

## Causes of the Russian Revolution

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### Background Info:

- I. The Russian Empire
  - A. Hadn't industrialized as much as Germany and Britain
  - B. Recently abolished serfdom
  - C. 1861- the largest and most diverse country
  - D. 4 million people who spoke more than one hundred different languages and over one hundred different ethnic groups.
  - E. Politically: Tsar was the ruler given complete authority by God and Orthodox Church.
  - F. Socially: Backwards country, non-Russian minorities (Poles, Jews, Finns and Ukrainians)
  - G. Economically: Privileged nobles owned most of land and millions of serfs worked in virtual slavery on the land.
- II. Key takeaway: Russia was unstable politically and socially, and they had only just begun to industrialize

### Cause #1: Peasant Lives

- A. If you remember the assignment we had about peasant lives, you know that peasant life sucked
  - a. They didn't have enough food
  - b. The peasants were dirty, uncivilized, and lived in terrible conditions
- B. They were overworked and treated like dirt
- C. Peasants were unhappy with their circumstances in Russia

### Cause #2: Working Conditions

- I. With industrialization comes more workers
  - A. Working conditions were terrible
    - 1. 11 hour work days
    - 2. Unsafe conditions
  - B. The workers demand for shorter work days, higher wages and better working conditions
  - C. Nobody listens to the workers' demands, so Bloody Sunday happens
- II. Bloody Sunday
  - A. Industrial workers are unhappy, so they sign a petition (150,000 people)
  - B. The workers go to the Winter Palace to present the petition
    - 1. Tsar Nicholas has the army shoot into the crowd

2. People start to resent the royal family

### **Cause #3: Corruption**

- I. Rasputin could help the son, Alexi, with his hemophilia
  - A. HUGE MISTAKE
    1. This angers both nobles and peasants
      - a) Nobles: Why does this lowly peasant get to work in the palace with the royalty?
      - b) Peasants: Why does he get to work with royalty and we don't?
    2. Everyone hated Rasputin except the King and Queen
    3. The people start spreading salacious rumors about the Queen and Rasputin
    4. This turned the public opinion even more against the monarchy

### **Cause #4: Military Humiliation**

- I. Russia went into the Russo-Japanese war for something petty (argument over who should get parts of Manchuria and Korea)
  - A. Russia thought it would be easy to just squash the Japanese quickly
  - B. Japanese defeats them despite everyone's beliefs that Russia would win easily
- II. World War I
  - A. Russia lost millions of people in just the first year
  - B. Morale of the Russian troops was low
  - C. Russia was running out of food, supplies, and patriotism
  - D. By the end of WWI, all the social classes wanted change

### **The March Revolution**

- I.