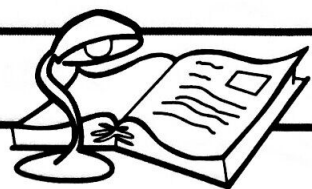


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Chapter 16, Section 3 (continued)

READ TO LEARN

• Background to Revolution (page 514)

Russia was not prepared for World War I. There were no competent military leaders in Russia. Czar Nicholas II was in charge of the armed forces, but he had no training or ability for this. Russian industry was not able to produce the weapons needed for the army. Because of these problems, the Russian army suffered heavy losses. Between 1914 and 1916, two million soldiers were killed.

While the czar was at the battlefield, his wife Alexandra made all of the important decisions. She consulted Rasputin, a Siberian peasant who claimed to be a holy man. She was influenced by him because he seemed to be able to stop the bleeding of her son Alexis, who had hemophilia. Because of his influence, Rasputin became an important power in Russia.

With such poor leadership, the Russian people suffered through a series of military and economic disasters. The people became more and more upset with the rule of the czar. Even the conservative aristocrats, who supported the czar, felt that something must be done. They assassinated Rasputin in December 1916. But even this drastic move could not save the reign of the czar.

In March 1917, working women led a series of strikes in the capital city of Petrograd (formerly St. Petersburg). The government had begun rationing bread. The same women who were working 12-hour days in the factories were now forced to wait in long lines to get bread to feed their children. On March 8, 1917, about 10,000 women marched through the city of Petrograd. Other workers soon joined them. They called for a general strike, which shut down all the factories in the city on March 10. Czar Nicholas ordered troops to break up the crowds by shooting them if necessary. But large numbers of soldiers soon joined the demonstrators and refused to fire on the crowds.

The Duma, or legislative body, which the czar had tried to dissolve, met anyway. On March 12, it set up a provisional government. This government asked the czar to step down. Because Nicholas II had no support from the army or even from the wealthy aristocrats, he did step down, on March 15. The provisional government, led by Alexander Kerensky, decided to carry on the war to preserve Russia's honor. This was a major blunder. Workers and peasants no longer supported the war. The provisional government was also faced with a challenge to its authority—the **soviets**. The soviets were councils in Russia composed of representatives from the workers and soldiers. They were largely made up of socialists. One group, the Bolsheviks, began to play a crucial role.

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Chapter 16, Section 3 (continued)

9. How did World War I contribute to the start of the Russian Revolution?

• The Rise of Lenin (page 517)

The Bolsheviks began as a small faction of a Marxist party called the Russian Social Democrats. Vladimir Ilyich Ulianov, better known as V.I. Lenin, led them. Lenin believed that violent revolution was the only way to destroy the capitalist system. He believed that a small group of well-disciplined revolutionaries could accomplish this. From 1900 to 1917, Lenin spent most of his time abroad. When the provisional government was formed, he saw this as an opportunity for the Bolsheviks to seize power. In April 1917, German military leaders shipped Lenin back to Russia. They hoped that he would create disorder in Russia.

Lenin's arrival in Russia started a new stage of the Russian Revolution. He believed that the Bolsheviks should try to gain control of the soviets and use them to overthrow the provisional government. The Bolsheviks told the people what they wanted to hear. They promised an end to the war, the redistribution of land to the peasants, the transfer of factories from capitalists to the workers, and the transfer of government power to the soviets.

10. What promises did the Bolsheviks make to the Russian people?

• The Bolsheviks Seize Power (page 518)

By October 1917, the Bolsheviks held a slight majority in the Petrograd and Moscow soviets. The number of Bolsheviks had grown from 50,000 to 240,000. Leon Trotsky, a dedicated revolutionary, led the Petrograd soviet. This put the Bolsheviks in a position to claim power in the name of the soviets. During the night of November 6, the Bolsheviks seized the Winter Palace, where the provisional government met. The government quickly collapsed. This overthrow

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Chapter 16, Section 3 (continued)

occurred at the same time as a meeting in Petrograd of the all-Russian Congress of Soviets. This group represented soviets from all over the country. Outwardly, Lenin turned power over to the Congress of Soviets. But the real power passed to the Council of People's Commissars, headed by Lenin.

The Bolsheviks changed their name to the Communists. Now that they were in power, they faced the difficult task of removing Russia from the war. This would mean the loss of much Russian territory, but there was no real choice. On March 3, 1918, Lenin signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and gave up eastern Poland, Ukraine, Finland, and the Baltic provinces. Even with this treaty, real peace did not come, because the country soon sank into civil war.

11. Why did Lenin sign the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk?

• Civil War in Russia (page 518)

Many people were opposed to the new Communist government. These people included groups loyal to the czar, liberals, anti-Lenin socialists, and the Allies. The Allies sent troops to various parts of Russia in the hope of bringing Russia back into the war. The troops rarely fought on Russian soil, but they gave aid to anti-Communist forces. From 1918 to 1921, the Communist (Red) Army was forced to fight on many fronts against the anti-Communist (White) forces. In the early part of the civil war, the White Army had several successes. But by 1920, the major White forces had been defeated. Within a year, the Communists regained control of Ukraine, Georgia, Russian Armenia, and Azerbaijan.

The royal family was a victim of the civil war. On July 16, 1918, members of the local soviet in Ekaterinburg murdered Nicholas II and his family, where they were being held captive.

12. What was the White Army? What groups made it up?

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• Triumph of the Communists (page 518)

The Communists had won the civil war against seemingly insurmountable odds. There were several reasons for their success. First, the Red Army was well disciplined. This was largely due to the efforts of Leon Trotsky, the commissar of war. He reinstated the draft and insisted on complete obedience. Second, the Whites were not unified. They had no common goal, and the different groups did not trust each other. The Communists, on the other hand, had a clear vision of a new socialist order. Third, the Communists implemented a policy of **war communism**. This policy was used to ensure regular supplies for the Red Army. This meant government control of banks and industries, the seizing of grain from peasants, and the centralization of state administration under Communist control. The Communists also formed a new secret police, known as the Cheka. The Cheka began a Red Terror aimed at destroying those who opposed the new regime. Finally, the presence of foreign armies on Russian soil was used to stir up Russian patriotism. The Communists were able to call on patriotic Russians to fight foreign attempts to control the country.

By 1921, the Communists had total control of Russia. Russia was now a centralized state dominated by a single party. The state was also hostile to the Allies, because the Allies had helped the Communists' enemies in the civil war.

13. Why did the Communists win the civil war in Russia?
