that Rennenkampf was in no hurry as the two generals disliked each other. The Germans under Ludendorf then ordered an attack, concentrating 6 divisions against Samsanov’s army. The Russians were surrounded in forest with little chance of escape. By the end Samsanov shot himself in despair, while over 90 thousand soldiers were taken prisoner. 250 thousand Russian soldiers were lost and many more wounded. It was a decisive win for the Germans.

BBC - History. (n.d.). *BBC - History - World Wars: Battle of Tannenberg: 26–30 August 1914*. BBC History. Retrieved 9 April 2021, from http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwone/battle\_tannenberg.shtml

1. It’s estimated that the allies used 5 million tons of artillery shells against their opposition. The central powers also have been estimated to use roughly the same amount.

Soldiers who were continuously exposed to shell-fire had the imminent possibility of getting shell-shock.

Early symptoms include: Tiredness, becoming extremely irritable, lack of concentration and headaches. The men would then suffer from mental breakdowns.

The condition is said to come from PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) as their suffering greatly lies in their memories of war.

spartacus-educational. (n.d.). Shellfire in the First World War. Retrieved 3 April 2021, from <https://spartacus-educational.com/FWWshellfire.htm>

1. Censorship in Tsarist Russia

A Tsarist method to control its people was by censorship.

Freedom of speech had been restricted and books and newspapers were suppressed to stamp down on liberal and socialist ideology.

If you were ever known to circulate banned books or newspapers, you ran the risk of getting noticed by the Okhrana (the Russian secret police).

The Okhrana's plans to destroy the Bolsheviks forced Lenin into exhile in 1907. Hw would not return for another 10 years.

Trials and executions were becoming frequent, in fact the term 'Stolypin's Neckties' became a common phrase for the hangman's noose.

Despite the extreme censorship, revolutionary groups endured and attracted support. Stolypin was then assassinated in 1911.

BBC Bitesize. (n.d.-b). Tsarist methods of control - policies - Security of the Tsarist state before 1905 - Higher History Revision. Retrieved 3 April 2021, from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z9qnsbk/revision/5>

The name Change

St Petersburg was changed to Petrograd in 1914 at the start of the war because it sounded to ‘German’.

Schmemann, S. (1991, June 13). *Leningrad, Petersburg and the Great Name Debate*. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/06/13/world/leningrad-petersburg-and-the-great-name-debate.html?smid=url-share>

1. Tsar Nicholas became chief in command for the entire Russian army. He quickly left his palace in St Petersburg and made his way to the army headquatars located in Russian Poland.

By joining the army, he wanted to inspire soldiers to continue their fight against the central powers however this was seriously short lived.

The Tsar knew very little about efficient military tactics and the organisation of such a large military army and so their defeats continued. A shortage of ammunition, equipment and medical aid arose.

Tsar Nicholas did the opposite of what he had hoped for. He was in fact seen with distain amongst the Russian people.

BBC Bitesize. (n.d.). *Impact of World War One - Reasons for the February Revolution, 1917 - Higher History Revision*. Retrieved 6 April 2021, from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/ztyk87h/revision/3>

1. Discontent with the Tsar

Tsar Nicholas has proven, time and time again that he is not a great leader. Discontent from peasant farmers, the labourers, the military are all but some of the groups whom he had a huge falling out with.

The Tsar rejected these notions saying it was nothing but a ‘hooligan movement’ demonstrating the fact that he did not want to face the true reality.

Knowing Nicholas was the type to open fire at unarmed civilians, Russian revolutionaries soon had enough and hatched a plan to divert the Tsar’s train whilst he was on his way home in St Petersburg.

There Nicholas lay stranded in Pskov without the support of his army or family. The only option he had now was Abdication.

BBC Bitesize. (n.d.-b). Revolution from below - Reasons for the February Revolution, 1917 - Higher History Revision. Retrieved 3 April 2021, from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/ztyk87h/revision/5>

* 1. The shortage of food, the extreme rationing and hyperinflation were common place in many Russian cities. In the midst of it all the promise of ‘peace, bread and land’ from the Bolsheviks captured the Russian public. The group which later gained control of Russia and became the Soviet Union.

The February revolution in 1917 called for mass strikes and protests where the Cossack army whom were previously hostile, no longer felt compelled to aim fire at the unarmed civilians, instead they joined them.

There was little to no support for the Tsar and his abdication quickly followed on the 15th of March 1917.

BBC Bitesize. (n.d.-c). *The abdication of Tsar Nicholas II in 1917 - KS3 History*. Retrieved 3 April 2021, from https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zkt97ty

1. The provisional Government was created in Feburary 1917 after the revolution. They felt that Russia has to continue the war as they relied on loans and investment from Britain and France though this decision was hugely unpopular. There were also continual food shortages throughout 1917, the peasants were getting impatient and simply seized the land which encouraged soldiers to desert and do the same. In fact desertion increased drastically during this time.

This all caused distress among citizens as it meant the provisional government were no better than the Tsar’s Government. They were eventually replaced by the Soviet Bolsheviks.

BBC Bitesize. (n.d.-b). *Reasons for the failure of the Provisional Government under Kerensky - February Revolution - Causes, events and effects - National 5 History Revision*. Retrieved 10 April 2021, from https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z43tcqt/revision/7

1. Physical injury was not the only injury that sustained during and after the war. Many were mentally traumatised by the things they’ve done and seen.

These men, some as young as 16 were tormented to talk about what they’ve had gone through, being too painful to speak as the heavy weight on the taboo topic of mental health gave them a harsh environment to do so.

Flashbacks of the past, the physical reminder of ones broken or missing limb and the frequent bout of depression led to unstable employment and financial difficulty for veterans.

World War One ended at 11am on 11 November, 1918. This became known as Armistice Day - the day Germany signed an armistice (an agreement for peace) which caused the fighting to stop.

By the end of the war over 20 million people were presumed dead and 21 million were wounded.

Russia by far provided the most amount of soldiers, over 12 million. They also suffered the deaths of nearly 2 million soldiers.

Unlike war itself, the effects of the war simply does not vanish. The pains of the war remain.

Experiences on the Western Front. (n.d.). Impact on Soldiers and their Families. World War 1 - Experiences on the Western Front. Retrieved 3 April 2021, from <https://experiencesonthewesternfront.weebly.com/impact-on-soldiers-and-their-families.html>

BBC Bitesize. (2020, January 14). How did World War One end and what happened next? <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zqhyb9q/articles/zkb86v4>