Chapter 28: Revolution in Russia
Two Revolutions in Russia

• Why did revolution occur in Russia in March 1917?

• Why did Lenin and the Bolsheviks launch the November revolution?

• How did the Communists defeat their opponents in Russia’s civil war?
Why Did Revolution Occur in Russia in March 1917?

- Czars had made some reforms, but too few to ease the nation’s tensions.
- Much of the majority peasant population endured stark poverty.
- Revolutionaries worked to hatch radical plots.
- World War I was producing disasters on the battlefield for the Russian army, and food and fuel shortages on the home front.
- Rasputin’s influence in domestic affairs weakened confidence in the government.
Why Did Lenin and the Bolsheviks Launch the November Revolution?

Lenin adapted Marxist ideas to fit Russian conditions. He called for an elite group to lead the revolution and set up a “dictatorship of the proletariat.”

Conditions were ripe for Lenin and the Bolsheviks to make their move:

- The provisional government continued the war effort and failed to deal with land reform.
- In the summer of 1917, the government launched a disastrous offensive against Germany.
- The army was in terrible shape and growing numbers of troops mutinied.
- Peasants seized land and drove off fearful landlords.
How did the Communists defeat their opponents in Russia’s civil war?

- Lenin quickly made peace with Germany so that the Communists could focus all their energy on defeating enemies at home.
- The Communists adopted a policy called “war communism.” They took over banks, mines, factories, and railroads, took control of food produced by peasants, and drafted peasant laborers into military or factory work.
- Trotsky turned the Red Army into an effective fighting force.
- When the Allies intervened to support the Whites, the Communists appealed to nationalism and urged Russians to drive out the foreigners.
Lenin called for an elite group to
a) set up a dictatorship of the czar.
b) set up a dictatorship of the proletariat.
c) set up a democracy.
d) set up a totalitarian state.

All of the following helped the Communists to win the civil war except
a) war communism.
b) making peace with Germany.
c) Trotsky’s strengthening of the Red Army.
d) an alliance with the Whites.

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Section 1 Assessment

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From Lenin to Stalin

- How did the Communist state develop under Lenin?
- What were the effects of Stalin’s five-year plans?
- How did Soviet foreign policy affect relations with the western powers?
### Turning Points in Russia, 1914–1921

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>World War I begins.</td>
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<td>1917</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>Revolution forces the czar to abdicate. A provisional government is formed.</td>
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<td>April</td>
<td>Lenin returns to Russia.</td>
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<td>July</td>
<td>Russians suffer more than 50,000 casualties in battle against German and Austro-Hungarian forces.</td>
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<td>November</td>
<td>A second revolution results in Bolshevik takeover of government.</td>
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<td>December</td>
<td>Bolshevik government seeks peace with Germany.</td>
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<td>1918</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>Russia signs treaty of Brest-Litovsk, losing a large amount of territory.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>July</td>
<td>Civil war between the Reds and Whites begins. The czar and his family are executed.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>August</td>
<td>British, American, Japanese, and other foreign forces intervene in Russia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>Communist government is victorious. Only sporadic fighting continues.</td>
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The Communists produced a new constitution that:

- set up an elected legislature, later called the Supreme Soviet
- gave all citizens over 18 the right to vote
- placed all political power, resources, and means of production in the hands of the workers and peasants

The new government united much of the old Russian empire in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), or Soviet Union.

Lenin adopted the New Economic Policy, or NEP.

- It allowed some capitalist ventures.
- The state kept control of banks, foreign trade, and large industries. Small businesses were allowed to reopen for private profit.
Soviet Union, 1917–1938
Stalin’s Five-Year Plans

Once in power, Stalin set out to make the Soviet Union a modern industrial power. He put into place several “five-year plans” aimed at building heavy industry, improving transportation, and increasing farm output.

- Stalin brought all economic activity under government control. The Soviet Union developed a command economy, in which government officials made all basic economic decisions.

- Stalin also brought agriculture under government control. He forced peasants to give up their land and live on either state-owned farms or collectives, large farms owned and operated by peasants as a group.

- Overall, standards of living remained poor. Wages were low, and consumer goods were scarce.
The Great Purge

Stalin harbored obsessive fears that rival party leaders were plotting against him. In 1934, he launched the Great Purge.

- At least four million people were purged during the Stalin years.

- The purges increased Stalin’s power.

- The victims of the purges included most of the nation’s military leadership. This loss of military leadership would weigh heavily on Stalin in 1941, when Germany invaded the Soviet Union.
Between 1917 and 1939, the Soviet Union pursued two very different goals in foreign policy.

As Communists, both Lenin and Stalin wanted to bring about the worldwide revolution that Marx had predicted.
- Lenin formed the Communist International, or Comintern, which aided revolutionary groups around the world.

As Russians, they wanted to guarantee their nation’s security by winning the support of other countries.
- The Soviet Union sought to join the League of Nations.

The Comintern’s propaganda against capitalism made western powers highly suspicious of the Soviet Union.
Section 2 Assessment

The New Economic Policy
  a) prohibited all capitalist ventures.
  b) called for all businesses to be privately owned.
  c) allowed some capitalist ventures.
  d) put trade in the hands of the business class.

The goal of the Comintern was to
  a) help the Soviet Union get into the League of Nations.
  b) aid revolutionary groups around the world.
  c) create an international organization that included the western powers.
  d) help the Soviet Union convert to a capitalist society.

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Life in a Totalitarian State

- How did Stalin create a totalitarian state?
- How did communism change Soviet society?
- How did state control affect the arts in the Soviet Union?
Stalin turned the Soviet Union into a **totalitarian state**. In this form of government, a one-party dictatorship attempts to regulate every aspect of the lives of its citizens.

- To ensure obedience, Stalin used secret police, censorship, violent purges, and terror.
- The party bombarded the public with relentless propaganda.
- The Communists replaced religion with their own ideology.
The Communists transformed Russian life.

- They created a society where a few elite groups emerged as a new ruling class.

- The state provided free education, free medical care, day care for children, inexpensive housing, and public recreation.

- Women were granted equality under the law.
State Control and the Arts

Stalin forced artists and writers to conform to a style called socialist realism. Its goal was to boost socialism by showing Soviet life in a positive light.

Government controlled what books were published, what music was heard, and which works of art were displayed.

Writers, artists, and composers faced government persecution.
Stalin used all of the following to create a totalitarian state *except*

a) secret police.
b) propaganda.
c) religion.
d) censorship.

In Soviet society, women were

a) considered second-class citizens.
b) stripped of all past freedoms.
c) granted equality under the law.
d) only allowed to hold certain jobs.

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