A SHORT HISTORY OF
THE U.S.S.R.

Text book for 3rd & 4th classes

Edited by Professor
A.V. SHESTAKOV

Indorsed by the All-Union Government Commission

CO-OPERATIVE PUBLISHING SOCIETY OF FOREIGN
WORKERS IN THE U.S.S.R.

MOSCOW 1938
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1. OUR COUNTRY

The U.S.S.R.—the Land of Socialism. There is only one Socialist country in the world. That country is our country.

Our country is the largest country in the world. To the north, it is bounded by eternal ice; and in the south it is so hot in the summer that oranges and lemons ripen, and tea and cotton grow.

Our country is the richest in the world in natural resources. Everything needed for existence is found in our country.

Year after year, there is more of grain and other wealth in this country.

Year after year, the number of factories, schools, theatres and cinemas increases.

Its old cities are growing at an unusually rapid pace, and new cities are being built.

The working people of the U.S.S.R. are becoming more prosperous all the time, and their life is becoming better and happier.

In no other country in the world is there such friendship among the various peoples as in the U.S.S.R. In the 11 Constituent Republics of the Soviet Union there are 50 different nationalities, making a total of 170,000,000 inhabitants. All are united in one fraternal union, which we call the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, or U.S.S.R., for short. All the peoples of the U.S.S.R. work for the common good. In the
U.S.S.R. there are no parasites, capitalists and landlords, as there are in other countries. In the U.S.S.R. there is no exploitation of man by man. All of us work for ourselves, and not for parasites.

In the past, our country was a backward country; now it has become the most advanced and mighty country in the world.

That is why we love our country so much; that is why we are so proud of our U.S.S.R.—the Land of Socialism.

The road to Socialism was mapped out for us by the great Party of the Communists, the Bolsheviks. This Party led the struggle of our fathers and mothers, the struggle of the workers and peasants, when they overthrew the rule of the tsar, of the landlords and capitalists. Under the leadership of the Communist Party we created a workers’ and peasants’ government, and built Socialism.

What this book teaches. It tells you how people lived in the past; how the peoples of the U.S.S.R. fought their oppressors and enemies; how they succeeded in making our country the Land of Socialism. From this book you will also learn about the life and struggle of the people in other countries.

All this is called history.

We love our country and we must know its wonderful history. Those who know history understand present-day life better, are better able to fight the enemies of our country, and make Socialism stronger.

2. HOW PEOPLE LIVED IN THE DISTANT PAST

How we know how people lived long ago. One day some children were digging a pit on the bank of a stream. In the ground they found some curious bones and a stone. They took them to school and showed them to their teacher.

“Children,” said the teacher, “you have found some very interesting things. These are the bones of ancient monsters. Once upon a time, very long ago, those animals lived in these parts. They are now extinct. And the stone is a tool with which the people, who lived very long ago, killed wild animals.”

The teacher tied the stone to a stick and it then looked like a heavy hammer.

The teacher told the children that all over the U.S.S.R. scientists were making excavations, and from the things they found they learned how people lived in the remotest times.

The life of primitive man. About five hundred thousand years ago, nearly the whole of our country was covered with a thick layer of ice.

Centuries passed, and the ice gradually melted. It began
melting in the south. And it was in the south that the first human beings appeared.

Their life was very hard. Around them roamed wild animals: huge mammoths and bears. They hid from these animals in caves and dugouts. They fed on roots, berries and the flesh of animals which they killed; and they clothed themselves with the skins of these animals. People went hunting together and sometimes they managed to kill even so strong an animal as a mammoth. What they caught they shared in common.

More centuries passed. People learned to produce fire, and to make tools out of stones, wood and bones. They invented the bow and arrow. Gradually they learned how to tame wild animals, and began to rear cattle. Thousands of years later they learned to cultivate useful plants, and began to engage in agriculture. They built themselves huts, or tents, and made clothes from the skins of animals and from coarse linen.

For a long time people used stone and bone implements. Many thousands of years passed before they learned to obtain ore, and to smelt copper and other metals.

In those distant times—tools, and the food obtained by hunting or tilling the soil—were held in common. All equally shared the life of arduous toil.

3. FROM THE CLAN TO THE STATE

Clans and tribes. It was impossible for one man to hunt big animals, catch fish with nets, or clear forests for cultivation all by himself. That is why, in olden times, relations did not separate, but lived together, in clans, sometimes numbering several hundred people. The clan held all things in common. Tools were used in common. The members of the clan went hunting and fishing together, and cultivated the land by their common efforts. The spoils of the hunt and the fruits of the harvest were shared among the clan. The cattle was held in common. The work of the clan was directed by elected elders. The affairs of the clan were discussed and settled at meetings of the whole clan. The clan protected its members. If a member of the clan was killed by a member of another clan, the relations of the killed man avenged his death. There were frequent wars between the different clans over arable land, pastures, forests and fishing.

Several neighbouring clans formed a tribe. A tribe consisted of several thousand people. All the people of the tribe spoke the same language and followed the same customs. Each tribe had an elected chief.

People lived in clans and tribes for many centuries. Gradually, the clans began to break up into families. The larger and stronger families began to take possession of parts of the land and part of the cattle and live for themselves. They ceased to share things with the others. They took possession of the captives of war and compelled them to work for them. In this way inequality arose in the tribes. Instead of the common ownership of food and implements, there was now private property. Some members of the clan began to own more property than the others. There arose among them the rich and the poor.

The rich men and the war chiefs of the warlike and strong tribes made raids upon their neighbours, took captives and forced them to become slaves. The tribal chiefs and the rich men of the tribe procured more slaves than the other warriors.

Those who obtained many slaves became richer than others. The rich chiefs gathered warriors around themselves, fed and clothed them, and provided them with arms. With the help of these warriors the chiefs made fresh raids. The booty and captives obtained from these raids were kept by the chiefs and their warriors.

The chiefs and rich men of the tribe compelled not only
the slaves to work for them, but their fellow tribesmen as well, and despoiled them of part of the fruits of their labour. In this way there arose in the tribes oppressors—the rich, and oppressed—the poor.

**The state.** A small group of rich people began to live at the expense of the large majority of the toilers; they oppressed and robbed them. The chiefs, with the help of their warriors, compelled the slaves and their own fellow tribesmen to obey them. They became the rulers of their tribes. These tribal chiefs were called princes, kings, tsars or khans. To keep the people in subjection the princes, khans and tsars increased the numbers of their warriors, established their own courts, and introduced various punishments.

These chiefs were not content to rule over their own tribes, but subjugated weaker neighbouring tribes. In this way states were formed.

4. **THE MOST ANCIENT STATES IN OUR COUNTRY**

**The first states in Trans-Caucasia and Central Asia.** The most ancient states in our country arose in the south of Trans-Caucasia. This was about 3,000 years ago. The first state in Trans-Caucasia was known as Urartu, and was situated in the region of Mount Ararat, near Lake Van. Its kings ruled over the Georgian tribes. They had many slaves who built palaces for them and dug canals to irrigate the kings' fields and orchards.

This was the state of the forerunners of present-day Georgia.

The kings of Urartu were constantly at war with the neighbouring states. The wars were very cruel. This can be seen from the inscription which one of the kings of Urartu ordered his slaves to cut on a rock. This inscription reads as follows:
few tribesmen as the bearers of their labour. The oppressors—the rich, powerful tsars of their time—began to live at the expense of small koilers; they oppressed them, exploiting the help of their fellow tribesmen to oppress those of their tribes. These small koilers elected khan. To keep their khan, the tsars increased the power of khan's own courts, then, took over their own property of the tribes. In this manner, the third type of tribes was born.

MAP SHOWING ANCIENT PEOPLES AND STATES ON THE TERRITORY OF THE U.S.S.R.

Central Asia. The beginning of the reign of Transfiguration. The first state to appear was situated in Transfiguration. Its kings ruled its subjects, who built their own state. The kings' fields were then taken away from them. The present-day

...war with the...

This can be seen in the reigns of Urartu and the Persian Empire. The inscription reads as

Lands paying tribute to the Khazars

Water route "from the Varangians to the Greeks"

Campaigns of Kiev princes:

Oleg and Igor

Sviatoslav

Kiev Rus in 11th century
(in the reign of Prince Yaroslav)

SCALE

300 0 300 600 900 km
“Sixty-four thousand; part I put to the sword, and part I carried away alive.”

Similar states existed in Central Asia. These were the states of the forerunners of the present-day Uzbeks, Tadjiks and Turkmens. Their rulers were also constantly at war with their neighbours.

In the ancient states of Trans-Caucasia and Central Asia there were many towns. To protect the towns from enemies, high stone walls were built around them. Skilful craftsmen and slaves built houses for the rich, and also warehouses and shops. Many handicraftsmen lived in the towns, and a brisk trade was carried on.

The inhabitants of the towns invented the alphabet and learned to read and write. In Georgia, for example, the alphabet was invented more than 2,000 years ago. The first learned men appeared in the towns; science and art began to develop.

**The peoples inhabiting ancient Siberia and Eastern Europe.**

In ancient times, South Siberia and the Black Sea coast were inhabited by numerous tribes of nomad herdsmen. Under the command of their tsars, they wandered from place to place over the steppes with their herds of cattle and horses in search of good pastures. About 2,500 years ago the nomad tribe known as the Scythians was particularly distinguished for its power. The Scythian tsars ruled over numerous nomad and settled agricultural tribes and slaves.

More than 2,500 years ago settlers from Greece landed on the north coast of the Black Sea. Here they built several cities and carried on a big trade with the Scythians. They bought cattle, grain and fish from the Scythians, and sent them across the sea to Greece. Gradually the Greek cities grew and united to form a whole state.

The rich Greek rulers and merchants did no work. All the work was performed for them by slaves, mostly Scythian captives of war. Two thousand years ago, the Scythian slaves, under the leadership of a slave named Savmak, rose in rebel-

13
lion against their oppressors and took power into their own hands. But the slave revolt was crushed by Greek troops that came from over the sea.

In the 4th century of our era, the Greek cities were overrun and ravaged by a powerful nomad people, the Huns. In the 5th century, Attila, the fierce ruler of the Huns, marched from the steppes of the Black Sea region against the peoples of Western Europe and subdued many of them. But after the death of Attila his kingdom fell to pieces as a result of the attacks of other nomad tribes who came from Asia. In the 6th century the nomad Khazars built a state on the Volga where the Huns had formerly ruled; and further up the Volga the Bulgar state was formed.

For many years the Khazars and Bulgars had to contend against the neighbouring Slavonic tribes.

5. THE SLAVS

The Slavs and their neighbours. Fifteen centuries ago the Slavonic tribes inhabited the lands on the shores of the Baltic Sea, along the rivers Dniepr and Danube, and the upper reaches of the rivers Oka and Volga. Later on, the Slavs inhabiting Eastern Europe formed three big nations—the Russians, Ukrainians and Byelorussians.

In the east, their neighbours were the Volga tribes, the forefathers of the present-day Maris, Mordovians and other nationalities, and also the Bulgar and Khazar states. In the south, the Slavs waged war against the nomads of the Black Sea steppes. They also waged war against the rich and, for that time, civilized Greek state of Byzantium (the country which is now Turkey). The Greek craftsmen built splendid buildings, palaces and churches. The Greeks had their writers, musicians and painters. They manufactured beautiful silk fabrics, pottery, and articles of gold and silver.

Byzantium had a great number of well-equipped soldiers. But the brave Slavs, in spite of their backwardness, frequently defeated the Greek troops. In the middle of the 9th century they waged a successful war against the Greeks, and even attacked Tsargrad (Constantinople), the capital of Byzantium.

In the west, the Slavs were obliged to wage war against the German tribes and Varangians.

The occupations of the Slavs. The ancient Slavs engaged in hunting and collecting wild honey. Later, agriculture became their chief occupation. They burned down sections of the forest and scattered seeds on the soil mixed with ashes. In this way they obtained good harvests; but the soil was exhausted within three or four years and it was necessary to burn down another section of the forest. In the steppes the land was broken up with the aid of mattocks and then seeds were sown; but even by this method the land became sterile within four or five years. The old fields had to be abandoned and new ground broken. This work was very laborious, particularly with the primitive implements used, and could not be performed by a single family. For this reason, the work was performed jointly by the whole clan. When the sokha, or wooden plough with an iron tip, was invented, horses were harnessed to the ploughs. Cattle manure was used to fertilize the soil. A small plot of land cultivated by a single family could now provide food for many years running. It was no longer necessary to cultivate the land in common, and this system began to disappear. A plot of cultivated and manured land began to be regarded as the property of the family cultivating it. The clan and tribal chiefs seized large plots of land and compelled their slaves
to cultivate them. On these plots also worked free, but impoverished, people from the various clans. The owners of ploughs and horses hired them out to those who did not own any in return for a part of the latter’s harvest and thus became rich. The equality which existed formerly disappeared; the clan was divided into oppressors and oppressed; into rich landowners and poor tillers. In the 9th century the Slavs already had boyars, who were the landowners and rich men, and also princes, the tribal rulers. The princes and boyars traded with the Greeks and other neighbours in grain, honey and bees-wax; but mostly they traded in slaves, captured in war by the druzhinas, or retinues, of the princes and boyars. The trade was carried on in fortified places along the trade routes, mostly along the banks of the big rivers. In the 9th century the Slavs had a few towns. The most important of these were Kiev and Novgorod.

II

THE KIEV STATE

6. THE RISE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF KIEV

The Varangian conquests. In the 9th century the North Slavs were subjugated by robber bands of Varangians, who came from over the Baltic Sea. The Varangian chief settled in Novgorod and from that city his warriors raided the neighbouring tribes, robbed them of their furs, honey and wax, and carried away captives. The Varangians took the booty and captives to Byzantium where they sold them to the Greeks. They went in boats along the rivers and lakes, then they dragged their boats over dry land to the River Dniepr. Navigation on the Dniepr was obstructed by the rapids where big rocks blocked the river. At this spot boats had to be taken out of the water and dragged with their cargoes along the banks. The warlike tribe of Pechenegs, who tended their herds in this neighbourhood, took advantage of this and often attacked the passing merchants. From the Dniepr travellers passed into the Black Sea and from there, keeping close to the coast, sailed to Byzantium. This passage was known as “the passage from the Varangians to the Greeks.”

The Slavs who lived around Novgorod often rebelled against the Varangians and sometimes succeeded in driving them across the sea. But not for long. The Varangians would return in larger numbers and again establish their rule over the Slavs.

Rurik and Oleg. It is related in ancient records, that at the end of the 9th century, Novgorod was ruled by the Varan-
gian prince, Rurik. The Slavs whom he had subjugated paid him tribute. After Rurik’s death, the warlike Oleg became prince. He did not remain in Novgorod, but went down the Dniepr and reached Kiev, which he conquered and made his capital.

From the beginning of the 10th century the Slav principality of Kiev was known as Kiev Russ.

Oleg united many Slavonic tribes under his rule and imposed heavy tribute upon them. A number of Slavonic princes were exterminated; the rest submitted to Oleg and joined him in plundering the Slavonic population. The Varangian conquerors soon merged with the Slavs and adopted their language.

Prince Oleg was a very energetic man. Under his rule Kiev was strongly fortified. Forts were built along the frontiers to protect the state from nomad peoples. According to ancient tradition, Oleg, with a huge army, partly in boats and partly on horseback, went to war against Byzantium. He laid waste to the country around Tsarigrad (Constantinople) and besieged that city. The Greek Emperor (as the chief ruler of the Greeks was known) paid Oleg a huge ransom: much gold, costly fabrics, wines and slaves. In the year 911, the Greeks concluded a commercial treaty with Oleg.

Oleg greatly strengthened Kiev Russ. He gathered the scattered Slavonic tribes and principalities under his rule. Kiev Russ began to be respected by Byzantium, and by the neighbouring western states.

**Prince Igor.** After the death of Oleg, Rurik’s son, Igor, became prince. Under his rule the expansion of Kiev Russ continued. Like Oleg, Igor was constantly at war. Under his reign campaigns were conducted against the Caucasus and Byzantium. The Greeks paid Igor a large and costly ransom. He concluded a treaty with the Greeks in which he pledged himself to protect Byzantium from nomad raiders.

Every autumn Igor collected tribute from the population. To collect this tribute he went among the people, and so this tribute was known as the “people’s tribute.” When the prince and his warriors came to a village, the inhabitants brought him furs, honey, wax and grain. The people’s tribute was a heavy burden upon the population.

One year Prince Igor collected tribute from the Drevlyans, a Slavonic tribe which lived on the right bank of the Dniepr. The Drevlyans gave him all he demanded. Igor departed. But then it seemed to him that he had collected too little. He returned and demanded an additional tribute. The
Drevlyans then said to themselves: “If a wolf gets into the habit of visiting a herd he will devour it all. Let us kill him.” They defeated the prince’s druzhina, took the prince prisoner and put him to death by tying his legs to the tops of bent trees on either side of him; when the trees were released and straightened, he was torn in half.

7. PRINCESS OLGA AND PRINCE SVYATOSLAV

Princess Olga. When Igor died, his wife, Olga, ruled the country. She took cruel vengeance on the Drevlyans for killing her husband. Her warriors besieged the capital of the Drevlyans. They were encamped outside the walls of the city for a whole year, but could not take it. According to tradition, Olga then resorted to a stratagem. She called upon the Drevlyans to pay a very light tribute—three pigeons and three sparrows from each household. The Drevlyans agreed to pay this tribute. Olga ordered bits of touchwood to be tied to the legs of the pigeons and sparrows; the touchwood was set alight and the birds released. The pigeons and sparrows flew back to their nests in the city, and soon the whole city was on fire. Olga’s forces rushed into the burning city and killed many of its defenders. Olga then imposed a heavy tribute upon the Drevlyans. Later on, however, she fixed a definite amount of tribute for all the tribes, and so introduced order in the levying of this tribute. Olga travelled to Byzantium to learn from the Greeks how to govern her country and there she became familiar with the religion of the Greeks.

At that time the Slavs still adhered to their old beliefs. They did not understand the forces of nature and feared them. Their habitations were blown away by storms. Houses and trees were struck by lightning and burned. The sun burned up their crops. They believed that the sun, the wind and the thunder storm were gods. They made images of them in wood and stone, and sacrificed animals, and some-
times children and captives, to them. In this way they hoped to placate the terrible gods they had themselves invented.

Olga was very pleased when she heard the Greek priests preaching that tsars ruled by divine right. She realized that the Greek religion would be an excellent means of strengthening the prince’s power and of gathering the scattered Slavonic tribes into one state.

She therefore adopted the Greek religion—Christianity—and tried to persuade her son, Svyatoslav, to do the same. But Svyatoslav refused. He believed that the Slavs could be united and a powerful state formed only by force of arms.

**Prince Svyatoslav.** After Olga, Svyatoslav became Prince of Kiev. Svyatoslav spent all his life at war. During his campaigns he slept on the ground in the open air, near the camp fire, using his saddle as a pillow. He ate whatever food was available—horseflesh, or the flesh of wild animals, roasted on burning coals. He was quite fearless and usually would warn his foes that he was going to attack them. He would send a messenger to say: “I am going against you.”

Svyatoslav subjugated many tribes on the banks of the River Oka, plundered the cities of the Bulgars on the Volga and of the Circassians on the River Kuban, and laid waste to the kingdom of the Khazars. From that time the kingdom of the Khazars ceased to exist. The principality of Kiev, however, became stronger than ever. All the country on the shores of the Black Sea came under the rule of the Prince of Kiev.

Later on, Svyatoslav went to war against the Bulgars who lived on the banks of the Danube. He captured many cities from them and wanted to transfer his capital from Kiev to the Danube. The cunning Byzantine emperor, fearing to have such a strong and warlike neighbour, urged the nomad Pechenegs, who then lived in the steppes on the shores of the Black Sea, to attack Kiev. While Svyatoslav was driving the Pechenegs from Kiev, the Bulgars on the Danube con-
spired with the Greeks to make war on him. In this war against the Bulgars and Greeks, Svyatoslav was defeated. While returning to Kiev he fell into an ambush set for him by the Pechenegs near the Dniepr Rapids, and was vanquished. Svyatoslav himself was killed in battle. The Prince of the Pechenegs made his skull into a wine cup and drank from it at his feasts.

8. THE PRINCES OF KIEV INTRODUCE A NEW RELIGION AND LAWS

**The wars of Prince Vladimir.** After a prolonged struggle against his brothers, Vladimir, Svyatoslav’s son, became ruler of the principality of Kiev, and, like his father, went to war against his disobedient subjects. He crushed the rebellion of the tribes in the north, and plundered the cities of the Bulgars on the Volga. Then he marched his warriors against Poland and captured several cities. He subjugated the Slavonic principality of Polotsk and the lands of several Lithuanian tribes, the western neighbours of the Slavs on the shores of the Baltic Sea. This is how the power of the principality of Kiev grew under Vladimir. Byzantium began to respect it more than ever. Vladimir helped Byzantium to crush a mutiny of the Greek soldiers. As a reward for this the Byzantine emperor gave Vladimir his sister for wife. Vladimir decided to adopt the Christian religion. He thought that the adoption of the Greek faith and his kinship with the Emperor of Byzantium would strengthen his rule.

**The introduction of Christianity.** In the year 988, Vladimir destroyed all the images of the ancient Slavic heathen gods in Kiev. The inhabitants of Kiev were forced to immerse themselves in the River Dniepr. The Greek priests, who had been brought over from Tsargrad (Constantinople), read prayers over the people as they stood in the water. This was called baptism.
Again and again the people rebelled against this new religion; but all the rebellions were crushed by the prince’s warriors.

Compared with idolatry, the introduction of Christianity marked a step forward in the development of Russia. It was accompanied by the spread of Greek culture and education among the Slavs. Byzantine craftsmen taught the Slavs to build and decorate houses and churches. Learned Greek monks invented the Slavonic alphabet, and this began to be used in the Kiev state. The prince gave the Greek priests and monks money and land. The monks wrote religious books in the Slavonic language, translating them from the Greek. They also recorded the important events of their time. These records were kept “from annum to annum” (from year to year) and were called “annals.” From these annals a great deal can be learned about the history of the Eastern Slavs and of the neighbouring countries. We also learn about those times from the folksongs and the legends called bylinas. The bylinas contain many stories about the brave deeds of the Slavonic heroes, or bogatyrs, and about their struggles against the nomads who attacked the Kiev state.

Prince Yaroslav the Wise. After the death of Vladimir, Yaroslav, who was later called the Wise, became Prince of Kiev.

Under Yaroslav, the first code of laws of the principality of Kiev, known as “Russkaya Pravda,” or Russian Right, was compiled. “Russkaya Pravda” contained the laws protecting the rights of the slaveowners, landowners and merchants.

9. SPONTANEOUS REBELLIONS OF THE PEOPLE IN THE PRINCIPALITY OF KIEV

How the princes and boyars ruled the principality of Kiev.

The princes of Kiev had a large number of warriors in their
druzhinas consisting of boyars and serving men. The kinsmen of the prince and the boyars governed the cities and the lands in the name of the prince. Some of the boyars owned large estates, and in their wealth they rivalled the prince.

The prince, his army, the boyars, the priests and monks, all lived on the labour of the slaves and the husbandmen, the smertes, as they were called. The smertes owned small plots of land and small farms, and they were free men, that is, they were not serfs. Under the first princes of Kiev they only paid a tribute, to collect which the princes went among the people.

In Kiev and other cities there lived handicraftsmen, merchants and the town poor. The merchants traded with the smertes and handicraftsmen and supplied goods to the princes, boyars and their troops. The merchants held the handicraftsmen in debt. The richer merchants carried on trade with other countries.

The free handicraftsmen built houses, churches and bridges, made clothes, pottery and arms. In furnaces blown with bellows they smelted ore and obtained iron. Blacksmiths worked in the cities and villages.

The inhabitants of the cities were governed by assemblies of the citizens known as the Veche. The Veche elected the city chiefs from among the rich and prominent citizens. The prince could not recruit soldiers or go to war without the consent of the Veche. Therefore he had to heed the Veche in many things. The princes tried to take the rule over the cities into their own hands, and tyrannized the smertes in the villages with impunity.

The smertes turned into serfs by the princes and boyars. In the 11th century the princes and boyars greatly increased their oppression of the people. They established their own laws, acted as judges, and ill-treated the people. For example, under Yaroslav the Wise, the penalty for murdering a boyar
was a fine of 80 grivnas (or 36 pounds of silver); but the penalty for murdering a smerd was only 5 grivnas.

The princes and boyars seized the land and declared it to be their own property. The smers living on these seized lands were compelled to work in the fields of the princes and boyars, build bridges and fortifications. Gradually, the free husbandmen were turned into bonded peasants, that is to say, into serfs. The smers retaliated by fresh revolts against the princes and boyars.

Spontaneous rebellions against the princes and boyars in the cities. During the 11th and 12th centuries, there were many revolts in Kiev, Novgorod, and other cities. The princes and boyars brought out their druzhinas to crush these rebellions, and did so without much difficulty, for the rebellions were spontaneous and unorganized. In 1113, the oppressed common people of Kiev rose in rebellion against the rule of the prince, the merchant usurers and the rich Kiev-Pechersk Monastery. This rebellion was supported by the smers. The boyars and merchants, frightened by the rebellion, hastened to call Prince Vladimir Monomach to become Prince of Kiev. Vladimir crushed the rebellion. Fearing fresh outbreaks, he slightly reduced the debts to the usurers and introduced slight improvements in the conditions of a section of the husbandmen.

Vladimir Monomach was well known in Byzantium and Europe. For the period in which he lived he was an educated man. His mother was the daughter of the Emperor of Byzantium, and his sister was the wife of the German Emperor. His own wife was the daughter of the King of England. Vladimir Monomach was the last strong prince of Kiev.

10. THE LAND OF NOVGOROD

The break-up of the principality of Kiev. In the 12th century, the principality of Kiev was divided up among the sons, grandsons and kinsmen of Vladimir Monomach. They were constantly at war with one another over principalities and cities. During these wars the princes mercilessly plundered the smers and city people, and forcibly pressed them into military service. The princes also treated one another cruelly. The vanquished princes had their eyes put out, and were starved to death in dungeons. Some of the princes became rich and declared their independence of the chief prince, the Grand Prince of Kiev. Thus, in the 12th century, the principality of Galich Volynia, west of Kiev, that of Suzdal-Rostov in the north, and the land of Novgorod became rich and strong. The principality of Kiev was sacked by nomad raiders, the Polovtsi, from the south. The story of the struggle against these raiders, in the 12th century, has come down to us in the ancient “Lay of Igor’s War.”

The land of Kiev was laid waste still more by the plunder of the princes and boyars. The peasants could no longer bear their violence and deserted the Dniepr, to go as far away as they could, to the Oka and the Volga. Trade in Kiev began to decline. The merchants began to travel from Europe to Asia by other routes, avoiding Kiev. The city of Kiev began to lose its importance as a capital. By the 13th century Kiev became a desolate city. Novgorod became the principal city for trade with foreign countries.

The government of the land of Novgorod. Novgorod was situated on the route to the Baltic Sea, on the shores of which there were rich German and Swedish cities. The Novgorod merchants and boyars carried on a big trade with their neighbours, the Germans and Swedes. From them they bought cloth, weapons and other articles they could not manufacture themselves, and in exchange they sold furs and the products of agriculture. To obtain furs for their foreign trade, the Novgorod boyars and merchants conquered lands in the north and east and forced the hunters inhabiting those lands to surrender the spoils of the hunt to them. Thus, Novgorod
began the principal city of a very big country. There were several thousand houses in this city. While Kiev was declining, the Novgorod boyars and merchants were becoming rich by plundering subdued peoples and by trading with foreigners.

All the affairs of the land of Novgorod were administered by the boyars, rich merchants and priests. They assembled the inhabitants of Novgorod in the Veche, or general assembly, but all matters were decided as the rich and strong boyars wanted them to be. The mayor of Novgorod, known as the posadnik, was elected by the Veche; but it was always a rich boyar who was elected. The powers of the prince of Novgorod were limited. This was definitely established after the great rebellion in Novgorod in 1136. At that time, the people of Novgorod rose against the boyars and merchants. The prince and the boyars fled; the people confiscated the lands of the prince and his retinue and deprived them of the right to own land. They decreed that the prince must always have beside him a posadnik who must be elected by the Veche. The prince could neither go to war, sit in judgment or dismiss or appoint officials without the consent of the posadnik. But the fruits of the people's victory over the prince were again usurped by the all-powerful Novgorod boyars. The inhabitants of Novgorod, the serfs of the surrounding villages, and the subdued tribes rebelled against their rule many times. A rebellion broke out in 1209, the people in Novgorod accusing the boyars of imposing excessive taxation and of oppressing the serfs. The houses of many of the boyars and merchants were sacked, and many of the oppressors were banished from the land of Novgorod. But these were no more than spontaneous revolts. The people were unable to break the power of the boyars and merchants owing to their lack of political consciousness and organization.

**Novgorod's wars against the Swedes and Germans.** In the beginning of the 13th century the Swedes attacked the land of Novgorod. They marched from the Baltic Sea and the River Neva, where Leningrad is situated today. Novgorod defeated the Swedes on the Neva. In commemoration of this victory, Prince Alexander, who was in command of the Novgorod forces, was afterwards known as Alexander Nevsky (Alexander of Neva).

In 1242, German knights tried to seize the land of Novgorod. They first appeared on the shores of the Baltic Sea in the 12th century and mercilessly plundered and exterminated the Slavs, Lithuanians and other tribes inhabiting the Baltic country. Here they built their castles and towns and still further increased their cruelties. They imposed their religion upon the inhabitants, deprived them of their freedom, and converted them into serfs.

The German knights, at the head of a strong army, fell upon the land of Novgorod, laid waste to its towns and
threatened to destroy the city of Novgorod. Prince Alexander Nevsky collected his forces and gave battle to the Germans on the ice of Lake Chud. The battle was a very stubborn one; the ice became red with blood. In this Battle on the Ice the Germans failed to withstand the onslaught of the brave Novgorod warriors and were put to flight. Alexander Nevsky pursued the enemy to the very frontiers of his land. Thus the Novgorodians resolutely repelled the enemy and saved their land from the German invaders.

11. SUZDAL RUSS

The land of Rostov-Suzdal. From the earliest times the land between the Volga and the Oka was inhabited by the Mordovians, Merias, Vess, and other tribes. It was also inhabited by Slavs. By the 10th century the Slavonic towns of Rostov and Suzdal had sprung up in this region.

Slav agriculturists from the southern districts of the principality of Kiev, which had been laid waste by the nomads, came here to escape from the violence of the princes and boyars. But here, too, the princes and boyars seized the land and compelled the inhabitants to work for them.

At first the land of Rostov-Suzdal did not attract the attention of the princes of Kiev. But things changed in the 12th century, when this remote country became settled. Prince Yuri Dolgoruky, son of Vladimir Monomach, came here from Kiev with a strong force of warriors and established his power, subordinating the domains of a number of boyars and minor princes to his rule. Among the estates he thus seized was the village of Moscow.

But the prince who most strongly established his rule in Rostov-Suzdal Russ was Andrei Bogolyubsky, Yuri Dolgoruky’s son. He fought against Novgorod, against the Bulgars on the Volga, and against the Mordovian tribes. Then he captured Kiev and became the Grand Prince over extensive lands, covering nearly the whole of the principality of Kiev.

The principality of Vladimir-Suzdal. Andrei Bogolyubsky established his capital in the city of Vladimir, on the banks of the River Klyazma. From that time on his principality became known as Vladimir-Suzdal. Andrei Bogolyubsky tried to subjugate all the local princes and boyars.

Dissatisfied with Andrei Bogolyubsky’s autocratic rule, the boyars conspired against him and killed him. His place was taken by Prince Vsevolod. He confiscated the villages and lands belonging to the disobedient boyars and sternly punished those who tried to establish themselves as independent princes.

Vsevolod organized several campaigns against Novgorod. He always managed to get his adherents chosen for elective positions in Novgorod.

Vsevolod extended his rule even to Kiev. He waged war on the Bulgars and Mordovians on the Volga. Several years later the city of Nizhni Novgorod (now the city of Gorky) was founded in that district on the Volga. Vsevolod failed to establish his power firmly over the other minor princes and boyars. After his death the principality of Vladimir-Suzdal broke up into small domains. Every prince and boyar tried to be independent and refused to obey the Grand Prince. The various small principalities fought one another.

There was no united, strong state. Every rich landowner tried to secure more land and power. The princes were constantly at war with each other. The continuous wars ruined the peasant population. When later, in the 13th century, the Mongol conquerors attacked the Russian principalities they met with no real, united resistance. The land of Vladimir-Suzdal was broken up into small parts and could not defend its independence.
leader named Genghiz Khan rose above the rest of the Mongol khans. He gathered an enormous army of various tribes and subjugated the Eastern Turco-Mongolian peoples.

Genghiz Khan’s horsemen swept down upon the enemy like a hurricane. They burned the wooden walls of fortresses with lighted grenades made of clay and oil. Stone walls were broken down with huge engines. Nothing could withstand their onslaught.

**Genghiz Khan’s conquests in Central Asia and the Caucasus.** After subjugating North China, Genghiz Khan marched his forces to Central Asia and conquered it. From Central Asia, rounding the southern coast of the Caspian Sea, his forces marched to the Caucasus and conquered Armenia and Georgia. In Georgia the Mongols met with strong resistance. At that time Georgia was a stronger state than Armenia. The Georgians fought bravely, but the Mongols defeated them and imposed heavy tribute upon Georgia and Armenia. For hundreds of years Central Asia and the Trans-Caucasian peoples remained under the rule of the Mongols.

**Khan Batu and his Russian conquests.** After subjugating all the peoples of the Caucasus, the Mongolian army, in 1224, defeated the combined forces of the Slavonic princes and the Polovtsi in a battle on the River Kalka. Carrying rich booty with them, the Mongols returned to Asia.

Fourteen years later the Mongols again appeared on the Volga. At their head was Khan Batu, the grandson of Genghiz Khan, who by that time had died. This time the Mongols attacked the Russians from the east. Batu destroyed the
kingdom of the Volga Bulgars and vanquished the Mordovians, then defeated the armies of the Russian princes one by one, captured Kiev in 1240, and marched on to Western Europe. Meeting with the resistance of the Czechs, Batu turned back and established in the lower reaches of the Volga a state known as the Golden Horde, with Sarai as the capital. This was a rich city, with stone palaces, orchards and a mint. The Khan of the Golden Horde began to rule the conquered lands. The princes remained in their domains, but they were subjects of the khan.

The Tatar-Mongols collected tribute from the people for the benefit of the khan. Viceroyals were appointed to every city at the head of military forces for the purpose of collecting the tribute. No mercy was shown to anyone. In the words of an old ballad: "... from those who have no money their children are taken; from those who have no children, their wives are taken; from those who have no wives, their heads are taken" (that is to say, they are taken captive and sold into slavery). The priests and monks paid no tribute; the khan exempted them. In return for this exemption, the priests and monks read prayers in the churches on behalf of the rule of the khan, and urged the people to submit to him.

There were continuous revolts against the Tatar tribute collectors. The khans of the Golden Horde then charged the Russian princes themselves with the collection of the tribute. After subjugating the Russian principalities, Batu also laid waste to many Ukrainian and Byelorussian lands.

Thus was the Tatar, or rather, the Tatar-Mongolian yoke imposed.

13. MOSCOW AND THE FIRST MOSCOW PRINCES

Moscow. On the hill on which the Kremlin now stands, there was in the beginning of the 12th century the village
RUSSIAN PRINCIPALITIES AND THE GOLDEN HORDE IN THE 13TH AND 14TH CENTURIES

The Mongols conquered the Maisky and eventually reached the Volga. They established a capital at Sarai and created numerous principalities ruled by Russian princes. These princes were forced to pay tribute and serve as vassals to the Mongol emperors. The Mongols were known for their harsh treatment of the conquered peoples, often enslaving them and stripping them of their lands and resources. The Mongol rule was characterized by brutal taxation and exploitation, and it was only after the death of the last Mongol emperor in 1260 that Russian princes were able to reclaim some independence.

As the Tatar power was divided, the princes rebelled and they were able to claim a section of the former Mongol domains. The Mongolian yoke was eventually overturned, and the princes regained their independence but were still faced with the challenge of maintaining their status and power in a region that was still recovering from the Mongol invasion.

The princes' power was not unchallenged, as the Mongol principalities continued to exist and maintain some influence in the region. The princes had to navigate a complex web of alliances and dependencies to maintain their position.

In conclusion, the Mongol conquest of Russia had a profound impact on the region, leaving a lasting legacy in the form of the Russian principalities and the Mongol principalities, which continued to exist as independent entities in the region for many years.
of Moscow. In ancient documents Moscow is first mentioned in 1147. In 1156, Moscow was surrounded by a wooden stockade.

The Tatar-Mongols of Khan Batu burned down Moscow and the wooden stockade that protected it. Part of its inhabitants perished, and part fled to the surrounding forests. But gradually the inhabitants returned and began to till the land.

Towards the 14th century Moscow became the capital of a small principality. Moscow was centrally located among the Russian principalities, which helped the princes of Moscow to unite all the other principalities around it. Moscow was surrounded by forests, and this helped to protect it against enemies, and particularly, against the Tartars. Since Moscow was situated on convenient river routes, the princes were able to collect large sums in the form of duties imposed on all goods carried on the Moskva River.

**Ivan Kalita.** Moscow became particularly strong under Prince Ivan (1328—1341), who was nicknamed Kalita, or Money-Bag. By means of gifts and flattery, Kalita got into the good favour of his overlord, the Khan of the Golden Horde, and obtained from him the right to collect the tribute for him in all the lands of Russia. Part of this tribute he kept for himself and his principality. With the money thus hoarded he bought villages, counties, and even whole principalities. He also denounced his neighbour princes to the Tartars and incited the Tatar khan against them. Because of his denunciations, the Tartars killed the princes and laid waste to their principalities. Kalita annexed these ruined principalities to his principality of Moscow. The khan elevated Kalita over all the other Russian princes, and gave him the title of Grand Prince. At the beginning of his reign Kalita had only four towns in his possession; at his death he bequeathed to his children 97 villages and towns.

Thus, resorting to every means, Kalita gathered the dis-
united Russian principalities into a single state with Moscow its centre.

Kalita’s descendants were also “gatherers” of the lands of Russia. At the end of the 14th century the principality of Moscow had become so strong that Kalita’s grandson, Dmitry, decided to rise in open revolt against the Tatar yoke. In 1380, on Kulikovo Field, on the River Don, he defeated the Tatar army headed by Khan Mamai. Two years later, however, the Tatars collected their forces again, attacked Moscow, captured it, and compelled it to pay tribute, but a smaller amount than before.

The young principality of Moscow grew strong, nevertheless. The strength of the old enemy, the Golden Horde, was declining. But a new and strong enemy appeared on the western frontiers of the principality of Moscow. This was the Lithuanian state which had united with Poland.

**Lithuania and Poland, the enemies of the Moscow state.**

The Lithuanian tribes were neighbours of the Slavs, and lived in the west, on the shores of the Baltic Sea. Towards the 13th century they united under the rule of a single prince, and in the 13th and 14th centuries they conquered the lands of the Byelorussians and part of the lands of Ukraine and Russia. Lithuania became a large state. At the end of the 14th century its frontiers nearly reached those of the Grand Principality of Moscow and included the city of Smolensk. The Lithuanian prince, Yagailo, who had married the Queen of Poland, became the King of Poland and Lithuania. The alliance between Lithuania and Poland strengthened both states. They now began to press upon the Grand Principality of Moscow more strongly than ever.

The Ukrainians, Byelorussians and Russians had lived a hard life under the rule of their princes and boyars. But their lot became worse under the rule of the Polish and Lithuanian conquerors, who reduced all the peasants to serfdom.
The *pans*, as the Polish landlords were called, compelled the peasants to change their Greek Orthodox religion for the Roman Catholic religion which they themselves professed. The Polish pans in the Ukraine were particularly insistent on this change. In the towns the pans prohibited Ukrainians and Byelorussians from engaging in trade and handicrafts. The administration of the towns was entirely in the hands of the pans. The latter dreamed of subjugating the whole of the principality of Moscow; but they were attacked by the German knights who had settled on the shores of the Baltic Sea. The Germans sacked the Lithuanian and Polish towns and laid waste to the land. The Poles and Lithuanians were not strong enough to fight the Germans and wage war against Moscow at the same time; but when their united forces had defeated the Germans they resumed their attacks upon the Moscow state with greater energy. In order to subdue Moscow the pans concluded an alliance with the Tatars.

14. TAMERLANE AND THE DECLINE OF THE GOLDEN HORDE

Tamerlane. While the young principality of Moscow, having united under the rule of a single prince, grew and became strong, the old empire of Genghiz Khan gradually became enfeebled. China threw off the yoke of the Mongols. The Mongol Empire itself gradually broke up into separate parts. Only from time to time now great conquerors arose among the Mongol khans. One of these conquerors was Tamerlane.

Tamerlane was born in Central Asia, in 1336. When he was a young man he became the leader of a band of daring warriors and placed his forces at the service, first of one ruler, and then of another. Tamerlane first came to the forefront during the suppression of a popular rebellion in the city of Samarkand, in Central Asia. After cruelly suppressing the rebels, Tamerlane proclaimed himself the ruling khan, and made Samarkand his capital.

Tamerlane conquered a number of neighbouring states. In 1395 he defeated Tokhtamysh, the Khan of the Golden Horde, and thus helped Moscow to free itself more quickly from the Tatar yoke. The princes of Moscow took advantage of the declining strength of the Golden Horde and turned their forces against Lithuania and Poland. At the end of the 14th century, Tamerlane destroyed Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, and took the Georgian king captive.

Tamerlane was fierce and cruel. Once, after capturing a town, he buried alive 4,000 of the inhabitants. After capturing another town he ordered his warriors to cut off the heads of 70,000 inhabitants, collect them and heap them up tower-high.

In every country he subjugated, Tamerlane chose the best craftsmen and sent them to Central Asia. To his capital, Samarkand, which he wanted to convert into a beautiful city, he sent 150,000 craftsmen. He built many palaces in the city and outside the city. The walls of these palaces were decorated with paintings depicting his campaigns. Tamerlane’s Mosque in Samarkand is to this day an edifice of striking grandeur and beauty.

The Uzbeks in Central Asia. After Tamerlane’s death in 1405, the states he conquered gradually became independent again.

In the 15th century, Central Asia was conquered by the nomad Uzbeks, who before then had inhabited the country of what is now Kazakhstan. The Uzbeks firmly established themselves in Central Asia. The Uzbek khans became the rulers of the Horezm and Bokhara states.
IV
THE RISE OF THE
RUSSIAN NATIONAL STATE

15. THE EXPANSION OF THE MOSCOW STATE UNDER
IVAN III, AND THE END OF THE
TATAR-MONGOL YOKE

The annexation of Novgorod and the release of the
Moscow state from the yoke of the Tatar khans. In order to
fight the Tatars and the Lithuanian and Polish pans, the
princes of Moscow strove to enlarge their domains and to
establish their rule over all the lands of Russia. This was
achieved by Ivan III. He became Grand Prince in 1462. But
he was still subjected to the Khan of the Golden Horde, al-
though the latter was now weakened. Ivan deceived the khan
by assuring him of his loyalty, but secretly he strove to gather
forces and emancipate himself from subjugation to the Tatars.
Ivan III united under his rule a number of neighbouring
principalities. The princes did not want to be united under
the rule of one prince, and had concluded alliances with the
Tatars and Lithuania, against Moscow. Nevertheless, Ivan III
succeeded during his reign in making Muscovy a strong and
united Russian national state. The land of Novgorod alone
remained a separate state.

At the end of the 15th century, Ivan III went to war
against Novgorod. The boyars of Novgorod concluded an
alliance with Lithuania, but this did not save them. Ivan III
defeated the Novgorod army, and Novgorod also became a
part of the united Russian state. By this time the Golden
Horde had broken up into three khanates: Kazan, Astrakhan
and Crimea. The Realm of Siberia, on the River Irtysh,
seceded from it. The break-up of the Golden Horde gave an
advantage to the princes of Moscow. The Golden Horde was
no longer terrible for the Russian state, which had now be-
come strong.

Choosing a favourable moment, Ivan III declared to the
Khan of the Golden Horde that he no longer recognized

Foreign merchants unloading their wares at the wharf in Novgorod

his overlordship over Moscow. The khan then went to war
against Ivan III. The opposing armies met on the River
Ugra, but neither of them dared to go into battle. They
stood facing each other for several months. The winter frosts
set in. The khan lacked fodder for his horses, and, moreover,
news was received of revolts in the Horde. The khan decided
to turn back, and Ivan III thus became the “victor.” This
was in the year 1480. The yoke of the Tatar-Mongols, which
Russia had borne for over two hundred years, was thrown off.
The Golden Horde had become quite feeble, and soon after it fell to pieces.

**Ivan III’s war against Lithuania and Poland.** In 1500 a stubborn war broke out between Ivan III and the King of Poland and Lithuania. The Polish and Lithuanian armies were utterly defeated and their chief commander was taken prisoner. The King of Poland and Lithuania then concluded an alliance with the German knights of the Baltic. At first, the Germans inflicted defeat on the forces of Ivan III; but soon after, his armies took the offensive, defeated the Germans, and laid waste to their lands.

The war ended with the conclusion of an armistice for six years. Ivan III retained possession of the Russian and Byelorussian lands he had captured from the Pans.

Under the reign of Ivan III the possessions of the Russian state increased threefold.

**“Ivan III, Ruler of all the Russians.”** After the conquest of Byzantium by the Turks in 1453, Ivan III married the Greek princess, Sophia Palaeologue.

Ivan III now declared that he was the successor to the Byzantine emperors. He adopted the ancient emblem of Byzantium, the Double Eagle, as the emblem of the Moscow state, and he began to call himself Tsar and “Ruler of all the Russians.”

Ivan now made great efforts to beautify Moscow. For this purpose he invited Italian craftsmen, technicians and painters to Moscow. He reconstructed the small Moscow Kremlin, and converted it into a huge stone and brick castle, with buildings of a kind hitherto unseen in Moscow. To this day the walls and towers of the Kremlin built by the Italians serve as a striking monument of the times of Ivan III.

In the Kremlin Palace Ivan introduced the pomp and customs of the court of the Greek emperors.

The increase in the power of the Prince of Moscow, however, led to an increase in the boyars’ oppression of the masses of the peasantry.

**16. HOW THE PEASANTS IN THE MOSCOW STATE WERE OPPRESSED IN THE 15th CENTURY**

**Forced labour (barshchina and obrok).** In all parts of the principality of Moscow there were the estates of the prince, boyars and the monasteries. The landlords lived with their families, servants and guards in manors which were shut off by high fences. The villages in which the peasants lived were scattered all around the manor. The peasants lived in low huts without windows or chimneys, and with an earthen floor. They tilled the land with the sokha, or wooden plough.

The plots of land which the peasants cultivated for their sustenance no longer belonged to them, but to the prince, the boyars and the monasteries. In return for the right to use the land the peasants were compelled to do all that the landlord demanded of them.

They tilled the landlord’s land, threshed and ground his grain, mowed his hay and stacked it in the manor grounds, built his manor house, his outhouses, constructed bridges, and dug ponds and roadside trenches.

But this was not enough for the princes, the boyars and the monasteries. They still thought that the peasants were tilling too much for themselves and too little for their masters. They therefore began to take part of the plots of land which the peasants cultivated for themselves. They compelled the peasants to do more work on the master’s land. This forced labour was known as barshchina.

In addition to barshchina, the peasants were compelled to give their masters a part of the produce of their farms,
such as grain, cattle, chickens, eggs, milk, butter and so on. This payment in kind was called obrok. Those peasants who failed to perform barshchina or pay obrok were severely punished. They were beaten with sticks almost to death and flung into prison.

**The peasants become bound to the soil.** The peasants were allowed to leave their masters if they desired to do so, but were compelled to leave their farms and farm buildings, and pay up all their debts to their masters, which debts were considerable. On leaving one master the peasant had to seek another who would allow him to settle on his land. The conditions for tilling the land were the same in the new place as they were in the old. The peasant could not escape from bondage except by fleeing to lands where there were no masters. But such free land became more and more scarce.

The landlords found it unprofitable to allow the peasants to leave whenever they desired. The boyars and the monasteries began to allow peasants to go to another master only after the harvest work was over. In 1497 Ivan III passed a law which permitted peasants to pass from one master to another only on St. George’s day, in the late autumn.

In this way the peasants were tied to their masters’ land to an ever greater extent. The master had the right to sit in judgment over his peasants, and to beat them with sticks if they disobeyed him.

In addition to the boyars and the monasteries, a new type of landlord arose during the reign of Ivan III. These were the pomeschiks, or gentry who had been in military service, or in the service of the princes and boyars. As a reward for their services in war, or for protecting the frontiers, they received from the prince grants of land with the peasants who lived on it. From this land, which was tilled by the peasants and was entirely under the rule of the pomeschik, the latter had to maintain himself and his family, acquire military equipment and a horse, and in case of war, to provide a certain number of men.

The prince “placed” his serving men on parts of the new lands which they conquered. These estates were therefore called “pomestya” (from the word “pomestit”—to place) and the landlords were known as pomeschiks. The boyars, however, owned their land by right of inheritance; the land passed from father to son and these estates were therefore called votochinas, or patrimonies.
V
THE EXPANSION OF THE RUSSIAN STATE

17. IVAN IV AND THE DEFEAT OF THE VOLGA TATARS

The autocrat tsar. Ivan III’s grandson, the future Ivan IV, known as Ivan the Terrible, lost his father at an early age. The boyars poisoned his mother and ruled the country for ten years. The young Ivan grew up among the arrogant boyars, who treated him with contempt and imbued him with all the bad habits imaginable.

In 1547, Ivan, then only seventeen years of age, proclaimed himself to be the autocratic tsar, the first of the rulers of Moscow to claim this title, and began to govern the country by himself, ignoring the boyars.

Ivan IV considered it very important for the purpose of strengthening his rule that people in his kingdom should acquire education by reading books which glorified the reign of the tsar. For this purpose he made use of the art of printing books which had been invented abroad, and established a printing office in Moscow. Here books were printed under his strict supervision. The first Russian printer to work in this printing office was Ivan Fedorov.

The conquest of Kazan and Astrakhan. In order to strengthen his power, Ivan IV pursued the same policy of conquest as was pursued by his grandfather, Ivan III, and by his father, Vasili III, who had captured Smolensk from Lithuania. Ivan IV decided first to capture the Tatar khanates on the Volga. With a large army and many cannon, he laid siege to Kazan, the capital of the khanate of Kazan, in the autumn of 1552.

The siege lasted the whole autumn. The Tatars fought with desperate courage and stubbornness. The tsar blew up the secret tunnel from Kazan to the river, and the inhabitants of Kazan were compelled to drink contaminated water from puddles and wells. Still the people of Kazan continued to defend their city, repelling the attackers day and night.

The tsar ordered the walls of the city to be undermined and blown up with gunpowder. Fierce fighting took place at the city gates and in the breaches of the walls. Even the Tatar women and children took part in the fighting, defending their city from the enemy. But the strength of the defenders of Kazan became exhausted. Ivan IV’s troops, numbering 150,000, overcame the Tatars. Kazan was sacked and burned to the ground.

A large number of Moscow serving men and merchants were transferred to Kazan; the Tatars, however, were permitted to live only in a suburb. The lands of Kazan were distributed among Russian serving men. In many parts of the Kazan khanate fortresses were built, in which Muscovite troops were stationed. These fortresses were built by the forced labour of the inhabitants of the khanate of Kazan: Tatars, Mordovians, Maris, Chuvash and Bashkirs. With the
subjugation of Kazan they all came under the rule of Ivan IV.

In 1556, the armies of Ivan IV captured the city of Astrakhan on the Volga, the capital of the Nogai Tatars. Thus, the whole of the Volga route fell into the hands of the Russian tsar.

After this, Ivan IV seized the north-eastern part of the Caucasus and built several fortresses on the River Terek. The Circassian and Kabardin princes began to enter his service.

From a national state, the Russian state began to grow into a multi-national state, that is to say, a state consisting of different nationalities.

18. REPRISALS AGAINST THE BOYARS AND IVAN IV's WARS

The oprichniki. After conquering the lands of the Tatars on the Volga and entrenching himself in the North Caucasus, Ivan IV went to war against the Baltic Germans, Poland, Lithuania and the Swedes. His object was to reach the shores of the Baltic Sea and establish intercourse with the West European nations. The Swedes and Germans barred the way of foreign craftsmen travelling to Moscow, and did all they could to hinder Russian trade.

After the first defeats in the war, Ivan discovered that he was being betrayed by the big patrimonial boyars. These traitors went into the service of the Poles and Lithuanians. Tsar Ivan hated the boyars, who lived in their patrimonies like little tsars and tried to limit his autocratic power. He began to banish and execute the rich and strong boyars. He thought it necessary to fight the boyars in order to crush these little tsars and to strengthen his position as
sole ruler. To fight the boyars he recruited from among the pomeshchiks a special force, several thousand strong. This force he called the oprichniki.

The oprichniki wore a special uniform. Attached to his saddle each oprichnik had a dog’s head and a broom. This was the emblem of their office: to hunt and track the enemies of the tsar, and to sweep away the treacherous boyars.

Ivan IV and his oprichniki exterminated many boyars. The lands of the executed boyars were distributed among the oprichniki and other pomeshchiks. In this way, Ivan the Terrible strengthened autocratic power in the Russian state and destroyed the privileges of the boyars.

He thus, as it were, completed the work, started by Ivan Kalita, of gathering together the scattered appanage principalities into one strong state.

**Peasants and Cossacks.** During the reign of Ivan IV, the conditions of the peasants became much worse. Towards the end of his reign peasants were forbidden to leave their masters even in the late autumn, on St. George’s Day.

To escape the plunder and violence of the landlords and oprichniki, the peasants fled from Central Russia to the steppes in the southern regions of the country and settled there. Many of these fugitive peasants settled on the banks of the rivers Don and Dniepr. Soon settlements sprang up here, the inhabitants of which called themselves Cossacks.

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**The war for the Baltic lands.** For twenty-four years Ivan the Terrible waged war for the purpose of conquering the lands of the Baltic; but in the end he failed. The Poles and the Lithuanians captured the Baltic region and reconquered the Byelorussian lands which Ivan the Terrible had captured at the beginning of the war. The Swedes drove him from the coast of the Gulf of Finland. A convenient sea route for trade with foreign countries was thus lost.

Ivan the Terrible was therefore obliged to carry on trade with foreign countries only through the White Sea, which was an inconvenient route, and, moreover, was frozen for several months in the year. It was an English sea captain who discovered this route by chance. He was trying to reach the Indian Ocean via the Arctic Ocean, but a storm drove his vessel to the mouth of the North Dvina, where, later, the Port of Archangel was built.

**The conquest of the Siberian kingdom.** At the end of the 16th century the lands of Western Siberia were joined to the kingdom of Moscow. The kingdom of Siberia was inhabited by Tatars and other Siberian peoples. They were ruled over by Khan Kuchum. In 1581, the Stroganovs, a family of rich merchants, owners of land in the Urals, sent a small detachment of mercenary troops consisting of Cossacks, well armed with firearms, against Kuchum. This detachment, under the command of Yermak, defeated the much more numer-

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An oprichnik with a broom in his hand and a dog’s head fastened to his saddle. *From an ancient drawing*

![Yermak](image)
ous army of Khan Kuchum which was armed with bows and arrows.

Ivan the Terrible rewarded Yermak with a suit of armour and his own fur coat, and also gave the Cossacks in his detachment rich rewards. Later on, however, Kuchum succeeded in defeating Yermak’s detachment. Yermak himself perished in the River Irtysk during a night attack by Kuchum’s warriors. Kuchum once again established his rule in the kingdom of Siberia, but not for long. A few years later an army was sent against him from Moscow, which finally subjugated the kingdom of Siberia.

Under the reign of Ivan IV, Russia’s possessions were enlarged manyfold. His kingdom became one of the biggest states in the world.
armed with bows

with a suit of armour

Kuchum succeeded

Yermak himself

established his rule

A few years

Moscow, which

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one of the biggest
VI
THE PEASANT WARS
AND REVOLTS OF THE OPPRESSED
PEOPLES IN THE 17TH CENTURY

19. THE FIRST PEASANT WAR IN THE RUSSIAN STATE

Tsar Boris Godunov and the beginning of the peasant revolts. Ivan IV died in 1584. Shortly before his death he killed his eldest son, Ivan, in a fit of anger, by striking him on the temple with his staff. Two other sons remained, Fedor, who was an imbecile, and Dmitry, who was still a child. The imbecile Fedor became tsar. Under his reign the country was governed by his brother-in-law, Boris Godunov, who was formerly one of Ivan the Terrible's oprichniki. Little Dmitry, who had lived with his mother in the town of Uglich, died, or was done to death by Godunov's adherents.

After the death of Fedor in 1598, Boris Godunov became tsar.

Under Godunov's reign the conditions of the peasantry became much worse. The peasants fled from the landlords to the Ukraine and to the Don. For three years running the harvest had failed. A severe famine set in. The peasants ate chaff, cats and dogs, and were even reduced to cannibalism. A plague broke out; corpses were strewn along the roads, but there was no one to bury them. In a number of places the peasants rose in revolt and wrecked the mansions of their oppressors, the boyars and the pomeshchiks. Popular unrest also broke out in the towns.

The first attempts of the Polish pans to subjugate the Russian state. The old enemies of the Russian state, the
Polish pans, decided to take advantage of the favourable situation created for them by the unrest, to attempt to subjugate Russia. For this purpose they spread the rumor that Dmitry, the son of Ivan the Terrible, did not die in Uglich, but had fled from Boris Godunov to Poland. The Poles found a man to suit their purpose, proclaimed that he was the Tsarevich, or Crown Prince, Dmitry, and sent him with their army against Moscow. This false Dmitry was to dethrone Boris Godunov and take his place as tsar. In the Ukraine, False Dmitry, as he is known, was joined by the Cossacks of the Don and the Dniepr, who were discontented with the boyars.

At this time Tsar Boris Godunov died, and the tsar’s troops made no resistance to False Dmitry. False Dmitry reached Moscow without hindrance, and entered the city with great pomp as the real tsar. The mother of the dead Tsarevich Dmitry had been bribed by the boyars and publicly recognized the pretender as her son. False Dmitry became tsar.

The Poles rejoiced; their plan had succeeded. Their henchman was tsar in Moscow. False Dmitry married a Polish woman named Marina Mnishek and he granted her father large tracts of land. The Poles who came to Moscow were given the best positions in the state and began to oppress and rob the people. False Dmitry openly treated the ancient Russian customs with contempt.

Unrest broke out among the people against the Poles and against the new tsar.

The people began to attack the Poles. The boyars, taking advantage of the unrest, conspired against False Dmitry and killed him. The pretender’s corpse was burned on a bonfire and his ashes were rammed into a cannon and shot out in the direction from which he had come.

False Dmitry was succeeded on the throne by Vasili Shuisky, a rich patrimonial landowner and boyar of ancient family. He was chosen as tsar on Red Square in Moscow.

This election was arranged by the boyars and the rich merchants during the popular revolt against the Poles.

Ivan Bolotnikov, the peasants’ leader. The peasant revolt continued under the reign of Shuisky. At this time an energetic leader named Ivan Bolotnikov rose among the peasants. Bolotnikov had formerly been a serf to one of the boyars and had fled from him. He had been to Turkey and Italy, and had seen a great deal. He was a gifted military leader, and the peasants, minor serving men and Cossacks rallied to him in large numbers. He collected an army in the south, and in 1606 marched on Moscow to overthrow the boyar tsar, Vasili Shuisky, and to put a “good” tsar in his place.

In the towns and villages along the line of march the rebels captured the tsar’s officials, exterminated the boyars and pomeshchiks, laid waste to their estates and destroyed the houses of the rich merchants. Detachments of small landowners, who were discontented with the tyranny of the boyars and with the boyar tsar, Shuisky, also joined Bolotnikov’s army.

Bolotnikov laid siege to Moscow. The small landowners who had joined Bolotnikov soon realized that his victory would weaken the power of the landlords. During a battle outside of Moscow these landlord detachments betrayed Bolotnikov and deserted to the side of the boyars and Tsar Shuisky. Bolotnikov’s army was defeated.
Bolotnikov retreated, first to Kaluga and then to Tula, in order to prepare for another attack on Moscow. Shuisky with a large army besieged Bolotnikov in Tula. The rebel army defended itself heroically, but suffered defeat. This is not surprising. The peasants at that time had no such ally and leader as the working class. Besides, the peasants themselves lacked political consciousness. They did not fight against tsarism and landlordism, but against the bad tsar and the bad landlords. They wanted a “good” tsar and “good” landlords.

In the winter of 1607 Ivan Bolotnikov was taken prisoner by the boyars. They put out his eyes and then took him to the river and drowned him in a hole in the ice. The conditions of the defeated peasantry became still worse. Shuisky issued new decrees increasing the state of bondage of the serfs. These decrees gave the landlords the right to search for and bring back fugitive peasants for a period of fifteen years from the time of their escape. The peasant revolts continued.

20. THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE POLISH USURPERS

The Polish usurpers and their expulsion from Moscow: After the failure of their first attempt to subjugate Russia, the Polish pans made another attempt. They put forward another pretender. The rumour was spread that it was not False Dmitry who was killed in Moscow, but another man, and that Dmitry had escaped. This new False Dmitry marched at the head of a Polish army 10,000 strong. He encamped with his army in the village of Tushino, near Moscow, and called upon Shuisky to abdicate the throne in his favour. Shuisky appealed to the Swedes for help. The Swedes, taking advantage of the weakness of the Moscow government, captured Novgorod. At the same time, the Polish king, Sigizmund, reached Smolensk at the head of an army, defeated the Moscow troops and captured the city. Russia’s enemies were tearing her to pieces.

The Moscow nobles drove Shuisky from the throne and compelled him to enter a monastery. At this time the second False Dmitry was killed. Meanwhile, popular unrest continued. The Moscow boyars were unable to cope with the rebels. To save themselves they chose the Polish Crown Prince, Wladislaw, son of King Sigizmund, tsar in place of Shuisky. “It is better to serve the Crown Prince than be beaten by our own serfs,” they said. In the autumn of 1610, the Polish forces entered Moscow with the help of the boyars and occupied the Kremlin. The Polish pans plundered the Treasury of the Moscow tsars. The usurpers seized the landed estates and distributed them among their adherents, and oppressed and robbed the Russian people.

Six months later, in the spring of 1611, the people of Moscow rose in rebellion against the Polish oppressors. Barricades of tables, boxes and logs were built in the streets of Moscow. Behind these the people of Moscow fired at the Poles. From the roofs of the houses a rain of bullets and stones poured down upon them. The Poles set fire to Moscow, and the greater part of the city was burned. The Poles fortified themselves behind the walls of the Kremlin. In the autumn of 1611 the whole people of Russia rose in rebellion against the Polish usurpers.

The march against the Poles entrenched in Moscow was organized and led by a Nizhni Novgorod meat merchant, Kozma Minin. He appealed to the people in the towns to collect money; with this money he equipped a large army. The choice of commander of his army fell upon Prince Pozharsky, an experienced military leader. A number of the peasant detachments who were fighting the landlords joined his army. This decided the issue. The people’s army marched to Moscow and besieged the Poles in the
and all over the country. The tsar sent troops to crush these detachments and those who had taken part in the rebellion. In Moscow the tsar’s chancellories, with their scriveners and under-scriveners, got busy again; and again the people groaned under the tyranny of the voevodas, or governors of provinces, and officials.

With a generous hand Tsar Michael distributed estates and high salaries to the landlords.

Tsar Michael carefully protected the interests of the landlords who had elected him.


Revolts in the towns. After the death of Tsar Michael Romanov, his son Alexei became tsar of Muscovy. By his order a heavy salt tax was introduced in 1646. This tax roused the anger of the people. Fearing a rebellion, Tsar Alexei repealed the tax. But the tax was not the only trouble. Even after it was repealed the people of Moscow rose against their oppressors. In 1648 the people of Moscow caused a “riot,” as popular rebellions were called at that time. The people well remembered the wrongs inflicted upon them by the tsar’s servants and officials. They demanded that the chief of these officials be surrendered to them for punishment.

The tsar promised to fulfill the demands of the rebels, but he sent his horsemen against them, who beat them with whips and trampled upon them with their horses. Then the crowds of people wrecked the houses of the most hated of the boyars and tsarist officials and killed a number of them. The rebellion was crushed by the tsar’s troops. In that year, 1648, rebellions in other towns were also crushed. After this, the tsar assembled the representatives
of the boyars, landlords and merchants in what was known as the Zemsky Sbor. In 1649 they passed a law granting the landlords the right to search for and bring back fugitive peasants no matter how long since they had escaped. The peasants were made complete serfs. A census was taken

of all villages and peasant households. It became very difficult for a fugitive peasant to hide anywhere. At that time, also, handicraftsmen and small traders were forbidden to move from one town to another without permission.

In the towns the handicraftsmen lived in special districts called slobodas, according to their occupations. For example, there was a Tanners' Sloboda, Potters' Sloboda, Gunsmiths' Sloboda, etc. There were many such slobodas in Moscow, which was the largest city in the country. The narrow crooked streets of these slobodas in Moscow were lined with small houses with two or three tiny windows.

The handicraftsmen earned little. Their lives were very hard; they were robbed by the voevodas and merchants. The revolts of the handicraftsmen and town poor continued. These revolts assumed particularly large dimensions in Pskov and Novgorod in 1650. They were joined

by the peasants. Tsar Alexei had to send a large army to suppress the revolts.

The town poor rose in rebellion also in subsequent years. For example, a great revolt broke out in Moscow in 1662. In suppressing this revolt the tsar's soldiers killed and drowned in the River Moscow several thousand rebels.

The Bashkir rebellion. In the same year, in the Urals, the Bashkir people, who had been conquered by Ivan IV soon after he had captured Kazan, rose in rebellion. The Bashkirs were joined by the Tatars. The rebels captured a transport containing weapons and obtained gunpowder. They fought
against the Moscow soldiers for three years. They laid siege to the tsar’s fortresses; but in the end they were defeated.

22. UKRAINE’S STRUGGLE AGAINST POLISH DOMINATION. UKRAINE JOINS RUSSIA.

Bogdan Khmelnitisky and the Ukrainian peasant war against the Polish pans. Beginning with the 13th century the Ukraine gradually passed under the yoke of the Polish and Lithuanian pans. The latter transformed all the peasants into serfs. Even slight offenses by their serfs they punished with death. In some of the Polish manors permanent gallows were erected. The Poles forcibly compelled the Ukrainian people to adopt their religion.

In Poland, and in Byelorussia, too, the peasants groaned under the tyranny of the pans. The serfs fled from the pans to the Dniepr, where they built small fortifications below the Rapids and called the place Zaporozhskaya Sich, or the Camp below the Rapids; and they called themselves Zaporozhye Cossacks. In other places, in the Ukrainian towns and villages, lived the town Cossacks. The town Cossacks as well as the Zaporozhye Cossacks were divided into rich and poor. The Cossacks were organized in regiments. Their chiefs were elected by the Cossacks. These chiefs were called hetmans.

The peasants and Cossacks frequently rose in rebellion against the Polish rulers. Even the rich Cossacks were discontented with the Poles because they robbed the land, and because of their oppression.

In 1648 a great rebellion of Cossacks and peasants broke out against the Poles. This rebellion was led by a rich town Cossack named Bogdan Khmelnitisky.

Bogdan Khmelnitisky sent his people disguised as beggars and monks to the villages of the Ukraine to rouse the peasants for the struggle against the pans. Soon the peasants rose in rebellion in all parts of the Ukraine and Byelorussia. The rebels began to wreck the mansions of the pans. The latter were compelled to split up their forces in order to fight Khmelnitisky and the rebel peasants. Khmelnitisky succeeded in defeating the Polish troops and in capturing their chief leaders.

The news of Khmelnitisky’s victories rapidly spread throughout the Ukraine, Byelorussia and Poland. The peasants rallied to Khmelnitisky’s standard in large masses. One of the most outstanding of the peasant leaders was Maxim Krivonos. Khmelnitisky, however, did not want to give the peasants freedom. He himself was a landlord and owned serfs. He started negotiations with the Poles and concluded a treaty with them which granted many concessions to the Cossacks. The Poles promised to pay the Cossacks regular salaries, to supply them with arms, and not to deprive them of their liberties.

The Polish pans deceived Khmelnitisky, however, and failed to carry out their promises. Then Khmelnitisky went to war against the Poles again.

The Ukraine joins Russia. There seemed to be no prospect of the war coming to an end. The Poles were devastating the country. In order to extricate himself from his difficult position, Khmelnitisky, in 1654, concluded a treaty with Tsar Alexei of Moscow, who professed the same religion as he. In accordance with this treaty Ukraine became subject to Russia. The Cossack elders received the rights which formerly they had tried to obtain from Poland. The peasants of the Ukraine were released from the oppression of the pans. No one was now forcing an alien religion upon them. But the fact that the Ukraine was joined to Russia did not free the toilers of the Ukraine from the oppression of their elders and hetmans.

To assist Khmelnitisky, the tsar made war upon Poland.
The war ended with the annexation by Russia of all the lands on the left bank of the Dniepr and of the city of Kiev.

23. STEPAN RAZIN’S WAR AGAINST THE BOYARS AND LANDLORDS

The Cossacks of the Don. The peasants who fled to the south, to the banks of the River Don and its tributaries, formed large Cossack settlements which were called stanitsyas.

There was no equality among the Cossacks of the Don in the middle of the 17th century. Some of the Cossacks had seized the best lands, accumulated property, began to trade, and became rich. Others remained poor. The poor Cossacks either had to go into bondage to the rich Cossacks, or to obtain their livelihood by robbery. The tsar’s voyevodas hunted down the fugitives and returned them to the landlords. The poor Cossacks hated the Moscow landlords bitterly. They were roused to rebellion by the Cossack Stepan Razin.

Stepan Razin and his struggle against the boyars and landlords. A foreign traveller, who was in Muscovy at that time, described Razin as follows: “He is of majestic appearance and noble bearing; proud of feature, tall in stature, his face slightly pock-marked. He possessed the ability to inspire fear and love.”

Stepan Razin rallied large masses of poor people to his standard. He was elected ataman, or chief. Many Cossacks and other people who were enraged against the tsar’s voyevodas and the landlords joined him.

In the spring of 1670, Razin, at the head of an army of 7,000 men, attacked Tsaritsin on the Volga (now called Stalingrad) and captured that town. Here the tsar’s soldiers, the Strelets, came over to his side. Then he marched on Astrakhan and captured that town after a siege of two days.

The rich merchants, boyars and the tsar’s officials were put to death by the Cossacks. Razin threw the voyevoda of Astrakhan from the belfry of the church. In Astrakhan Razin’s followers elected administrators from among the Cossacks.

With the munitions captured in Astrakhan, Razin moved up the Volga. He captured cities and wreaked vengeance on the tsar’s voyevodas and officials. He sent messengers among the peasants to call upon them to join his ranks.

In response to Razin’s call, the peasants rose in rebellion, killed their landlords, burned down the manors, and joined
Razin's army in whole detachments. The peoples of the Volga, the Chuvash, Tatars, Mordovians and Maris, marched with the Russian peasants. The fact that they spoke different languages did not hinder them. Their hatred for the tsar and the landlords united them into one common family.

**Suppression of the peasant movement and execution of Razin.** The tsar and the landlords gathered their army and regiments of mercenary foreign soldiers and marched against Razin. Razin found it hard to contend against these well-armed forces. He gave them battle near Simbirsk. Razin was wounded. His army was defeated. With a small detachment he managed to retire to the Don. But the rich Cossacks of the Don captured him and surrendered him to the tsar. The tsar pronounced the following sentence on him: "Put him to a cruel death."

Razin was executed in Moscow in 1671.

Tsar Alexei dealt cruelly with the rebel peasants. Thousands of the rebels were hacked to pieces, whipped to death and hanged on gallows. The peasant revolt was crushed.

During the Razin rebellion, as was the case during Bolotnikov's rebellion, the peasants did not have an organized working class for their reliable ally. Nor did they understand the aim of the rebellion; they could wreck the landlords' mansions and kill the landlords, but they did not know what to do further, what new order to introduce.

This was the cause of their weakness.

**24. THE SUBJUGATION OF THE PEOPLES OF EASTERN SIBERIA**

**The subjugation of Eastern Siberia.** Detachments of Cossacks penetrated Siberia along the rivers, travelling in boats; often they had to cross overland from one river to another and dragged the boats across. A Cossack, Semen Dezhnev, at the head of a small detachment, was the first to reach by sea the narrow straits between Asia and America. Cape Dezhnev, the most eastern promontory of Asia, is named after him.

The Cossacks were followed by Moscow voyevodas who settled in the newly built towns, and there issued their orders to the Cossack detachments. The Cossacks were able to subjugate the native inhabitants by means of their firearms, the use of which many of the peoples of Siberia did not know. The subjugation of the peoples of Eastern Siberia to the Russian tsar took a hundred years. At the end of the 17th century nearly the whole of Siberia was subjugated. The Hakass, Oirot, Buryat-Mongolians, Evenkis and Yakuts now paid tribute, or *yasak*, as it was called, to the Russian tsar.

**The oppression of the Siberian peoples.** All over Siberia small wooden fortresses were built in which the voyevodas and soldiers were stationed. From them the voyevodas went forth among the native population to collect the tribute.

The voyevodas compelled the local population to till the land around the fortresses and used the harvested grain to maintain the soldiers. Russian peasants were forced to
settle in Siberia, or were induced to do so by the offer of various privileges.

The voyevodas bribed the native princes in order to obtain their assistance in robbing the native population. Sometimes the voyevodas sold the natives into slavery in Central Asia. They also sent the Cossacks to conquer other peoples. In 1651 the Cossack, Khabarov, with a detachment of men, reached the River Amur. On his way he burned all the villages that resisted him. The inhabitants of these villages fled to the forests.

In the wake of the tsar’s voyevodas and soldiers came Russian merchants, priests and monks. The merchants sold vodka to the native people and traded with them when they were intoxicated, buying valuable furs from them for next to nothing. The priests and the monks seized the land from the native population, built churches and monasteries, and robbed the people by forcing them to be baptized and to bring gifts to the church.

The yoke of the tsarist government lay very heavily upon the subjugated peoples of Siberia. Many times they rebelled, killed their oppressors and burned the fortresses and towns. But the voyevodas and merchants gathered fresh military forces and wreaked cruel vengeance on the rebels.


Landlordism. After suppressing the peasant revolts, the landlords increased their oppression of the serf peasants. They compelled the peasants to pay their obrok in money. In addition, they took larger and larger quantities of grain, flour, butter, eggs, poultry, sheep, cloth and linen from the peasants. The landlords consumed a large amount of these things themselves, but they also sold a large amount. Hundreds of cartloads of grain, flax, land and hides were sent to market by the landlords. Part of these goods was sold in the country and part was sent abroad. The landlords were keen on making agriculture as profitable as possible. Thus they became rich by robbing the peasants.

Industry and commerce. There were very few mills and factories in Russia at the end of the 17th century. At that time they were only beginning to appear. During the reign of Tsar Alexei, the foundry in which cannon and church bells were cast, was enlarged. In the towns of Kashira and Tula there were iron works and armouries; there were also small iron mines and workshops in which free craftsmen and serf peasants were employed. Skilled craftsmen were brought from abroad. In the iron works the hammers and small blast furnaces in which the ore was smelted were worked by water power. The water was made to run in a groove and turn a wheel like in a water mill. By means of various devices the wheel was made to
work the bellows for the furnace and raise and drop the hammer.

The premises of these works were built of wood. In addition to the cannon foundry in Moscow, there was only one factory built of brick—a weaving mill where serf weavers wove cloth by hand for the tsar's household.

There were also potash works in the Volga district and salt works in the north and in the Urals.

With the annexation of the Ukraine and the conquest of Siberia trade in Russia greatly increased. Trade was carried on all over the country. Goods were carried over long distances by means of barges along the rivers in the summer, and by means of sledges in the winter.

Scores of English and Dutch ships brought goods from abroad and carried from Russia, via Archangel, lumber, furs, hides, potash, tar, grain, wax, honey and caviar. Every year Russia exported goods to an amount exceeding 15,000,000 gold rubles. The Dutch and English merchants tried to keep the trade with Russia entirely in their own hands. To be able to trade independently Russia had to have her own ships, and ports more convenient than Archangel which was frozen for many months in the year. Such ports existed on the Black Sea and Baltic Sea; but the Black Sea was then in the hands of the Crimean Tatars and the Turks, while the shores of the Baltic Sea were in the possession of the Swedes.

The administration of the state. In Russia all affairs of state were administered by the tsar, the autocratic ruler. He lived in the Kremlin, in Moscow. The tsar had his counsellors, the boyars, whom he assembled from time to time. The council of the boyars was called the Boyars' Duma. The tsar decided all questions as he thought fit, but in important matters he took counsel with the boyars.

The tsar governed the country through the medium of his chancellories, known as prikazi. The chiefs of the chancellories were boyars appointed by the tsar. There were over fifty chancellories, but there was no order in their work. The officials in these chancellories were called dyaks and podyachis, that is, scriveners and under-scriveners. They wrote documents and received petitions; but it was impossible to obtain access to these officials without paying a bribe. Every petitioner had to bring a gift, such as fish, cake or poultry.

The country was divided into a number of large uyezds, or counties. The uyezds were governed by voyevodas. The voyevodas were appointed from among the boyars and nobility. They, too, like the officials in Moscow, forced the people to give them bribes.

In addition to the standing army of Streltsi and warriors, Tsar Alexei had a mercenary army of well-armed foreigners; but this army was a small one.

The Boyar's Duma and the chancellories functioned very badly. The whole administration of the state needed thorough reform.

26. CULTURE IN RUSSIA IN THE 17th CENTURY

Culture. The whole system of life in Russia at that time was backward, but the state of education of the people was worst of all. The population of this enormous country was almost entirely illiterate. Even in Moscow, the capital, there were very few schools, and very few people who could read and write.
In Moscow, a few educated men, landlords who had been abroad, appeared. Their manner of life was the same as that of wealthy people in Western Europe. They knew foreign languages and loved to read learned books. But there were very few people of this kind. The boyars and the tsar's officials scowled upon their connections with foreigners.

Only the tsar, and the boyars who were close to him, had doctors to tend them when they were sick. These doctors were foreigners. There were no Russian doctors at that time. The common people went to sorcerers when they were sick. The sorcerers pretended to heal the sick by means of incantations, charms, and various mixtures from which more patients died than were healed.

There were no theatres in those days. The first theatre was built by Tsar Alexei for himself. In this theatre plays were staged which sometimes lasted the whole day. At night, after attending the theatre, the tsar would take a bath to wash away the "sin," for to attend theatrical performances was regarded as a sin.

The priests taught the people to be obedient to the tsar, the boyars and the landlords. "All power comes from God," said the priests. "God suffered in patience and commanded you to do the same." Whoever denied the doctrines of the church or read forbidden books was burned at the stake.

Habits and customs. The boyars and merchants wore long beards and long kaftans, or robes. The wives and daughters of the boyars, nobles and rich merchants covered their faces with thick veils. They were forbidden to meet and talk to other men. The common people ignored the customs of their oppressors. The women of the townspeople, handicraftsmen and peasant serfs were much freer.

With the assistance of the church and the priests, the tsar and the landlords kept the people in ignorance. They encouraged them to go to the taverns and get drunk with vodka so as to obscure their minds more easily.

Russia was in need of thorough reform; if this reform had not been brought about she would have remained a backward and ignorant country. The reformer who strengthened the Russian landlords' and merchants' state was Tsar Peter I.
VII
RUSSIA IN THE 18th CENTURY.
THE EMPIRE OF LANDLORDS
AND MERCHANTS

27. THE WARS OF PETER I AND
POPULAR REBELLIONS

The war against the Turks and Peter I’s travels abroad.
At the very end of the 17th century Peter, the son of
Alexei, became tsar, and was known as Peter I. Soon after
his accession to the throne the clever and active young
tsar began to introduce certain innovations. He ignored the

Boyars’ Duma and struck up a great friendship with the
foreigners living in Moscow. He took them into his service
and formed a new army after the fashion of foreign armies,
while the old army, known as the Streltsi, was being dis-
carded.

In 1695 Peter went to war against Turkey in order to
secure an outlet to the Black Sea. He built a fleet of 29 ships
on the River Don, and with his
army, which was trained by foreign
officers, he attacked the Turkish
fortress at Azov and captured it.
During this war Peter became
still more convinced that it was
necessary to reorganize the whole
life of the country and to adopt
the military and naval methods of
the Europeans.

Peter travelled abroad. The
most advanced countries in West-
ern Europe at that time were
Holland and England. In Holland,
Peter worked as a shipwright in
the Dutch shipyards. In England
he perfected his knowledge of ship-
building. He spent about two years abroad and learned
a great deal. In Russia, the Streltsi, who were discontented
with the innovations which Peter introduced, mutinied and
demanded the restoration of the old customs. This was a
reactionary rebellion. Peter returned from abroad and
personally led the suppression of the Streltsi rebellion which,
if successful, would have dragged Russia back to the past.
The rebellion was crushed and the Streltsi-regiments dis-
solved.

The beginning of the war against the Swedes. In 1700
Peter I went to war against the Swedes in order to obtain
possession of the Baltic coast. At that time the Swedes possessed the best army in the world and a fine navy. The King of the Swedes at that time was Charles XII. Charles attacked Peter's army, which was besieging the Swedish fortress of Narva, routed it, and captured all his artillery and many prisoners.

Peter, however, was not dismayed. He ordered the bells to be removed from the churches to be cast into cannon. He chose 250 young men and made them learn to read and write and the elements of mathematics in order to become artillery men and craftsmen. A new army consisting of serf peasants was formed and trained on modern lines.

To maintain this army large sums of money were required. Peter imposed taxes on public baths, flour mills, inns, and even on oak coffins, and the price of salt was doubled. He increased the penalties for serfs who escaped from their masters, and ordered all the colonies of fugitive peasants in the upper reaches of the Don to be destroyed. From the Bashkirs he confiscated large numbers of horses for his cavalry.

In 1703 Peter captured from the Swedes the marshy estuary of the Neva and there built a fortress and the town of Petersburg (now Leningrad), which became the capital of the country under Peter. To build this fortress and town Peter conscripted vast numbers of serf peasants from all over Russia. These serfs died in thousands from starvation and disease. The people retaliated against these tortures by rising in rebellion.

Popular rebellions. During the reign of Peter I the Bashkirs rose in rebellion, and unrest broke out among the Kalmyks. In 1707 a rebellion broke out among the Cossacks and peasants of the Don. This rebellion was led by the Cossack, Kondrati Bulavin. The rebels captured a number of towns. Peter sent a whole army against Bulavin. At this time the rich Cossacks conspired against Bulavin and attacked the farm in which he lived. Bulavin kept his foes at bay until all his bullets were spent. Not desiring to fall into the hands of his enemies, he used his last bullet to take his own life.

The rebels continued their struggle against Peter's troops for two years. The rebel villages on the Don were burned to the ground. Almost without exception, all the rebels who were taken prisoner were executed. Thousands of fugitive serfs were restored to their masters.

The reasons for Bulavin's defeat were the same as those for the defeat of previous rebellions of peasants and Cossacks.

After crushing the popular rebellions, Peter concentrated all his forces on the struggle against the Swedes.

28. THE WARS AGAINST THE SWEDES AND THE EASTERN COUNTRIES

The rout of the Swedes. Taking advantage of the treachery of the Ukrainian hetman, Mazeppa, Charles XII, the Swedish king, invaded the Ukraine, via Poland. In 1709 the Swedish and Russian armies met at Poltava.

The Swedish troops were defeated. Charles XII and Mazeppa fled to Turkey. Charles persuaded the Turks to declare war on Russia. The war against Turkey was resumed.

Peter sent an army 40,000 strong against the Turks. Turkey, however, mustered an army five times as large.
Peter's army was surrounded on the River Prut, and he was compelled to sign a peace treaty in accordance with which the fortress of Azov was restored to the Turks.

After his failure in the war against the Turks, Peter resolved to crush the Swedes and to get a tight hold of the Baltic coast. He captured Riga and Reval from the Swedes and built a strong navy. A naval battle took place in which the Swedish fleet was defeated.

The war against the Swedes lasted twenty-one years. At last the Swedes were compelled to sign a peace treaty which ceded to Russia the lands on the coasts of the Gulf of Riga and the Gulf of Finland.

Peter's fight for the Caspian coast. Peter now decided to entrench himself on the Caspian coast, through which lay the routes to the east, to Central Asia, India and Iran.

Peter mustered an army of 80,000 men and, starting out from Astrakhan, marched against the dominions of Iran. He had beforehand come to an agreement with the Georgian princes, who were then the vassals of Iran, and with the Armenian merchants, to help him in his war against the Shah of Iran.

The first military engagement took place in Daghestan. The peoples inhabiting this country stubbornly resisted Peter's army. Peter was compelled to return to Astrakhan.

But in addition to the army which he sent overland, Peter also dispatched troops by sea. These forces landed in the towns on the shores of the Caspian Sea and captured them. In this way Peter captured the towns of Derbent and Baku.

The towns of Azerbaidjan, which Peter captured, were inhabited by peoples who had been subjugated to the shahs of Iran two or three hundred years before Peter had started his campaign. All this time the Azerbaidjan people were at constant war with the Iran conquerors and fought for their independence and against oppression. This is why the native population of Azerbaidjan did not seriously resist Peter's forces.

Peter I achieved his object. The Baltic coast fell into the hands of Russia. Russia came nearer to Europe. Peter waged unceasing war against the backwardness of Russia and reformed the country on European lines.

29. PETER I'S REFORMS

Reforms in the administration of the state. In place of the Boyars' Duma, Peter established the Senate, which consisted of persons appointed by him. In place of the fifty chancellories, he established twelve Ministries, which had charge of the army, the navy, relations with foreign countries, economic affairs and the Courts of Justice. In the Senate and the Ministries, all affairs were administered by nobles.

Peter divided the whole of Russia into eight gubernias, or provinces. At the head of each gubernia he appointed a governor, who administered the country in that area and was in charge of recruiting soldiers and collecting taxes.

In order to increase the power of the nobility, Peter declared their estates to be their private property. In 1721, after his victory over the Swedes, Peter adopted the title of Emperor. From that time on Russia was known as the Russian Empire.

Economic reforms. In order to increase the revenues of the state Peter introduced a poll tax, and all male peasants, young and old, were compelled to pay this tax. During Peter's reign, a number of factories (or manufactures, as they were called) and mills were opened. In these factories serf labourers worked on hand looms. Merchants were given money for building new factories and mills.

In England, at that time, many free wage workers
were already working in such mills. Peter, however, in order to ensure that the merchants obtained a sufficient number of workers, attached whole villages of serf peasants to each mill. Under his reign over 200 factories and mills were established. The arms factories in Tula were greatly enlarged. In the Urals, new iron works and cloth mills sprang up.

The merchants and the factory owners quickly grew rich. Peter granted the merchants self-government in the towns.

**Education.** Peter devoted a great deal of attention to education and even tried to introduce it by force. He sent the sons of the nobility abroad to learn ship-building and foreign languages. Schools were opened in which navigation, engineering, medicine and other arts and sciences were taught. The teachers in these schools were Englishmen, Dutchmen, Swedes, Germans and men of other nationalities, whom Peter had invited to serve him in Russia.

Peter ordered grammar schools to be opened in all the gubernias, which the children of the nobility were compelled to attend to learn reading, writing, arithmetic and geometry. He even forbade nobles to marry if they could not read and write.

Peter introduced the first newspaper on the European model. This newspaper bore the title of “Vedomosti,” and in order to make it easier to read he simplified the Russian alphabet.

Before Peter’s reign the year was counted from September 1; he introduced the new calendar which counted the year from January, as was done abroad.

The new calendar was introduced on January 1, 1700, and is in use to this day.

Peter ordered the nobles to cut off their beards and to wear wigs and short coats, as was the fashion in Western Europe. He allowed only priests and peasants to wear long robes and beards.

He also ordered his courtiers to arrange what were called “assemblies,” with European dancing and games.

Under the reign of Peter I, Russia made great progress; nevertheless, it remained a country in which serf oppression and the tyranny of the tsar reigned supreme. The Russian Empire was enlarged and strengthened at the cost of the lives of hundreds of thousands of toilers and the impoverishment of the people. Peter I did a great deal to create and strengthen the landlords’ and merchants’ state.

### 30. THE EMPIRE OF THE NOBILITY IN THE 18th CENTURY

**The rule of the nobility.** Peter I died in 1725. After his death the nobility at court, relying on the aristocratic regiments of the Guards, organized plots, dethroned emperors and empresses who displeased them, banished them, imprisoned them, and even killed some of them. The longest to reign were the empresses Anne and Elizabeth.

During their reigns there were several wars against Turkey, Sweden and other countries. On the conquered territory new estates were formed which were granted to the nobles with the peasants living on them.
In Petersburg, the nobility built themselves magnificent palaces and arranged sumptuous feasts and balls. The imperial court and the nobles of Russia now copied the customs of the French kings and their courtiers.

The nobles learned to speak French; the men adopted the French fashion in clothes and wore velvet coats, knee breeches and long silk stockings. Their high-heeled shoes were embellished with costly buckles, and on their heads they wore powdered curled wigs. The women wore costly clothes of the finest silk and lace. Their hair was dressed in the elaborate French style of that time.

The magnificently dressed nobles in their powdered wigs could not, nor would they work. But to run the factories and build palaces the nobles needed learned men and experts. They were invited from abroad, and this entailed great expense.

The idea of establishing an Academy of Sciences had occurred to Peter I, and actually this Academy was opened in the year of his death. All the members of the Academy were foreigners. The Academy took in students; but the nobles would not study, and peasants were not admitted.

M. Lomonosov. The first Russian scientist was not a noble, but a peasant from the village of Denisovka, near the town of Archangel. His name was Michael Lomonosov. Lomonosov made his way from the Far North to Moscow, and in order to enter a school he had to pretend to be the son of a noble, for otherwise he would not have been admitted. He was very poor and often went hungry, but thanks to his perseverance he passed an eight-year course of study in five years. His abilities were recognized, and he was granted a scholarship to enable him to continue his studies abroad. On his return to Russia he was appointed a member of the Academy of Sciences. Lomonosov was an outstanding scientist in the fields of physics, chemistry and other sciences. He made many great scientific discoveries. He laid the foundations of Russian science and was the first to write books in pure Russian, purging the language of many obsolete Slavonic words.

On Lomonosov’s proposal the first university was established in Moscow, in 1755. A statue of Lomonosov still stands on the grounds of the Moscow University. Lomonosov died in 1765, in the reign of Catherine II.
Empress Catherine II. In 1762 the nobles placed Catherine II on the Russian throne, having first, with her assistance, killed her husband, Peter III.

Under the reign of Catherine II the rights of the nobles were still further extended. She distributed among them over a million peasants as serfs. In order to obtain the means for living their luxurious lives the nobles began to oppress the peasants more than ever.

Forced labour, or barschina, as it was called, reached such dimensions that the peasants were obliged to spend nearly all their time working for the landlords. The serfs did everything for their masters; they tilled their land, they served as blacksmiths and cooks, domestic servants and huntsmen, and even as actors for their private theatricals. The only time the peasants had left to work for themselves was on church holidays and at night. Under Catherine’s reign, obrok, or the tax in kind, increased almost five-fold.

The nobles sold and bought peasants as if they were slaves. The price of a woman serf ranged from twenty to thirty roubles; the price of a handicraftsman or a serf who could read and write ranged from one hundred to two hundred rubles. A small child could be purchased for ten to twenty kopecks. The landlords priced their dogs more highly than their serfs.

The landlords tormented their peasants to the utmost. The story is told of the woman landowner, Saltychikha, who beat her serfs to death, poured boiling water over them, and set their hair alight. She murdered over a hundred serfs.

These horrible conditions caused the peasants to rise in rebellion.

31. THE PEASANT WAR UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF PUGACHOV

The beginning and progress of the peasant war. The first to rise in rebellion were the Cossacks on the River Yaik (now the River Ural). The tsar’s government had deprived the Ural Cossacks of their liberties and imposed heavy taxes upon them in the effort to convert them into serfs like the peasants of Central Russia. The Cossack elders compelled the rank-and-file Cossacks to pay extra taxes which they put in their own pockets, and they also kept for themselves the pay that was intended for the Cossacks.

In 1773 the poor Cossacks rose against their oppressors. At the head of the rebellion stood the Don Cossack, Emelian Pugachov, a strong, wise and brave man.
The Cossacks captured a number of fortresses and besieged Orenburg.

The serf workers in the Ural iron mines and iron works rallied to Pugachov's standard. Tied to these works like slaves, the peasants hated their laborious toil. Already at the beginning of Catherine's reign, 50,000 out of the 200,000 serfs employed at the works took part in rebellions.

The workers readily joined Pugachov's army. They supplied his army with guns, cannon and cannon balls. Famous captains of Pugachov's army, like Khlopusha and Beloborodov, were factory workers.

The Bashkirs also joined the Pugachov rebellion. The nobles had driven the Bashkirs from their land and established iron works on it. The Bashkirs rose in rebellion against this robbery more than once, but they were crushed. In the year 1740 alone, about 30,000 rebel Bashkirs were tortured to death or distributed among the nobles as their property. Four hundred Bashkir villages were plundered, wrecked and burned to the ground. But the Bashkirs refused to submit. Fifteen years later, under their leader Batyrsha, they rose again and fought the tsar's armies for two years. But they were crushed once again. Batyrsha was taken prisoner and murdered while in prison in Petersburg.

The Bashkirs now rose again and with their horsemen joined Pugachov's army. One of their leaders was Salavat Yulayev. He was a brave young rebel who with his army rendered Pugachov great assistance.

At the same time, the Russian, Tatar, Chuvash, Mordovian and Mari serf peasants on the Volga also rose. Pugachov gave himself out as the emperor, Peter III. He announced that his wife, the wicked Catherine II, and the nobles had failed to kill him as they had intended, and that he had escaped. He signed orders in the name of Peter III and sent manifestoes all over the country calling for the extermination of the nobility and declaring that he would free the peasants from the power of the landlords, from compulsory military service, and from taxes.

The whole of the Volga district, the Urals, and also part of Siberia were swept by the rebellion. The estates and mansions of the nobles were wrecked, their granaries were ransacked and the grain taken to supply Pugachov's army. The peasants seized the landlords' land.

Pugachov and his army reached Kazan and captured it. Soon, however, Catherine's troops began to press upon Pugachov's army. Pugachov was compelled to retreat south, down the Volga. The Volga towns along his line of march surrendered to him without a fight, but he could not hold them.

**Suppression of the peasant rebellion.** In August 1774 Pugachov reached Tsaritsin (now Stalingrad). A few days later he suffered defeat in battle against the empress' soldiers and fled to the steppes with the remnants of his army. Here the treacherous rich Cossacks betrayed him to the authorities.
Pugachov was chained, put into a large wooden cage and taken to Moscow. On January 10, 1775, the brave leader of the peasant war, Emelian Pugachov, was executed in Bolotnaya Square.

Salavat Yulayev was also captured. His captors slit his nostrils and with a red hot iron branded on his forehead the words, “thief and murderer.” After this he was taken to Bashkiria, and in every village in which he had led the rebellion he was faggotted with a whip. His tortures were so unbearable that he committed suicide.

The peasants fought bravely and staunchly, but being ignorant, they did not clearly understand the object of their struggle. Being disunited, they were unable to establish the firm organization and strong army needed for the struggle. The working class, which could have led the peasants and oppressed peoples in the struggle, did not yet exist. The alliance between the working class and the peasantry was lacking.

This is the reason why the peasants and the oppressed peoples were defeated.

32. CATHARINE II CONQUERS NEW LANDS AND SUBJUGATES NEW PEOPLES

The conquest of the Crimea and subjugation of the Ukraine. Peter I waged war against the Turks in order to capture the Black Sea coast, but he failed. It was only in the reign of Catherine II that Azov was recaptured from the Turks, and the Crimea conquered. At that time the Crimea was governed by Tatar khans who were subjects of Turkey. The khans and their Murzi, the nobility, sold themselves to Catherine and helped her to establish her rule over the Crimea.

Russian landlords appeared in the Crimea and robbed the Crimean peasants of their best lands. Large numbers of Tatar peasants fled to Turkey and the Russian nobles took possession of their lands. On the Black Sea coast Catherine founded the fortress of Sevastopol, where warships were built.

In this war against Turkey, the celebrated Russian general, Alexander Suvorov, became famous.

Suvorov started his military career as a common soldier. He lived a strict mode of life, ate coarse soldiers’ food, slept in hay stacks and thus hardened his body. At the head of an army of 25,000 men he defeated the Turkish army, which was 100,000 strong.

Simultaneously with the conquest of the Crimea all the territory of the Ukraine stretching from the left bank of the Dniepr was definitely annexed to Russia. The hetman system was abolished. Russian troops were brought to the Zapozhskaya Sech and the Sech was destroyed forever. Its lands were seized by the tsarist generals. Part of the Zaporozhye Cossacks were transferred to Kuban, in the North Caucasus; others went to Turkey, while the poor Cossacks and peasants were compelled to work as serfs. Catherine granted the Ukrainian elders the same rights as those enjoyed by the Russian nobility.

The partition of Poland. During the 18th century Poland was greatly enfeebled. Poland was governed by the biggest landlords who were constantly quarrelling among themselves. The king’s power was slight. When the Ukrainian peasants under the rule of Poland rose in rebellion, the Polish pans were able to subdue them only with the aid of Russian soldiers.

Polish lands were also conquered during Catherine’s reign. Catherine made an agreement with the neighbouring states of Austria and Prussia by which the three countries divided parts of the territory of Poland among themselves. Russia obtained the ancient Byelorussian and Ukrainian lands on the right bank of the Dniepr.

In 1794, a rebellion against tsarist Russia, led by Kos-
ciusko, broke out in Poland with the object of restoring Poland's independence. Catherine sent a large army led by Suvorov to Poland to crush the rebellion. Kosciusko was defeated; he himself was severely wounded in battle and taken prisoner. Catherine annexed Lithuania from Poland.

For many years after Poland ceased to exist as an independent state.

**Conquests in Kazakhstan and in the Far North.** In the 18th century the Kazakh herdsmen were divided into three states known as the Small Horde, the Medium Horde and the Great Horde. These hordes were governed by khans and sultans. The Kazakh nobility and merchants carried on trade with Russia and with neighbouring states in Central Asia such as Kokand and Bokhara, and also with China. All these countries tried to subject the Kazakhs to their rule.

But the most persistent in these efforts was Russia. During the reign of Catherine II a large part of the Small Horde adjacent to Russia was annexed. The khans of the Small Horde betrayed their people and helped the tsarist rulers to seize the Kazakh lands.

More than once the Kazakh people rose in rebellion against the traitorous khans and against their subjection to the Russian tsar.

In 1783, brave Sarim Datov headed the rebellion of the Kazakh people. For fourteen years they fought against their enemies under this fearless leader who became a national hero. Sarim was killed by his enemies and the rebellion was suppressed. Catherine's troops marched far into the Kazakh steppe and built fortresses there. The tsarist generals established their rule over the whole of the Small Horde. In the first half of the 19th century the whole of Kazakhstan was conquered.

At the end of the 18th century the last remaining lands of the northern peoples of Siberia were subjugated to the rule of Russia. The tsar's soldiers crossed the Bering Strait,
Object of restoring the large army led by Kosciuszko was achieved in battle and autonomy from Poland. The state no longer existed as an independent entity.

Far North. In the Far North, the region was divided into three parts: the Russian Empire, the Kalmuk Horde and the Kazakh Steppes. The Kalmuk Horde was ruled by khans and sultans, and maintained a thriving trade in Central Asia and with South China. All these states were under Russian rule.

In the interior, the area was Russia. During the reign of the Small Horde, the khan of the Small Horde and the tsarist rulers to the west rebelled against Russian influence.

In the rebellion against Russian influence to the Rus-
into the far north of America, and established Russia's rule over Alaska. In the 19th century the Russian tsar sold Alaska to the American government for next to nothing, not knowing that much gold was to be found there.

Towards the end of Catherine's reign the final conquest of Azerbaidjan began.

To the numerous peoples groaning under the rule of tsarism new peoples were added: the Poles, Crimean Tatars, Azerbaidjanians and the Kazakhs.
33. THE BOURGEOIS REVOLUTION IN FRANCE AND THE STRUGGLE WAGED AGAINST IT
BY CATHERINE II AND PAUL I

The overthrow of the royal power in France. On July 14, 1789, the people of Paris rose in rebellion and stormed and captured the prison known as the Bastille. The prisoners were released. The flag of the revolution was raised over its towers.

The revolution quickly spread over the whole country. In all towns the handicraftsmen, small traders and the few factory workers of that day rose in rebellion. Everywhere the peasants attacked the manors of the nobility, seized their land and demanded the total abolition of serfdom. Many nobles fled abroad.

Relying on the help of the revolutionary people, the bourgeois seized power. It was the bourgeois revolution that was victorious in France.

King Louis XVI tried to escape from France. Catherine II ordered her ambassador in Paris to issue a Russian passport to the king to enable him to enter Russia. On the way, however, the king was caught and brought back to Paris in disgrace.

The feudal states of Austria and Prussia, with the help of the French nobles who had fled from the revolution, started war against bourgeois-revolutionary France. The king knew about the counter-revolutionary designs of the invaders and secretly helped them.

The revolutionary government of France organized the defence of the country. France was proclaimed a republic, and Louis XVI was beheaded as a traitor to the people.

After the execution of the king the revolutionary Jacobins, who were the representatives of petty-bourgeois democracy (the peasants and artisans), came into power. The leaders of the Jacobins were Robespierre and Marat. Marat was known as the “Friend of the People.” Under the rule of the Jacobins, the peasants were completely liberated from serfdom.

The revolutionary government confiscated the land from the landlords and sold it to all those who wished to buy. Much of the landlords’ land was bought by the peasants, but a large part of it passed into the hands of the bourgeoisie.

The Jacobins, however, were not consistent revolutionaries. As petty-bourgeois democrats they were in favour of the private ownership of the land, factories and mines. They
prohibited the workers from going on strike and fighting against the capitalists.

The revolutionary people rose in defence of their country. The republican army routed the armies of the invaders and drove them out of France. Then the armies of France began to fight beyond their own borders to liberate other peoples from the rule of kings and feudal nobles.

Fearing that bourgeois-democratic France would become strong, England, which was a strong industrial country, started war against her.

The counter-revolutionaries inside and outside the country fought the revolution by every means in their power. They sent assassins to kill the leaders of the revolution, and actually did kill Marat. The Jacobins retaliated with ruthless terror against the enemies of the people.

Soon, however, the big bourgeoisie of France succeeded in seizing power again. The Jacobin leaders were executed.

General Napoleon Bonaparte became the leader of bourgeois France.

The bourgeois revolution liberated the French people from the rule of kings and landlords, but in its place it established the rule of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie was victorious because the working class in France was weak and unorganized, while the peasants, who with the aid of the bourgeoisie had liberated themselves from the power of the landlords, supported the bourgeoisie. The French revolution abolished the oppression of the landlords, but increased the oppression of the bourgeoisie, the capitalists.

The struggle waged by Catherine II and Paul I against the bourgeois revolution. Catherine II was afraid that the revolution would spread to her empire. There were people in Russia who sympathized with the revolution. A nobleman named Radishchev, one of the most enlightened and progressive men in Russia at that time, wrote a book entitled *A Journey From Petersburg to Moscow* in which he openly opposed serfdom and autocracy, and expressed sympathy towards the peasant revolts against the landlords. Catherine banished Radishchev to Siberia and ordered his book to be burned.

Catherine II thought it her principal mission to combat the bourgeois revolution in France. She readily allowed the French nobility who fled from France to take refuge in Russia, and ordered all Russian subjects in Paris to leave France. She gave her assistance to all the countries that were waging war against France. She granted money to Austria, ceded part of Poland to Prussia, promised both the assistance of Russian troops, and prepared her army for war. Only her sudden death in 1796 prevented her from starting war against bourgeois France.

After Catherine’s death, her son, Paul I, ascended the throne. Paul continued the struggle against the bourgeois revolution. He ordered all private printing shops in Russia
to be shut down and prohibited the reading of French books or any discussion of the French revolution.

Paul I declared war on France and sent an army against her under the command of Suvorov. Suvorov won several victories, but Russia's allies, Austria and Prussia, failed to help him. The Russian army could obtain no food supplies. Paul recalled Suvorov's army and concluded peace with France. At this time Napoleon Bonaparte overthrew the government set up by the revolution in France and declared himself supreme ruler over the country. When he saw that Napoleon was fighting the revolution, Paul I concluded an alliance with him.

Paul's negotiations with Napoleon led to a rupture between Russia and England. From being England's ally, Paul became her enemy. The Russian nobility, displeased with Paul's alliance with France, plotted against him with the aid of the English ambassador in Petersburg and assassinated him.

34. TSAR ALEXANDER I. THE WAR OF 1812

The annexation of Georgia. Alexander I, Paul's son and successor, who had taken part in the plot against his father, continued the conquest of the Black Sea coast and the rich lands of the Caucasus which Peter I and Catherine II had started. First of all he entrenched himself in Georgia.

In Georgia, as in Russia at that time, the landlords were in power. The peasants toiled for the landlords from day-break to dark. The peasants lived in huts of stone and clay, or in dugouts. The greater part of the harvests of their fields and orchards was taken from them by their masters, the landlords. The rulers of the countries adjacent to Georgia—Turkey and Iran—made devastating raids upon the rich lands of Georgia and reduced the Georgian peasants to even greater poverty.

After one of these raids, when the Iranese captured over 10,000 Georgians, the Georgian king appealed to Paul I for aid. Tsarist troops were sent to Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia. In 1801, Georgia was finally annexed by Russia. The devastating raids of the shahs of Iran upon Georgia ceased.

Georgia became a dominion of tsarist Russia. Russian officials were appointed as judges and to other administrative posts. They insisted on conducting all official business in the country in Russian, which the Georgian people did not understand. Serfdom continued in Georgia. Greatly oppressed, the Georgian peasants frequently rebelled against their own landlords and the tsarist officials, but they were ruthlessly crushed by the tsar's soldiers, who were assisted by the Georgian princes and nobles. With the aid of the Georgian feudal nobility, Alexander I firmly established his power in Trans-Caucasia.

The conquest of Finland and Bessarabia. In 1805, after resuming his military alliance with England, Alexander I declared war on Napoleon I, who had proclaimed himself Emperor of France.

Napoleon defeated Alexander I's troops and demanded that Russia cease trading with England, France's principal enemy. Vanquished, Alexander I was obliged to agree to this. In compensation Napoleon promised not to hinder the Russian emperor in his wars against Sweden and Turkey. Napoleon had by this time subjected nearly all the peoples of Western Europe to the rule of France.

Soon after, Alexander I declared war on Sweden and his
troops quickly occupied Finland, which then belonged to Sweden. In the winter the Russian army crossed the ice in the Gulf of Bothnia and threatened the capital of Sweden. In 1809 the Swedish king was compelled to conclude peace and agree to cede Finland to Russia.

Three years later Alexander I succeeded in wresting from Turkey the land of Bessarabia, lying between the rivers Dniester and Prut, which Turkey had previously seized.

The war against Napoleon in 1812. The alliance between Russia and France was not maintained for long. The Russian landlords and merchants keenly desired free commercial intercourse with England and demanded that the tsar should break his alliance with Napoleon. The nobility were also afraid that the influence of bourgeois France, where serfdom had been abolished, would weaken their power in Russia. They present- ed a petition to the tsar in which they demanded that the power of the serf-owning landlords be increased and that the war against bourgeois France be resumed. Alexander I yielded. Trade with England was resumed; preparations were started for another war.

In the summer of 1812 Napoleon invaded Russia with an enormous army of over 500,000 men. The Russian army numbered only 200,000. The Russian army retreated, destroying all the stocks of food and equipment on the way. Soon Napoleon captured Lithuania and Byelorussia and marched on Moscow. Napoleon’s invasion of Russia roused the Russian people for the fight against the invaders. The peasants began to wage guerilla warfare against Napoleon.

At the end of August the biggest battle of the war was fought at the village of Borodino, near Moscow. The Russian soldiers fought stubbornly against the enemy who was devastating the country. More than 50,000 Russians fell in this sanguinary battle, but in spite of that the strength of the Russian army remained unbroken.

The French in burning Moscow

The French losses were enormous, but they still retained their superiority in numbers. General Kutuzov, the commander of the Russian army, decided to surrender Moscow to Napoleon without a fight and to retreat in order to save his army.

The French occupied Moscow. A great fire broke out in the city and many houses were destroyed. The French could obtain no food in Moscow.

Winter set in. It was impossible for the French to hold Moscow under such conditions. Napoleon and his army retreated along the road through country that had been devas-
tated during his march on Moscow. His attempts to retreat by another road failed, for the other routes were occupied by Russian troops.

The frost came early that year. Napoleon’s troops suffered from the cold and disease broke out in their ranks. The Russian guerilla fighters, or irregular troops, attacked and exterminated the French stragglers. Of Napoleon’s vast army only 30,000 men survived and returned from Russia.

Napoleon mustered a new army and continued the war. This time, however, he had to face the alliance of Russia, Prussia, Austria, England and Sweden. Napoleon was defeated near Leipzig. The Allies crossed the frontiers of France and occupied Paris.

The victors restored the rule of the old French kings and princes. The brother of the king who had been executed during the revolution was placed on the throne. Napoleon was banished to a remote island in the Atlantic Ocean. All the countries in Europe which Napoleon had conquered were again ruled by their kings or princes whom Napoleon had deposed.

As a reward for the part he had taken in the fight against Napoleon, the Allies ceded to Alexander I a part of Poland, with its capital, Warsaw.

In order to combat revolution in Europe, the Tsar of Russia, the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria concluded a reactionary alliance known as the “Holy Alliance.” These monarchs pledged themselves to help each other to suppress popular rebellions. At the head of this reactionary alliance was the Russian tsar, Alexander I.

Tsarist Russia became the gendarme of Europe.

35. THE DECEMBRISTS

The secret societies of the revolutionary nobles. Alexander I kept a huge army under arms. The troops near the European frontier were stationed in special military settlements where, while performing their military duties, they tilled the land and thus provided their own food. The commander of these military settlements was General Arakcheyev, a cruel and brutal man.

The hard life of the soldiers, who had to serve in the army for twenty-five years, was worse than penal servitudes. They spent the whole day either at work in the fields or at military drill. Even their wives were chosen for them by the officers. For the slightest offense the soldiers were cruelly flogged, often to death.

The tyranny of the tsar and the serf system disgusted the more progressive people among the nobility. Many of them were army officers. During the campaigns in France they had seen that the peasants were much happier after the abolition of serfdom and that wage labour in farm and factory was more productive than serf labour. They had seen that in the cities of Western Europe people were more prosperous and educated than in the cities of Russia.

These noblemen longed to introduce such conditions in their own country. They organized secret revolutionary societies: the Northern Society and Southern Society.

The members of the Northern Society wanted to abolish serfdom, that is to say, the power of the landlords over the peasants, but they wanted the landlords to retain possession of nearly all the land. They thought that a tsar was needed, but that it was necessary to limit his power. The leaders of this society were Ryleyev, a poet and friend of the poet Pushkin, and the army officers Trubetskoy and Kakhovsky. The Southern Society was formed in the tsar’s army in the Ukraine. It was led by Colonel Pestel, an educated and brave man. He thought that it was necessary to give the peasants not only liberty, but also land. He wanted Russia to be a republic. He proposed that the tsar and his family be exterminated.
But the members of these secret societies were nobles and were afraid of calling upon the people to revolt. They remembered the peasants’ revolt against the nobles during the reign of Catherine II. They wanted to bring about revolution only with the aid of the soldiers whom they commanded.

December 14, 1825 in Petersburg. The rebels shot down with cannon on Nicholas I’s orders

The Decembrist rebellion. In 1825 Alexander I died. He left no children. His brother Nicholas was to ascend the throne.

On the morning of December 14, 1825, the army officers who were members of the Northern Society in St. Petersburg brought their men out to the Senate Square and refused to take the oath of allegiance to Nicholas I. They were joined by the naval guards. The rebels waited for the orders of their chief leader, Prince Trubetskoy, but he quailed at the last moment and failed to appear on the square. The rebellion was thus left without a leader. Nicholas called out troops that were loyal to him and surrounded the mutinous regiments.

A large crowd of serfs, artisans and building labourers gathered near the rebel troops. They pelted the soldiers who remained loyal to the tsar with firewood and stones. But the aristocratic revolutionaries were afraid to take advantage of their help.

Nicholas sent the Governor of Petersburg to negotiate with the rebels. Kakhovsky killed the governor. Nicholas was not sure of the loyalty of his troops and for a long time did not dare to resort to force. Towards the evening, however, cannon were brought up and he ordered the gunners to fire point blank at the rebels. The cannon roared. The rebels and the people scattered. Hundreds of killed and wounded were left lying on the square.

Two weeks later, near Kiev, in the Ukraine, the army officers in the Southern Society rose in rebellion at the head of the Chernigov Regiment. They led their regiment out to join other troops who belonged to the organization, but they were defeated by troops whom Nicholas I had sent to crush the rebellion.

After crushing the rebellion Nicholas I ordered the rebels to be arrested and cruelly punished. Five of the principal leaders, Pestel, Ryleyev, Kakhovsky, Muravyov-Apostol and Bestuzhev-Ryumin, were hanged. Over one hundred officers were banished to Siberia. Hundreds of soldiers
were forced to "run the gauntlet," that is to say, they were forced to run between ranks of soldiers armed with sticks who beat them as they ran. Many of the soldiers were sent to penal servitude or for active military service in the Caucasus.

The revolutionary nobles who rebelled in December 1825 became known as the Decembrists. Their numbers were small and they lacked contact with the people. But the Decembrists were the first to come out in open, organized, armed rebellion against the autocracy in the very capital of the tsar. Their cause was not crushed. It was continued by the generations of revolutionaries that followed them.

On ascending the throne Nicholas I thought it was his principal mission to combat revolution, and he did all he could to preserve the old, serf system.

36. THE KINGDOM OF GENDARMES AND OFFICIALS

Nicholas I. Nicholas I's teacher, speaking of him as a boy, said: "I never saw him with a book; his only occupation was drill and soldiers." This is the sort of man who became Emperor of Russia.

Nicholas I was very much frightened by the rebellion of December 14, 1825. For the purpose of combating revolution he established a special police force called the gendarmerie. The Chief of the Gendarmes was subordinate only to the tsar.

Strict surveillance was established over the whole population. The gendarmes and the secret agents of the police scoured the whole country; they listened to the talk that went on among the people and even to private conversations. People were arrested on the slightest suspicion and on the basis of unverified reports.

Nicholas I governed Russia through the medium of the nobility and officials among whom were many who took bribes and robbed the Treasury. The government officials and the judges compelled the people to give them bribes; they insulted and tormented the people.

Nicholas I established the stern discipline of the stick in Russia. Under his reign soldiers, peasants, persons under arrest, in fact all who opposed the landlords and the tsar were flogged. They were flogged with birches, knouts, whips and sticks.

The peasants were compelled to work harder than ever for the landlords. All their land was taken from them and the barshchina and obrok were increased.

The peasants could not bear this life of slavery and rose against the tyranny of the serf owners. They killed the cruellest of the landlords, wrecked and burned their mansions and refused to perform the barshchina or pay obrok. Peasant disturbances continued.

The tsar's soldiers and police ruthlessly suppressed the discontented peasants and sternly punished them.

Life in tsarist Russia became unbearable.

The great Russian writers. The great Ukrainian poet Shevchenko. In the reign of Nicholas I there lived the Russian genius and poet, Alexander Pushkin. He wrote fine poems, plays, novels, etc., such as Eugene Onegin, Boris Godunov, The Captain's Daughter, and many others of which we are so proud today. Pushkin was the creator of Russian literature.

Pushkin was born in Moscow, in 1799, in a noble's family. He began to write poetry when he was still a boy. He was educated at the school for the nobility, called the Lycée, in Tsarskoye Selo (now called Pushkin), near Leningrad. After leaving the Lycée he became a famous poet and associated with the Decembrists. In his poems he strongly condemned serfdom and autocracy. At that time
such poems could not be published, and so they were copied by hand and widely distributed and read in secret.

Tsar Alexander I heard of these poems and banished Pushkin, first to the south, and later to his estate in the country for a period of two years. To the very end of his life Pushkin was under the constant surveillance of the gendarmes. Nicholas I, under whose reign Pushkin's lot was particularly hard, knew of the poet's connection with the Decembrists and persecuted him for it. Pushkin's poems could be published only with the consent of the tsar himself.

The tsar hated Pushkin. The courtiers persecuted and insulted the great poet. Nicholas I was well aware of this persecution, but took no measures to stop it, not even when Pushkin was deliberately provoked into fighting a duel. He fought this duel in the beginning of 1837 with a man who had insulted him, and was killed.

Free thought was crushed in this kingdom of gendarmes. Nicholas I exiled the other celebrated poet, Michael Lermontov, to the Caucasus, there to serve in the army. The tsar sent him there, where he was always in danger of being hit by the bullets of the mountaineers, because he had written a poem in which he branded the court parasites as the murderers of Pushkin. In the Caucasus, Lermontov was killed in a duel with a ne'er-do-well army officer. When Nicholas I heard of this he said: "Serves the dog right."

The third great writer of that day, Nicholas Gogol, described in his works the rule and tyranny of Nicholas I's officials. In his celebrated Dead Souls and The Inspector General, Gogol presents a vivid and truthful picture of the hard life of the people in serf Russia.

It was during the reign of Nicholas I that Vissarion Belinsky, the celebrated Russian literary critic and revolutionary, died. Sick with consumption, he was hounded to death by the gendarmes.

The great Russian composer, Michael Glinka, also led a hard life under the reign of Nicholas. Glinka composed the first Russian national opera, Ruslan and Ludmila, in which he reproduced the music not only of the Russian folk songs, but also of those of other nationalities inhabiting Russia. The aristocracy failed to appreciate the beauty of this
remarkable opera and it ceased to be shown soon after it was produced. Indignant at this, Glinka left Russia. He died in a foreign country.

Nicholas I also treated cruelly the Ukrainian revolutionary poet and artist, Taras Shevchenko. Shevchenko was a serf who later was able to purchase his freedom.

In his poems Shevchenko described the oppression of the Ukrainian and other peoples in tsarist Russia, the hard lives of the serfs, the tyranny of the tsars and pans who trampled on the rights of the people.

Nicholas I conscripted Shevchenko for the army, banished him to Kazakhstan and even forbade him to write and paint. For ten years Shevchenko was tormented in the soldiers’ barracks, but his spirit remained unbroken. He continued to write his poems in secret. His complete works were published in the Ukraine for the first time under the Soviet Government in a collection of his poems entitled Kobzar.

37. THE CONQUEST OF THE CAUCASUS

The conquest of Armenia. The annexation of Azerbaijan was commenced in the reign of Catherine II. Many small principalities in Azerbaijan were snatched from the rule of Iran and annexed to Russia. In the reign of Alex-

ander I large forces of Russian soldiers were sent to Azerbaijan and Georgia.

The Shah of Iran tried to win back his dominions. In the reign of Nicholas I the Russian troops defeated the shah’s troops and annexed Armenia, the peoples of which had been suffering under the yoke of the Iran rulers for hundreds of years. Thus, tsarist Russia strengthened its rule in Trans-Caucasia.

The new dominions were separated from Russia by the lofty Caucasian mountains. In these mountains the warlike mountaineers lived. No one could subdue them. Nor could Nicholas I subdue them for a long time.

His troops set fire to the mountaineers’ auls, or villages, and killed all those who fell into their hands. In the foothills near these mountains forts were built from which the Russian soldiers raided the mountaineers’ villages and forced them further and further into the mountains.

Hiding in the mountain gorges and forests, knowing every inch of their native mountains, the Freedom-loving mountaineers fought stubbornly for their independence and defended their land inch by inch.

But success in this struggle was prevented by the lack of unity among the tribes and nationalities, of which there were nearly a score in the North Caucasus at that time. Often there were feuds between the various tribes, and the Russian generals incited them against each other and defeated them one by one.

The mountaineers’ fight for independence under the leadership of Shamil. The mountaineers were united by the gifted and energetic leader Shamil. Shamil was born in Daghestan, and even in his childhood he was distinguished for his courage and determination.

He was strong, bold, agile, a splendid horseman, an excellent marksman, a tireless swimmer and runner. He was brave and experienced, and exercised great influence
among the mountaineers. He became an able ruler and gifted military leader.

He created a large mountaineers' state. At the head of the various regions he appointed chiefs from among the ablest and bravest mountaineers. Every mountaineer was obliged to learn to shoot, to handle a sword, and to ride a horse in order to be able to defend his country from its enemies.

Shamil mustered an army of over 30,000 men. He also had artillery. He lured detachments of Russian soldiers deep into the mountains and blocked their line of retreat with rocks and felled trees. Caught in this ambush, the Russian soldiers were exterminated by the mountaineers.

The final conquest of the Caucasus. For twenty-five years the mountaineers of North Caucasus fought heroically under Shamil's leadership, but they were unable to defeat Nicholas I's huge army. Nicholas dispatched troops to the Caucasus in ever increasing numbers. Forests were cut down, villages were destroyed, mountain roads were laid, and slowly but surely the Russian army advanced.

Shamil's army was melting away. Large numbers of his warriors were killed or taken prisoner. The Russian generals succeeded in buying over the elders of some of the mountain tribes. With several hundred mountaineers Shamil hid in the Aul of Gunib, on a high mountain in Dagestan. Surrounded on all sides by the Russian army,

Shamil and his comrades bravely defended themselves, but at last were compelled to surrender. This happened after the death of Nicholas I, in the reign of Alexander II.

38. THE REVOLUTION IN EUROPE IN 1848.

KARL MARX AND FREDERICK ENGELS

Nicholas I and the revolution of 1848. In the middle of the 19th century industry in Europe had already made great progress. In a number of countries large industrial centres had sprung up. Factories and mills employing modern machinery had increased in number, and railways were being rapidly built. The factory owners were making huge profits. Millionaires arose. They became a power and controlled the state.

Growing industry created a great demand for workers. A numerous working class, which had not existed before, came into being, the class we call the proletariat. The
proletariat began openly to fight for its rights against the capitalists. The proletariat of Paris, in particular, covered itself with glory in the revolution of 1848.

On February 22, 1848, a revolution broke out in Paris and quickly spread to other towns in France. The king fled to a foreign country. France was proclaimed a republic.

Rebellion of the workers of Paris, June 1848

But it was a bourgeois republic. The revolution brought no relief for the workers. At the end of June 1848 the proletariat of Paris rose in revolt against their capitalist masters and the bourgeois republican government. The workers fought heroically for three days. Their wives and children made bullets out of lead, helped to build barricades, and amidst the hail of soldiers’ bullets brought food for the fighters. The bourgeoisie sent well-armed troops against the workers. They fought the workers ruthlessly. The workers were badly organized and insufficiently armed and the peasants failed to come to their aid. The rebellion was suppressed. The bourgeoisie took severe reprisals against the vanquished workers; thousands were shot, thrown into prison or sent to penal servitude. The bourgeoisie triumphed.

As soon as the first news of the revolution in Paris and of the unrest in Prussia and Austria reached him, Nicholas I moved his army to the frontiers of Prussia and Austria. He waited for a convenient moment to send his troops to crush the revolutionary movement, which he hated so much.

After France, the revolution broke out in many other countries in Europe. In Vienna, the capital of Austria, the workers, university students and other citizens rose and overthrew the rule of the aristocracy. The emperor fled from Vienna.

In Berlin, the revolutionary workers fought on the barricades for eighteen hours and forced the king to yield. A new government was set up in Prussia, and serfdom was abolished.

The workers and townspeople rose against their kings, nobles and partly against the capitalists in other countries of Europe.

The revolution spread to Hungary, which was part of the Austrian Empire. At the request of the Emperor of Austria, Nicholas I sent an army to Hungary and crushed the revolution.

This is how Tsar Nicholas I, the gendarme of Europe, fought against revolution.

But no power on earth could suppress the young class, the proletariat, which rose in revolt in 1848.

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. The teachers and leaders of the proletariat were those men of genius, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

In 1848, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels came forth as the leaders of the revolutionary workers in Germany. Marx was then 30 years of age, and his friend Engels was
28 years of age. They were the first revolutionary Communists. Before the revolution they had founded the Communist League and had written their celebrated Communist Manifesto. In this manifesto they called upon the workers of the world to fight their enemies, the capitalists. Since then the slogan, “Proletarians of all countries unite!” has been inscribed on the standards of the workers all over the world.

After the revolution in Germany was crushed, Marx and Engels were compelled to leave Germany and to emigrate to England. There they lived and worked under very difficult conditions. Marx's family was often in want. Engels helped his friend as much as he could and shared all his joys and sorrows, his successes and failures.

The hard conditions of life, however, did not break the spirit of these great revolutionaries. They tirelessly continued the great work they had started in the cause of emancipating the toilers from the oppression of the capitalists.

They wrote many books from which the workers learned how to fight the capitalists and to vanquish them. Marx and Engels taught the workers that there has always been a fierce struggle between the oppressed and the oppressors. Under capitalism this struggle was waged between the bourgeoisie and the workers; it was inevitable and would end in the victory of the working class. The working class would overthrow the bourgeoisie and establish its own revolutionary rule, the dictatorship of the proletariat. The victorious proletariat would build a new, Communist, society in which there would be neither classes nor oppressed. This is what Marx and Engels taught.

Marx and Engels called upon the workers of all countries to unite and form a single, powerful Communist Party.

39. TSARIST RUSSIA ON THE EVE OF THE REFORM OF 1861

The development of industry. Until the middle of the 19th century industry in serf Russia had developed slowly. Only one-tenth of the population of Russia lived in towns. The total number of workers employed in factories and mills was not more than 500,000. Among them were many serfs whom their masters had sent to the factories to earn money to pay their obrok. Machines, and steam engines to drive the machines, were only just being introduced in the factories. Steamships were just beginning to appear on the Volga and Dniepr. Only one large railway had been built, between Moscow and Petersburg.

The manufacturers could not build many factories because there were not enough free people to become wage workers. Moreover, it was difficult to sell goods in Russia because the serf peasants bought very little.

The increase in the town population and in the number of factories caused an increase in the grain trade in Russia. In addition, the landlords exported large quantities of grain, particularly to industrial England. They wanted more grain to sell, and so began to oppress their serfs more than ever.

Many landlords began to understand that serfdom was a hindrance to the development of commercial farming and that free wage workers tilled the land better and actually cost less than serfs. They began to talk about abolishing serfdom.

The Crimean War. In order to become complete master of the Black Sea coast, to drive the Turks entirely out of the Caucasus, and to be able to export the landlords' grain to Europe via the Bosporus and Dardanelle Straits, Nicholas I, in 1853, again declared war on Turkey, which by that time had become enfeebled. But England and France
did not want Russia to become strong and crush Turkey. They concluded an alliance with each other and declared war on Nicholas I.

The allied fleets entered the Black Sea. Their warships were driven by steam engines and equipped with heavy guns. Nicholas I had only a fleet of sailing ships. The enemy landed a large army in the Crimea and besieged Sebastopol. The range of the enemy’s guns and rifles was twice that of the Russians’. The tsar’s generals did not even have good maps of the Crimea. Military supplies were in the hands of corrupt government officials and contractors. Such was the military technique of backward, serf Russia.

The naval fort at Sebastopol lacked land fortifications. In a short space of time the people and the soldiers built earthworks and on them placed batteries of guns. Nicholas I’s sailing ships dared not go into battle against the enemy’s fleet. The Russians therefore sunk their ships at the entrance of Sebastopol harbour, and thus barred the way to the enemy’s fleet.

The siege of Sebastopol lasted eleven months. The Russian soldiers died in hundreds every day, stubbornly defending the town. Finally, the principal fortification, Malakhov Kurgan, which was known as the Gate of Sebastopol, was captured by the French after a heavy bombardment.

Sebastopol lay in ruins. It was impossible to hold it any longer. The garrison retreated from the ruined fort. The defeat of Nicholas’ Russia was complete. Nicholas I died suddenly during the siege of Sebastopol. Alexander II became tsar.

In 1856 peace was signed in Paris. Russia was forbidden to maintain a navy or forts in the Black Sea; but Sebastopol remained in Russia’s possession.

The defeat in the Crimean War revealed the extreme backwardness of serf Russia.

After the war, peasant disturbances broke out over the whole country and, at an assembly of nobles, Tsar Alexander II declared that it would be better for the nobles to liberate the peasants “from above,” than wait until the peasants revolted and liberated themselves “from below.”

**A. I. Herzen.** Prominent among those who came out strongly against serfdom and tsarist tyranny was the bourgeois democratic revolutionary and author, Alexander Herzen. Nicholas I had banished Herzen from the capital. On his return from exile Herzen went abroad. In London he and his friend Ogarev began to publish the journal *Kolokol (The Bell)* in the first Russian printing office that was free from the tsarist censorship. This journal strongly advocated the liberation of the peasants and the oppressed peoples. It was secretly transported to Russia. By this time Alexander II was on the throne. Those who were caught reading *Kolokol* were arrested and banished to Siberia.
THE GROWTH OF CAPITALISM IN TSARIST RUSSIA

40. THE ABOLITION OF SERFDOM IN RUSSIA

Alexander II's Manifesto of February 19, 1861. Fearing that the peasants would rise in revolt and break up the serf system themselves, Alexander II, on February 19, 1861, issued a manifesto liberating the peasants. The peasants became free; they could no longer be bought and sold; they ceased to be the property of the nobility.

But the peasants were granted little land, in fact they had less than before the Reform, as the emancipation of the serfs was called. The land that was left to them was inferior land, for the landlords took the best lands for themselves. Moreover, the landlords deprived the peasants of the use of the forests, meadows and pastures. The landlords divided the land in such a way that the peasants' lands were cut off from the watering places for cattle, the forests and pastures. The peasants were therefore obliged to beg the landlords to permit them to use sections of the latter's land on any terms the landlords cared to impose.

For their land and liberation the peasants were compelled to pay the landlords compensation, and the price they had to pay for the land was twice and three times that of its actual value. This compensation was paid in installments, and for a period of over forty years the peasants paid the landlords for their emancipation a total of over two billion rubles.

The tsar and the landlords robbed the peasants in the Crimea, the Ukraine and the Caucasus even more. In the Crimea they took for themselves the best lands on the Black Sea coast. Here were the palaces and estates of the tsar, the tsar's family and his court aristocracy, who appropriated all the land. The peasants in the Ukraine also received very little land. The landlords did not want to give them the fertile black soil. In Georgia, in addition to paying enormous sums in compensation, the peasants were obliged to continue working for the landlords for many years and to pay them one-third of the harvest of their vineyards and fields.

This sort of liberation from serfdom roused great discontent among the peasants all over the country. The peasants demanded complete liberty and all the land they required without compensation. Troops were sent out to subdue the peasants and sanguinary battles were fought in which hundreds were killed and wounded.

N. Chernyshevsky. The most enlightened people of those days championed the interests of the peasants. One of these was Nicholas Chernyshevsky, a great man of learning and a revolutionary democrat. Even as a child, living in Saratov, the hard lives led by the serfs and the Volga bargemen impressed him. While the introduction of the Reform was in preparation he wrote many magazine articles in which he demanded that the peasants be granted complete liberty and all the landlords' land without compensation.

After the Manifesto of February 19 was proclaimed, Chernyshevsky, with a number of
other revolutionary democrats, resolved to rouse the peasants to revolt against the tsar and the landlords. For this purpose Chernyshevsky wrote a manifesto entitled “To the Serf Peasants.” This manifesto was intercepted by the tsar’s gendarmes.

Alexander II ordered Chernyshevsky to be imprisoned in the Fortress of Peter and Paul and afterwards sent him to penal servitude. The staunch revolutionary never renounced his convictions, and for fully nineteen years he was either kept in prison in Siberia or he remained in exile. Marx, Engels and Lenin thought very highly of Chernyshevsky as an outstanding man of learning and as a staunch and brave revolutionary democrat.

The poet N. Nekrasov. It was during these years that the gifted Russian poet, Nicholas Nekrasov, wrote his poems. In his simple verses he vividly depicted the hard lot of the peasants in tsarist Russia. He wrote about the manner in which human beings were tormented under serfdom and how mercilessly the peasants were exploited by the landlords and the capitalists even after the Reform. “In place of the chains of serfdom many others were forged,” wrote Nekrasov.

Nekrasov’s poems became the favourite songs of the revolutionaries of that time. They are sung by the Russian people to this day.

Reform of the administration. Under serfdom the serfs were completely in the power of the landlords who acted as judges over them.

After the Peasant Reform a village starosta, or elder, was appointed in every village to govern the peasants. Several villages were combined to form a volost, which was governed by a volost elder. The volost and village elders were elected from among the rich peasants. They were subordinate to the tsar’s officials. They squeezed the taxes out of the peasants and helped the police to keep them in subjection. Peasants involved in minor cases were tried in volost courts by judges elected in each volost. The volost judges could sentence peasants to be flogged, fined or imprisoned. Corporal punishment was retained for peasants and criminals.

In the gubernias and uyezds Zemstvo, or local, Administrations were set up which managed the schools and hospitals and supervised the repair of bridges and roads. The money for these purposes was taken from the peasants. The peasants also had the right to vote in the elections and to be elected to these Zemstvo Administrations, but the electoral system was such that the peasants could elect only one representative for every 3,000 households, and there was therefore a small number of them in the administrations. The peasant representatives in the Zemstvo Administrations were mostly kulaks, or village usurers and exploiting farmers. All the work of the Zemstvo Administrations was directed by the landlords. City dumas, or councils, were set up to take charge of municipal affairs, but only manufacturers, merchants and rich houseowners had the right to take part in the elections to these dumas.

The conditions of military service were also changed. All males reaching the age of 21 became liable for military service. The period of military service was reduced to six years. As before, however, the peasants served as common soldiers, while the officers were chosen only from the nobility.

After the Reform all power still remained in the hands of the tsar and the landlords; they owned enormous tracts
of the best land and kept the peasants under the strict sur-
veillance of the police and government officials.

After the abolition of serfdom, however, more factories
began to spring up in Russia, railways began to be built
faster, and trade began to develop more widely. Serf Russia
was becoming a capitalist country.

41. THE STRUGGLE OF THE POLES FOR
INDEPENDENCE. THE WARS OF ALEXANDER II

The Polish rebellion of 1863. For many years the Poles,
headed by the Polish nobility, had been preparing to lib-
erate Poland from the rule of the Russian tsar. In Warsaw,
the revolutionaries formed what was known as the National
Committee, which made preparations for a rebellion.

In 1863, this National Committee, headed by the nobil-
ity, raised a rebellion and proclaimed itself the government
of Poland.

The rebellion affected Poland, part of Lithuania and
part of Byelorussia. Everywhere detachments of rebels
were formed. The rebels were armed with pistols, hunting
rifles, pikes and swords. Avoiding pitched battles with
strong forces of Russian troops, they began to carry on
guerilla warfare. The rebel detachments hid in the forests
from which they made sorties upon the tsarist troops. In
the course of eighteen months over a thousand such sort-
ies were made.

The rebellion was particularly strong in Byelorussia.
Here, under the leadership of Kastus Kalinovsky, the peas-
ants, armed with scythes and axes, attacked and burned
the landlords’ manors, exterminated small detachments of
Russian troops, and killed landlords, tsarist officials and
army officers.

Alexander II sent a whole army to crush the rebellion.
Eighteen months passed before the tsarist generals succeeded
in crushing the valorous rebels. In Byelorussia and Lithu-
ania the suppression of the rebels was led by the cruel
General Muravyov. He mercilessly hanged the prisoners
he captured. Brave Kastus Kalinovsky was also captured
and hanged.

After the rebellion was crushed the tsar’s government
exiled tens of thousands of Poles to Siberia.

During the rebellion, Tsar Alexander II hastened to
pass a law abolishing serfdom in Poland and Lithuania
on terms less onerous for the peasants than those in the
other gubernias in Russia. The various services which the
peasants were required to render were abolished. In Lithu-
ania the peasants were allowed to retain their plots of
land for a lower price than that paid by the peasants in
the other gubernias, and in Poland they obtained them
gratis. The tsar did this in order to win the peasants to
his side in opposition to the Polish landlords.

The conquest of Central Asia. Meanwhile, Tsar Alexan-
der II resolutely set out to conquer Central Asia.

After entrenching herself in Kazakhstan, tsarist Russia
in the course of ten years conquered Kirghizia. The Kirghiz
stubbornly resisted the Russian troops, but their resistance
was broken.

Following the course of the River Syr-Darya, the Rus-
sian forces attacked the Uzbek city of Tashkent. The Uzb-
beks fiercely defended their territory and once recaptured
Tashkent from the Russians. It was only in 1865 that the
Russians were able at last to establish themselves firmly
in that city.

Three years after the capture of Tashkent the Russian
forces captured Samarkand, an ancient city in Bokhara,
one the Tamerlane capital. The Emir of Bokhara accepted
the overlordship of the Russian tsar and was compelled to
yield to him the most fertile lands of Bokhara.

The next to be subjugated were the dominions of the
Khan of Khiva. The khan also accepted the supremacy of the Russian tsar. After this the khanate of Kokand was conquered.

For twelve years the warlike tribes of Turkmenia fought the tsarist troops to protect their independence. They repulsed strong Russian forces from Geok-Tepe, their principal fortress, and yielded only after the Russians had subjected it to heavy artillery bombardment. Following this the tsar’s troops captured Ashkhabad.

At the end of the 19th century Russia conquered the Pamirs, the “Roof of the World.”

Thus, in the course of thirty years of stubborn war, landlord Russia conquered the peoples of Central Asia.

Tsarist officials and Russian merchants came to Central Asia in the wake of the Russian armies.

They imposed heavy taxes upon the population, robbed them of their lands and property and cheated them in trade. The khans, elders and mullahs, or Mohammedan priests, helped the Russian tsar to rob the subjugated peoples.

On the lands fit for the purpose American cotton began to be sown. Cotton was needed for the growing textile industry in Russia. All the profits from cotton growing were pocketed by the native rich and Russian manufacturers, who exploited the poor Uzbeks, Turkmens and Tadjiks.

The peoples of Central Asia were entirely at the mercy of the tsar’s generals, the nobles and capitalists. More than once the oppressed masses rose in rebellion, but the Russian nobles, assisted by the wealthy section of the native population, obtained the upper hand.

Central Asia became a colony of tsarist Russia.

**The war against Turkey.** Towards the close of the reign of Alexander II Russia once again went to war with Turkey. Once again the Russian tsar failed to capture the Straits, the gateway from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. In accordance with the peace treaty, Turkey ceded to Russia the important commercial port of Batumi on the Black Sea. The Russian forces far outnumbered those of Turkey, but owing to Russia’s backwardness the war entailed enormous losses. Hundreds of thousands of badly armed soldiers needlessly sacrificed their lives.

### 42. THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL AND THE PARIS COMMUNE

**The First International.** Marx and Engels regarded the revolutionary movement of the European workers of 1848 merely as the beginning of the proletariat’s struggle for its emancipation. They realized that this struggle would be a stern one and that the bourgeoisie would fight hard to retain its rule. The great leaders of the proletariat were of the opinion that in order to fight the bourgeoisie successfully the proletariat must form an international party. This is why they formed the first international proletarian association.

In 1864, at a congress of workers’ representatives held in London, Marx and Engels proposed that the International Workingmen’s Association be formed. This proposal was adopted and the First International was thus founded. The leader of the First International was Karl Marx. The First International united the working class movement in different countries. Marx drew up a program for this movement. For nearly ten years Marx led the First International and was busy organizing the masses of the workers. His faithful assistant in this was Frederick Engels.

Marx and Engels staunchly and persistently defended the interests of the working class, and constantly fought all those who tried to lead the proletariat along wrong and harmful roads. Marx and Engels unceasingly exposed those who tried to persuade the workers to believe that Socialism
could be built peacefully, without overthrowing the rule of the bourgeoisie. These people called themselves Socialists but in fact they supported the capitalists and betrayed the workers. Marx and Engels also constantly explained what enormous harm was done by those who regarded themselves as revolutionaries, but who opposed the establishment of the rule of the workers, opposed the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Marx and Engels said that such opinions benefited only the enemies of the working class, the capitalists. Such opinions were harmful because they tended to reconcile the workers to capitalist exploitation, weaken the proletariat and help the capitalists to crush the workers.

The Paris Commune. In 1870 war broke out between Prussia and France. In this war Prussia was victorious. The French armies were defeated. The French emperor, Napoleon III, was captured with his army. In Paris the revolutionary workers and the petty-bourgeois masses made a revolution; but it was the bourgeoisie that assumed power. The Prussian army marched on Paris. A citizen army, known as the National Guard, was then formed in Paris. Many workers joined this army.

The Germans reached Paris and besieged it. The workers' battalions rose to defend their city and vowed that they would rather die than surrender Paris to the enemy. Surrounded by the enemy troops the population of Paris bravely held out for four and a half months. The workers and their families starved. The bourgeois government, fearing that the workers would rise in revolt against the bourgeoisie, resorted to downright treachery and came to an agreement with the Germans behind the backs of the people to surrender Paris. But the workers retained their arms. The German troops, seeing that the Paris workers represented a menacing force, dared not enter the city.

The bourgeois Prime Minister, the contemptible traitor
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The bourgeois Prime Minister, the contemptible traitor
and enemy of the people, Thiers, then sent soldiers to surprise the workers and take the artillery away from them. But working women saw the soldiers approaching and raised the alarm. The National Guard saved the guns. Many soldiers went over to the side of the people and shot two of their generals on the spot. Thiers, the Ministers, the generals, the bourgeoisie, the profiteers, government officials and priests then fled from Paris to Versailles.

On March 18, 1871, power in Paris passed into the hands of the working class. The working class set up its own government known as the Paris Commune. Some of the members of the Paris Commune were Socialists, members of the First International that was founded by Marx and Engels.

Marx and Engels called upon the Commune to advance on Versailles, where the bourgeois government of Thiers had taken refuge. But the Commune lacked the determination to take this step. This lack of determination was due to the fact that there were many petty-bourgeois, wavering revolutionaries in the Commune who believed in the “good intentions” of the bourgeoisie. Marx severely criticized them for their lack of determination. Meanwhile, Thiers’ troops were closing in upon Paris.

The Commune transferred the factories of the fugitive bourgeoisie to the workers. Churches and monasteries were transformed into clubs for the people. Everything was done to improve the conditions of the toilers. An order was issued to move the workers from their dark and damp cellar dwellings to the houses of the rich.

The whole world tensely watched the great struggle of the Paris proletarians. But the Communards were besieged, cut off from the rest of France. They failed to establish an alliance between the workers and peasants against the bourgeoisie; they failed to win the peasantry to their side.

The Communards fought heroically against the numerous
and well-armed forces of the Versailles bourgeois government. Women and children fought shoulder to shoulder with the men. On May 21, Thiers' troops forced their way into Paris. The German army assisted them. The bourgeoisie wreaked cruel vengeance on the Communards. In the course of one week tens of thousands of men, women and children were shot. Still larger numbers of workers were imprisoned or deported to remote islands to serve terms of penal servitude.

The Paris Commune was crushed. It lasted 71 days, but the proletariat will remember it forever. Every year the workers put wreaths on the graves of the Communards who lie buried in one of the cemeteries of Paris, at the wall of which the heroic Communards were shot.

The Paris Commune was crushed because the workers still lacked a Marxian-revolutionary party of their own capable of leading them unwaveringly against the bour-
and well-armed forces of the Versailles bourgeois government. Women and children fought shoulder to shoulder with the men. On May 21, Thiers' troops forced their way into Paris. The German army assisted them. The bourgeoisie wreaked cruel vengeance on the Communards. In the course of one week tens of thousands of men, women and children were shot. Still larger numbers of workers were imprisoned or deported to remote islands to serve terms of penal servitude.

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The Paris Commune was crushed because the workers still lacked a Marxian-revolutionary party of their own capable of leading them unwaveringly against the bour-
geoisie. Another reason was that the workers lacked the support of the peasants; they failed to understand the importance of an alliance between the workers and peasants.

In 1876 the First International ceased to exist.

The importance of the First International was enormous. It was the first international association of workers and served as the model for the Communist International that was founded by Lenin.

Marx died in 1883 and Engels in 1895. Their teachings directed the struggle of the workers for Communism along the right road and served as the basis of the activities of V. I. Lenin and of our Communist Party.

43. CAPITALISM IN RUSSIA

How the workers and peasants lived under capitalism. After the Reform of 1861, tens of millions of peasants continued to live in horrible poverty and under oppression. They had little land. In order to maintain themselves and their families and to pay the taxes they had to rent land from the landlords or borrow money from them. In return for this the peasants were compelled to till the landlords' land with their own horses and implements. Thus, the peasants still remained in bondage to the landlords.

The landlords were like vampires, sucking all they could out of the peasants. Towards the end of the 19th century, half the peasants in Russia became poor peasants, having no horses at all or only one wretched nag. The middle peasants still managed to make ends meet; but if the harvest failed they were pauperized, fell into greater bondage to the landlords and peasant kulaks and were forced to work for them as labourers.

The peasants were not only robbed and oppressed by the landlords but also by the kulaks.
The ruined peasants deserted the countryside and went into the towns. The towns were growing rapidly because of the development of industry. At the end of the 19th century there were already more than two million industrial workers in Russia. Large industrial centres sprang up; engineering works in Petersburg and Nizhni Novgorod (now the city of Gorky); iron and steel works in Tula, the Urals and the Donetz Basin, and textile mills in the Moscow, Vladimir, Kostroma and Yaroslavl gubernias.

The ruined peasants drifted to these places. There was also a great demand for labour for the construction of railways. Towards the end of the 19th century there were already over 30,000 kilometres of railways in Russia, and the building of the Siberian Railway had been started.

To the spacious lands of Siberia came hundreds of thousands of peasant families. Notwithstanding the severe climate, they toiled stubbornly and perseveringly to cultivate this rich country. The peasants penetrated deep into the taiga, as the Siberian forests are called. The ancient dominions of Russia began to be populated by masses of ruined peasants.

The lot of the workers was no better than that of the peasants. The factory owners compelled the workers, not only men, but also women and children, to work thirteen and fourteen hours a day. Often they had to work seventeen and eighteen hours a day. The workers were compelled to work on holidays; there was no such thing as vacations.

The wages paid for this hard labour were miserable indeed, for masses of starving peoples stood at the factory gates begging for work.

The workers were fined, that is, part of their wages was deducted, on the slightest pretext. The factories were filthy, damp and gloomy, and there was hardly any ventilation.

The workers lived in filthy and congested barracks. The beds on which they slept were never empty; when the workers on the day shift rose to go to work the workers from the night shift came to sleep in them.

Both the workers and peasants were equally oppressed in tsarist Russia. But the factory workers began to organize earlier than the peasants and to fight their oppressors. Later on they were followed by the peasants.

**The Narodniki.** The Russian revolutionaries of that time, known as Narodniki, did not appreciate the leading role of the working class. They mistakenly thought that the peasantry was the main force and that liberation from the rule of the tsar and the landlords could be obtained merely by means of a peasant revolt. They did not understand that the peasants alone, without an alliance with the working class, could not vanquish tsarism and the landlords.

Soon after the Peasant Reform of 1861 these revolu-
tionaries began to organize secret revolutionary circles of young people, mostly students. At the meetings of these circles the question of how to help the peasants was heatedly discussed. Finally it was decided that it was necessary to go into the villages, “among the people,” as they said, and call upon the peasants to rise in revolt against the tsar and the landlords. This is why these revolutionaries were called Narodniki, from the word “narod,” meaning the people. But the peasants did not follow the Narodniki.

Then the Narodniki decided to continue the struggle by their own efforts without the people. They resolved to start the struggle by assassinating the tsar and organized a secret society called Narodnaya Volya, or Will of the People. They spent much time and effort in preparing for the assassination of the tsar. Only on March 1, 1881 did they succeed in assassinating Alexander II by hurling a bomb at him.

Assassinations, however, led to no improvement whatever. The place of the assassinated tsar or Minister was taken by another, more cruel than the first. Alexander II was succeeded by his son, Alexander III, in whose reign the conditions of the workers and peasants became even worse. The tsar’s gendarmes tracked down and arrested nearly all the revolutionaries of the Narodnaya Volya. Alexander III ordered five of them to be hanged, and the rest were sentenced to life-long imprisonment in a fortress, or to penal servitude.

It was not just by chance that the Narodniki failed. The method they chose of fighting tsarism by means of terrorism was a wrong one, and harmful for the revolution.

The activities of the Narodniki were harmful because they made it difficult for the working class to understand that it must play the leading part in the revolution, and because they hindered the formation of a Marxist workers’ party. They diverted the attention of the toilers from the

fight against the oppressor class as a whole to the futile assassination of individual representatives of this class, and hindered the alliance between the workers and the peasants.

In 1887 a small group of revolutionaries made another attempt to assassinate the tsar (Alexander III), but failed. The organizers of this attempt, Lenin’s elder brother, Alexander Ulyanov, and his comrades, were captured by the gendarmes and hanged. The old mistake was repeated with the same bad consequences.

At that time Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (Lenin) was already seventeen years of age. On learning of his brother’s execution he said: “No, we will not take this road. This is not the road to follow.” Lenin was right. Only the organized working class in alliance with the peasantry, and leading the peasantry, could achieve complete victory over the rule of the tsar and the landlords.

The writer Leo Tolstoy and the painter I. Repin. In the second half of the 19th century there were many gifted writers, painters and composers in Russia.

One of these was Leo Tolstoy. He began writing when he was still a young man, when he was taking part in the wars.
against the Caucasian mountaineers, and in the defence of Sevastopol during the Crimean War. He wrote his most important works after he had retired from the army and went to live on his estate, Yasnaya Polyana, near the town of Tula. In his principal novel, War and Peace, a great work of art, he vividly tells the story of Russia’s war against Napoleon in 1812. In his works Tolstoy depicted the life of the landlords under serfdom and under the capitalist system. Towards the end of his life he began to depict the awful conditions of the peasants after the Reform of 1861. Tolstoy did not believe in revolution, but he saw how hard was the lot of the peasants and sternly condemned the tyranny of the tsarist officials, landlords and capitalists.

In that period also there lived the great Russian painter, Ilya Repin. He was born in the Ukraine, in a soldier’s family, and from childhood loved to draw. He became a celebrated painter. Repin knew the hard lot of the Russian peasants, for he himself had come from the people. His pictures are famous throughout the world.

In the second half of the 19th century there lived the great Russian composers, Moussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin and Tchaikovsky.

Moussorgsky composed the opera Boris Godunov, and Rimsky-Korsakov the operas The Snow Maiden and Sadko. In their operas these composers made extensive use of the folk songs of the peoples inhabiting Russia. We often hear these beautiful compositions today.

44. THE LABOUR MOVEMENT FROM 1870 TO 1900.
V. I. LENIN

The first workers’ unions. The workers began their struggle against the capitalists during the reign of Alexander II.

The workers of a factory would come together and submit demands to their employers for improvements in their conditions and refuse to go on with their work until the employer had satisfied these demands. This is called a strike.

In order to be able to fight the capitalists more successfully the workers began to organize in unions.

The first union was formed in Odessa in 1875 and was called the South Russian League. This union made preparations to fight the autocracy and called upon the workers to unite in order to carry on the struggle for a revolution. Soon, however, the members of this union were arrested. Its leader, Zaslavsky, was sent to penal servitude, during which he died.

Three years later a union was formed in Petersburg known as the Northern League of Russian Workers, at the head of which were Khalturin, a carpenter, and Obnorsky, a mechanic. This union began to organize and lead strikes. But the tsarist government broke up this union too.

The labour movement, however, spread to new districts. The conditions of the workers were becoming worse, the capitalists robbed them more than ever.

Morozov, the cotton mill owner, for example, fined his workers unmercifully; by imposing fines on the workers
he usually took back one-third of their wages. The workers could stand this open robbery no longer and in 1885, 8,000 mill hands employed in the Morozov mills in the town of Orekhovo-Zuyevo came out on strike. The mills were brought to a standstill.

This strike had been organized beforehand. It was led by an advanced worker named Moiseyenko, who formerly

A conference of workers on the eve of the Morozov strike

had been a member of the Northern League of Russian Workers. With a group of fellow weavers he drew up a list of demands to be submitted to the mill owner, and these demands were confirmed by the workers at a secret conference.

Morozov rejected the demands and secured the arrest of one of the workers' leaders. A crowd of weavers forcibly released their arrested comrade, but the troops which had been sent for by Morozov defeated the workers. Six hundred strikers were arrested and scores were put on trial.
Strikes like this broke out in many factories in Russia. In the following year, the tsarist government, frightened by the growth of the labour movement and the strikes, was obliged to pass a law prohibiting the mill owners from robbing the workers so brazenly.

The workers realized that they could achieve a great deal by means of organized struggle.

The advanced workers of Russia first became acquainted with the teachings of Marx and Engels in workers' circles and in the unions.

**The Emancipation of Labour Group.** At that time proletarian revolutionaries appeared in Russia who subscribed to the teachings of Marx, and were of the opinion that the proletariat must become the leader or the revolutionary movement.

One of these revolutionaries was George Plekhanov, the first propagandist of Marxism in Russia.

In 1883 Plekhanov went abroad and organized a revolutionary Marxist group which was called the Emancipation of Labour Group. This group translated the works of Marx and Engels into Russian and distributed them in Russia. It also exposed the enormous harm that was being done to the labour movement by the teachings of the Narodniki and their methods of struggle.

In Russia numerous circles were formed for the study of the works of Marx. But neither the Emancipation of Labour Group nor these circles were connected with the labour movement.

This connection was established by Lenin, who organized the Bolshevik Party and led the working class and the peasantry in the struggle against the tsarist government, the landlords and the bourgeoisie.

**V. I. Lenin, the leader of the working class and the founder of Bolshevism.** Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (Ulyanov) was born in 1870, in the town of Simbirsk (now called Ulyanovsk). At school he was a very good pupil.

At the age of seventeen Lenin entered the Kazan University, but was soon expelled for taking part in the revolutionary students' movement. He then began to prepare for examination in all the subjects in the university curriculum. This examination he passed.

While still living in Kazan Lenin joined a Marxist circle and studied the works of Marx and Engels. He astonished everybody by his profound knowledge.

In 1893 Lenin went to Petersburg and there he began to teach in workers' circles.

In Petersburg Lenin amalgamated all the workers' circles into the League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class, and thus he paved the way for the creation of a genuinely revolutionary workers' party. On his proposal, similar leagues were formed in other towns.
Lenin ruthlessly fought against the Narodniki and against all those who misinterpreted the teachings of Marx.

Lenin studied every detail of the lives of the workers, wrote leaflets and books for them to read, and called for a persistent struggle against the capitalists.

The tsarist detectives succeeded in arresting Lenin.

He was kept in prison for a long time and then exiled to Siberia for three years.

The Leagues of Struggle, which Lenin had organized, made an attempt to unite into a party. With this object the first congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (R.S.D.L.P.) was convened in 1898, in the city of Minsk. The attempt to form a party at this congress failed, however.

On returning from exile Lenin went abroad and there started the first Marxist newspaper. It was called *Iskra*, or *The Spark*.

*Iskra* was printed on tissue paper so as to make it more convenient to smuggle it secretly into Russia.

In *Iskra* Lenin wrote articles calling upon the workers to unite in a revolutionary political party for the purpose of fighting the autocracy and the capitalists.

Lenin’s *Iskra* paved the way for the formation of the Bolshevik Party.

The workers’ struggle flared up and soon spread to the outlying districts of Russia, including Trans-Caucasia, where, since 1898, Comrade Stalin, Lenin’s pupil, carried on his revolutionary work.
45. THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION

The Obukhov Defence and the Rostov strike. In the beginning of the 20th century the revolutionary struggle of the workers increased in intensity. The workers organized strikes and demonstrations and mustered their forces for the struggle against the capitalists and the tsarist government.

At that time Nicholas II was tsar. His reign began in 1894.

In 1901, on the first of May, the day celebrated by the workers all over the world, the workers in the Obukhov Ordnance Works in Petersburg came out on strike and submitted a number of demands to the management. The officials were so astonished at this that they did not know what to do. They said to the workers: “At this rate you will not only demand our dismissal, but also the dismissal of the tsar’s Ministers, won’t you?” “Not only of the Ministers, but of the tsar himself,” the strikers retorted.

The officials sent for the police and the military to crush the strikers. The strikers built barricades inside the works and around it, and the police and soldiers who arrived were met with a hail of stones and lumps of iron. The police and soldiers opened fire on the strikers. The workers fought the troops for several hours. A number of workers were killed and severely wounded. This battle was afterwards known as the Obukhov Defence. About 800 participants in this battle were arrested; many of them were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment and penal servitude.

The news about the heroic Obukhov workers quickly spread throughout the country. In all parts of boundless Russia the workers rose for the fight.

In 1902 a big railway strike broke out in Rostov on the Don. Many factory workers joined the railwaymen. The

strike and meetings of workers were led by the Rostov Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. The members of this committee came out openly to speak at meetings and call upon the workers to fight resolutely and staunchly until complete victory over the tsar’s government had been achieved. For several days mass meetings of workers were held on the outskirts of the town. As many as 30,000 Rostov workers gathered at these meetings. The Rostov police and the local garrison could do nothing against the strikers.
To suppress the strike the Rostov authorities sent for the Cossacks in the adjacent towns. Only when the Cossacks arrived was the strike stopped.

The Rostov strike showed that the working class of Russia had already risen for the open political struggle against tsarism.

The peasant movement. The rising of the workers was followed by peasant risings. In the spring and summer of 1902 the struggles of the peasants in the Ukraine and the Volga districts affected over 300 villages. The peasants wrecked the landlords' manors, seized their grain and distributed it among the starving, and seized their lands.

Soldiers were sent against the peasants. The peasants were shot down and flogged to death. Thousands of peasants were arrested and imprisoned. The peasant movement was crushed. The peasants did not yet understand that in order to achieve victory over the landlords it was first necessary to abolish tsarism.

In his newspaper Iskra, Lenin called upon the peasants to fight against tsarism jointly with the workers. The work in the rural districts carried on by the Social-Democrats who supported Iskra was hindered by the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, the S.R.'s, as they were called for short, which arose in the beginning of the 20th century. While pretending to champion the interests of the peasants, this party really championed the interests of the kulaks and tried to carry out the mistaken program of the Narodniki.

Lenin persistently fought the Socialist-Revolutionaries.

The formation of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. Lenin's Iskra rallied around itself the scattered Social-Democratic organizations which existed in Russia. Efforts were again made to form a revolutionary proletarian party, and this time they were successful.

In 1903 the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party was held secretly abroad. At this congress forty-three delegates from different parts of Russia gathered. A program drawn up by V. I. Lenin was adopted. This program dealt with the main object of the party of the working class, which is, to organize the Socialist Revolution, to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, to achieve the victory of Socialism. But the program went on to say that in order to achieve this main object the party must first of all achieve its immediate object, which is, to overthrow the tsarist autocracy in Russia, to establish a democratic republic, to introduce an eight-hour day for the workers, to abolish all the remnants of serfdom in the countryside and to give the peasants land.

In order that these great objects might be achieved, Lenin insisted that only staunch fighters in the workers' cause, tried friends of the working class, be allowed to become members of the Party. The Party, said Lenin, must be the vanguard of the working class, and the members of the Party must be devoted heart and soul to the revolution. Lenin insisted that only those who accepted the Party's program and actually took part in the work of one of its organizations should be allowed to become members of the Party. This demand was opposed by Martov, Trotsky and several other delegates. They proposed that the Party should admit as members all who expressed a desire to join or promised to help the Party in some way without pledging themselves to participate in the work of any of the Party's organizations or to submit to Party discipline. This proposal meant weakening the Party as the leader of the working class, for it enabled people who belonged to the bourgeoisie and were unreliable and hostile to the Party to join.

Lenin's opponents at the congress, who were led by Martov and Trotsky, then proposed that in their fight against tsarism the workers should conclude an alliance
not with the toiling peasantry, but with the bourgeoisie. Lenin showed how harmful this proposal of Martov and Trotsky was and argued that the working class must under no circumstances enter into an agreement with the bourgeoisie, for the latter would betray the workers. The workers must not unite with the bourgeoisie, said Lenin, but with the revolutionary peasants, and march together with them in the fight against the tsar and the landlords. Lenin and his supporters urged that immediately after the overthrow of tsarism and the landlords the fight against the capitalists, the fight for Socialism, must be started.

The congress elected a Central Committee and the Editorial Board of the Iskra and entrusted them with the guidance of the Party's work. To these bodies Lenin's supporters were elected. They obtained the majority of votes at the congress. The Russian word for "majority" is "bolshinство"; that is why Lenin's supporters came to be known as Bolsheviks. His opponents, who were in the minority, came to be known as Mensheviks, from the Russian word "menshinство," which means "minority." After the congress the majority of the Social-Democratic organizations in Russia supported the Bolsheviks.

Comrade Stalin did not attend the Second Congress of the Party because he was then in prison. In 1904 he escaped from Siberia, went to Trans-Caucasia and won the workers there to the side of the Bolsheviks.

The advanced workers had great faith in Lenin and Stalin. At that time their numbers could be counted in thousands.

In the summer of 1903 the first general strikes broke out in the big cities of the Ukraine and the Caucasus under the leadership of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. All the factories were brought to a standstill. The workers gathered in the streets and squares in thousands. Speakers addressed the workers and spoke to them about revolution. The workers marched in processions carrying red flags, the banner of the proletarian struggle for Socialism. The tsarist government sent troops to these cities and suppressed the strikes.

But these strikes did not take place in vain; they hastened and brought nearer the revolution.

46. THE BEGINNING OF THE REVOLUTION

War against Japan. Tsar Nicholas II tried to crush the revolution by all the means in his power. His courtiers advised him to start war against Japan, for which preparations had been going on for a long time. They thought that the war would put off the revolution. "War rather than revolution!" said these courtiers.

But it was the Japanese who started the war first. In January 1904, the Japanese, without declaring war, attacked Port Arthur, a fort built by Russia on the shores of the Yellow Sea, where Russian warships were stationed. The best of these warships were blown up by the Japanese.

The Japanese transported troops across the sea from their islands to Manchuria. Well Armed and trained, the Japanese army began to defeat the backward tsarist army, which was badly armed and led by incompetent and corrupt generals.

The Japanese captured Port Arthur and defeated the tsar's army at Mukden. In the narrow straits of Tsushima the Japanese fleet destroyed the last warships of the Russian navy which had been sent from the Baltic Sea.

Defeated in the war, the tsarist government was compelled to sign a humiliating peace treaty with Japan. Japan annexed half of the Island of Sakhalin and Port Arthur, and entrenched herself in Korea.

Bloody Sunday and the first Soviet of Workers' Deputies. The defeats suffered in the war with Japan still further
increased the hatred of the people towards the tsar's government. The war did not put off the revolution, it hastened it.

In the beginning of January 1905 the workers in the huge Putilov Works (now known as the Kirov Works) in Petersburg went on strike.

Soon the strike grew into a general strike of the workers in Petersburg. In the factories stormy meetings of workers were held. The workers sought a way of escape from their conditions of poverty and oppression. They put forward the demand for an eight-hour day, for the right to organize in unions, for freedom of the press and free speech. The workers also demanded that the landlords' land be transferred to the peasants and that a Constituent Assembly be called to change the system of government in Russia.

A few months before the strike the tsar's government had formed a society, known as the Workers' Association, for the purpose of combating the labour movement. This society was led by the priest Gapon. Gapon was a provocateur, or agent of the police. When the strike started, Gapon, at meetings of his society, urged the workers to organize a procession to the tsar's palace and to submit a petition to the tsar. In this petition the workers included all their demands. The Bolsheviks urged the workers not to listen to Gapon. "You will not achieve liberty and land by means of petitions to the tsar," they said. "These must be won by armed force." Gapon, however, succeeded in persuading the workers to march to the palace to submit their petition. Gapon's secret intention was to cause bloodshed and so weaken the labour movement.

On January 9, 1905, a cold and frosty morning, crowds of workers, with their wives and children, marched to the Winter Palace. Over 140,000 people marched in the procession.

The tsar's soldiers, lined up outside the Winter Palace, met the unarmed people with volleys of rifle fire. Over
a thousand people were killed; many were cut down by the sabres of the Cossacks and trampled upon by their horses. The streets of Petersburg flowed with workers’ blood.

The workers learned a severe lesson that day. It became clear to everybody that no faith could be put in the tsar and his servants. In the evening of that day the workers put up barricades in the working class districts. Over the barricades floated red flags. The workers attacked army officers and the police and disarmed them. In their struggle the workers were led by the Bolsheviks.

The news of the tsar’s wicked deed caused an outburst of anger throughout the country. The workers stopped work and came out into the streets singing revolutionary songs and shouting: “Down with the tsarist autocracy.” Soon the revolution spread over the whole country.

Mass strikes and workers’ demonstrations continued throughout the spring.

In May 1905 a particularly stubborn strike began in the cotton mill town of Ivanovo-Voznesensk. This strike was led by the Bolsheviks.

The workers gathered in thousands on the banks of the river Talka, on the outskirts of the town. To lead their struggle against the tsar’s government and the mill owners the workers elected deputies who formed a Soviet, or Council.

This was one of the first Soviets of Workers’ Deputies to be formed in Russia. This Soviet met every day, surrounded by thousands of workers. Meetings of workers were addressed by the Bolsheviks, who were at the head of the Soviet. The crowd listened eagerly to their revolutionary speeches. This heroic struggle of the workers lasted for over two months. The workers and their families starved, but they would not surrender. The governor of the gubernia ordered the soldiers to shoot at the workers. At last the workers were exhausted. At a meeting of 40,000 workers the Soviet recommended that the strike cease. This strike steeled the workers and trained them for their future, more stubborn, struggles.

The peasant movement. In the spring of 1905 unrest broke out among the peasantry. In Central Russia as well as on the Volga the peasants seized the land and cut timber and took the grain from the landlords’ granaries and distributed it among the starving. They set fire to the landlords’ manors, demanded the distribution of the land, and in a number of places seized the landlords’ estates. The frightened landlords fled from their estates to seek the protection of the soldiers and police. The tsarist government sent soldiers and Cossacks against the peasants. The soldiers shot down the peasants and imprisoned and flogged many of them. But the peasants, supported by the workers in the towns, continued their struggle. The peasant movement grew wider and wider every day.
In Georgia the peasants stopped paying their tribute to the landlords. In a number of places they seized the land, pastures and woods, and refused to recognize the tsarist authorities. The government was carried on by the peasants themselves.

In Latvia and Estonia the agricultural labourers rose in revolt in the spring and summer of 1905. They armed themselves and formed revolutionary peasant committees. Led by these organizations they drove the German barons, who were the landlords in those parts, out of their villages.

In the Ukraine and Byelorussia the peasants also rose against the tsar's government and landlords.

**The Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.** On Lenin's insistence the third congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party was convened in London in April 1905. At that time the Party had a membership of about 8,500. Delegates from twenty Bolshevik Committees gathered at this congress. The Mensheviks refused to take part in the congress and did not appear.

At the congress Lenin said that in order to achieve the victory of the revolution the Party must bring about an alliance between the workers and peasants and strengthen this alliance; with the combined forces of the workers and peasants start an armed insurrection to overthrow the tsar and to establish a revolutionary government of workers and peasants. The peasants must set up their revolutionary committees and seize all the landlords' land without compensation. The workers must lead and assist this struggle of the peasants.

Lenin went on to say that after the tsar and the landlords were overthrown the Bolsheviks would have to lead the workers and the poor peasants in the struggle against the capitalists and the kulaks, in the struggle for the Socialist revolution.

The Third Congress adopted all of Lenin's proposals.

The delegates returned to Russia and began very energetically to put into effect the proposals adopted at the congress.

Lenin was assisted in the work of leading the struggle for the victory of the revolution by Comrade Stalin, who was then working in Trans-Caucasia. Here Comrade Stalin worked to strengthen the Bolshevik Committees, made preparations for the Bolshevik congress, organized secret printing presses, wrote leaflets addressed to the workers, taught and organized the revolutionary workers and peasants and directed the preparations for an armed insurrection. Comrade Stalin worked very hard to unite the workers and toiling peoples of Trans-Caucasia and all the other parts of Russia into one family.

47. **Preparations for an Armed Insurrection**

The mutiny on the battleship Potemkin. The revolution spread to the army and navy. In June 1905, a mutiny broke out on the battleship Potemkin, then stationed in the Black Sea.

The battleship was at anchor off Odessa, where the workers were on strike. The sailors had heard about the events in Odessa, and were very excited and eager to respond to the call of the workers to join the struggle.

One day, while the sailors were at their mid-day meal, one of the sailors shouted:

"Boys, there's maggots in the soup!"

The ship's officers fed the men with cheap rotten meat and pocketed the difference in the price.

Discontent had been rife among the men for some time. The incident of the maggots hastened the outbreak. The
The red flag was raised on the Potemkin.

The tsar sent warships to suppress the mutiny on the Potemkin, but the sailors on these vessels refused to fire at the rebel ship. The Potemkin, however, could not hold out without fuel and food. It also lacked sufficiently experienced Bolshevik leaders.

The Potemkin was compelled to make for Rumania and surrender to the authorities there.

In spite of failure, the Potemkin mutiny served to encourage the workers. It proved to them that the navy and army were beginning to come over to the side of the revolution.

**The October General Strike.** By the autumn of 1905 the revolutionary movement had spread over the whole country. Day after day the ranks of the strikers were reinforced by additional groups of workers from the mills and factories. The workers organized open air meetings and often fought the police and soldiers who were sent to disperse them.

In the beginning of October a strike broke out on the Moscow railways, which soon spread to all the railways in the country. The post and telegraph workers also ceased work.

Teachers, doctors, professors and students followed the workers in the struggle. In Kharkov and Ekaterinoslav (now Dniepropetrovsk) the workers began to put up barricades, ransacked the gunsmiths’ shops and opened fire on the soldiers and police.

In many towns trade unions were formed under the leadership of the Bolsheviks. In the big industrial centres Soviets of Workers’ Deputies were formed. These Soviets were the beginnings of the new revolutionary power of the workers and peasants. Many of the Soviets of Workers’ Deputies began to prepare for an insurrection; they obtained arms by various means and began to drill the workers.
In nearly all the large factories in which the Bolsheviks had their party organizations, action groups were formed. The tsarist government issued the order to the troops to "spare no bullets," and to shoot down the strikers mercilessly.

The soldiers shot down workers in a number of towns and broke up their meetings. The workers could not yet rise in armed rebellion. The number of action groups was small, and they lacked arms. However, the tsar also lacked sufficient forces to suppress the revolutionary movement. There was considerable unrest in the army; the soldiers began openly to display their sympathy for the revolution. This was largely due to the work of the Bolsheviks in the army, where they secretly distributed leaflets calling upon the soldiers to join the revolution. It was also due to the tsar's defeat in the war against Japan.

Frightened by the growth of the revolution, Tsar Nicholas II, on October 17, issued a manifesto in which he promised to grant the people liberty, and to convene a State Duma, or Parliament, of representatives of the people to administer the affairs of Russia jointly with the tsar. The Manifesto of October 17 was a piece of deliberate deception. The tsarist government merely wanted to gain time to muster its forces and to drown the revolution in blood. Although the manifesto was supposed to have granted liberty, the police continued to break up meetings and to arrest and kill workers and their Bolshevik leaders. In Moscow the tsarist rowdies killed Nicholas Baumann, a fine Bolshevik and leader of the Moscow workers. At his funeral 100,000 Moscow workers, headed by the Moscow Committee of the Bolshevik Party, followed his coffin.

In November 1905 Lenin arrived in Russia from abroad and guided the work of the Party and the struggles of the toilers.

Meanwhile, Comrade Stalin was also firmly, and in the manner of Lenin, preparing the toilers in Trans-Caucasia for battle against the tsar and his servants. He denounced the Mensheviks who were opposed to the preparations for armed insurrection. Addressing the workers of Tbilisi, Comrade Stalin said: "What do we need to be really victorious? For this we need three things—understand and remember this: first, we need arms; second, we need arms; third, I say again, we need arms."

In December 1905 the question of armed insurrection was discussed at a conference of the Bolsheviks. At this conference Lenin and Stalin met for the first time. Before that they had been acquainted only through the medium of correspondence and messages sent with comrades.

48. THE DECEMBER ARMED INSURRECTION

The armed insurrection of the Moscow workers. On December 7, 1905, a general strike broke out in Moscow which quickly grew into an armed insurrection. At the hour appointed by the Bolsheviks, the factories, mills and railways came to a standstill. The electricity was cut off. The newspapers ceased to appear. The workers began to arm and the ranks of the action groups grew. The police and soldiers broke up the workers' meetings and fired at the houses where the action groups gathered. The workers began to put up barricades in Bronnaya Street, Tverskaya Street (now Gorky Street), at the railway stations, and at the Goujon Works (now the Sickle and Hammer Works). Soon many streets in Moscow were bristling with barricades made of carts, overturned tramcars, barrels, boxes and lamp posts. All these were piled up across the street and fastened together with telegraph wire and the overhead wires of the tramways. The tsar's cavalry and mounted police were unable to break through these bar-
rioters. At many of the barricades the workers' action groups, armed with revolvers, fired at the soldiers. Firing went on continuously in the streets of Moscow for several days. Workers' action groups from other places hastened to Moscow's assistance. That brave Bolshevik, M. Frunze, arrived from Ivanovo-Voznesensk with his action group.

The peasants brought grain and potatoes for the workers in Moscow and many of them took their place in the ranks of the fighters at the barricades. The working-class district of Presnya became the centre of the struggle. The action groups were led by the Bolsheviks. Under their leadership Presnya held out against the tsar's soldiers for ten days. Presnya was a proletarian fortress in which the insurgent workers were in power. The Presnya workers heroically defended their district. Their wives helped in the struggle. They nursed the wounded and brought food for them. Tremendous courage was displayed by the young people. They acted as scouts, helped to build barricades, lay in ambush, and fought the soldiers.

The workers on the Kazan Railway also put up a stubborn fight against the tsar's soldiers.

There were not enough troops in Moscow to contend with the insurgents. To reinforce them the tsar sent two regiments to Moscow. Only with the aid of artillery and machine guns did they succeed in defeating the insurgents. The tsar's forces were commanded by General Dubasov. On December 18 the workers' action groups were compelled to abandon the barricades and hide their weapons in secret hiding places. Over a thousand persons were killed. For several days fires caused by artillery shells raged in the city. The bodies of dead workers, men, women and children, were lying about the streets. Many of the fighters in the revolution were shot and hanged by the tsar's troops.

This is how the tsar's executioners punished insurgent Moscow.

At the time of the armed insurrection in Moscow Lenin was in Petersburg. The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party did its utmost to rouse the workers of Petersburg to rebellion, but the Mensheviks, headed by Trotsky, who were in the majority in the Petersburg Soviet, were opposed to supporting the armed insurrection in Moscow. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries disrupted the workers' revolution. They supported the bourgeoisie who had conspired with the tsarist government to suppress the revolution. A strike broke out in Petersburg in December, but it did not lead to an armed insurrection.

The peasants' struggle against the landlords. During the revolution, as a result of the influence of the labour movement and the call of the Bolshevik Party, the peasants nearly everywhere in Russia rose against their landlord oppressors. All gubernias in Russia were affected by the peasant movement. During the three years of the revolutionary struggle
more than 7,000 revolutionary peasant actions were registered. The peasants seized the land of the landlords and the monasteries, cut down their timber, attacked the landlords' manors and set fire to them. In the Saratov gubernia alone the peasants in the autumn and winter of 1905 destroyed about three hundred manors. The peasants drove out the police, the volost elders and village elders and elected their own administration. The more advanced peasants united in peasant unions. In this they were assisted by the Bolsheviks. The tsar and the landlords sent out punitive expeditions and suppressed the peasant revolts.

**Armed insurrections of the oppressed peoples in Russia.**

In Trans-Caucasia, under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, the workers and peasants fought bravely against the tsar's troops. The whole of Georgia was up in arms. Reinforcements of tsarist troops were rushed into Georgia. The Georgian workers and peasants fought many a battle with these troops.

In December 1905 many towns and villages in Georgia were in flames, having been set on fire by the tsarist troops.

In the Ukraine the first outbreaks of armed insurrection occurred during the general strike in October. The biggest revolts broke out in December 1905 in the Donetz Basin, in Gorlovka and Lugansk (now called Voroshilovgrad). The factory workers and miners fought the tsarist troops for several days. In Lugansk the workers were led by the mechanic Kliment Voroshilov.

In Finland the workers formed an armed Red Guard. The Red Guard disarmed the tsar's police. The gendarmes, the police and the Russian government officials deserted their posts and fled to Russia.

The Finnish people elected their own government. The Finnish bourgeoisie, frightened by the increase in the power of the workers, came to an agreement with the tsar and betrayed the workers. The labour movement was cruelly suppressed. The Red Guard was destroyed; the government was dispersed.

Everywhere the oppressed peoples fought against the hated tsarist government; but, like the Russian bourgeoisie, the bourgeoisie among these peoples fought against the revolution in alliance with the tsarist authorities.

This time the workers and peasants were compelled to retreat. The tsar, the landlords and the bourgeoisie proved to be the stronger. But the blood of the workers and peasants of all these peoples of Russia shed during the revolution cemented the ties of friendship between them and united them in a close and great union for future struggles.

The revolution of 1905 had its repercussions all over the world. It was the greatest struggle the proletariat had waged since the Paris Commune of 1871.

The Russian revolution stimulated a mass strike movement in Western Europe. Owing to the influence of the Russian revolution the toilers in Turkey overthrew their sultan, the toilers in Iran overthrew their shah and the toilers in China overthrew their emperor. China became a republic.

**49. THE DEFEAT OF THE REVOLUTION**

The suppression of revolutionary actions. Notwithstanding the bloody reprisals of the tsar's government against the people in revolt the revolution continued. In 1906 there was still a number of workers' strikes and revolutionary actions by peasants, soldiers and sailors. The mutinies of the sailors in Kronstadt and Sveaborg in July and August 1906 were of special portent. Thousands of sailors rose in revolt, killed their officers, and established their own government in a number of fortified places. The sailors were badly organized, however, and the tsarist officers succeeded in suppressing the revolt. The government arrested over 4,000 sailors.

The tsar's Minister Stolypin issued a law for the ruthless
extermination of the revolutionaries. Under this law, from 1906 to 1909, over two thousand persons were hanged and 25,000 were sentenced to penal servitude, exile and imprisonment. Tens of thousands of revolutionaries were shot and tortured to death without trial. Arrested revolutionaries were tormented and tortured in the tsar’s dungeons: needles were forced under their finger nails, they were scorched with red-hot irons and starved to death. Stolypin vented his wrath particularly upon the Bolsheviks. Thousands of revolutionaries devoted to the cause of the workers perished on the gallows or in penal servitude.

Many of the Bolshevik Party organizations were wrecked, the Soviets of Workers’ Deputies were destroyed and the trade unions and all the peasant organizations were suppressed.

The State Duma. With the same object of suppressing the revolutionary movement Nicholas II, in 1906, convened the State Duma. According to the electoral law then passed, a handful of landlords and capitalists had the right to elect a larger number of deputies to the Duma than tens of millions of workers and peasants. Women were not given the right to vote. Such was the tsar’s Constitution.

But soon the tsar violated even this Constitution. He dissolved the First and Second State Dumas because they were not always obedient to him and his Ministers. The tsar particularly disliked the Second Duma. To this Duma a large number of peasants and workers had been elected, including sixty-five Social-Democratic deputies. In their speeches in the Duma these worker and peasant deputies exposed all the tricks and deception of the tsar’s government. The tsar ordered this Duma dissolved.

The tsar’s officials drew up a new electoral law. The workers and peasants were still further restricted in their right to vote. All the peoples of Siberia and Central Asia were deprived of representation in the Duma, and the rights of the peoples of the Caucasus and Poland were curtailed.

Thus, when the Third Duma met in the Taurida Palace in Petersburg in the autumn of 1907, nearly all the seats were occupied by landlords, merchants, manufacturers, priests, generals and tsarist dignitaries in gorgeous uniforms.

Only a very few seats were occupied by deputies representing the workers, peasants and oppressed peoples of Russia.

The State Duma made no change in the system prevailing in Russia. The nobility, headed by the tsar, continued to rule and rob Russia.

The Third Duma passed a land law introduced by the tsar’s Minister Stolypin. This law left the land in the possession of the landlords. The peasants had to be content with the land they already occupied, but the conditions of their tenure were changed. Before the new law was passed the majority of the peasants owned their land in common, in vil-
lage communities, and from time to time they re-divided this land according to the number of working members in each family. The Stolypin law abolished the common ownership of the land. Each peasant could claim private possession of the land he occupied, quit the community and become an independent farmer. The peasants who quit the village community in this way were called *khutorianie*, or homestead farmers.

The poor peasants who had no draught animals, implements or money to pay taxes, sold their allotments to the kulaks, that is, the rich peasants. This is exactly what the tsarist government wanted. It wanted to transform the kulaks into small landlords who would stand by the tsarist government.

As a result of the operation of this law over a million poor peasants were deprived of their land and completely pauperized.

The government induced the discontented peasants to migrate to the territories of the peoples inhabiting the border regions of Russia. The people in these regions were forcibly driven from their native soil into the desert and mountains.

**Industry after the revolution.** In suppressing the revolution the tsarist government was also assisted by foreign capitalists. Before the revolution these foreign capitalists had bought land in Russia containing iron ore, oil and coal, and had built factories. The French and English bankers granted the tsarist government huge loans with which to build railways, to strengthen the army and to pay the salaries of government officials. The revolution threatened to deprive the foreign capitalists of the capital they had invested in Russia and of the enormous profits they obtained from these investments.

Even before the revolution the capitalists began to unite for the purpose of raising prices and of crushing the workers

more quickly. These capitalist organizations were called *trusts* and *syndicates*. After the revolution bourgeois trusts and syndicates became ever more numerous.

For a number of years Russian industry had been in a state of stagnation, but a revival set in in 1910. The output of coal, metals and oil, and the production of sugar

and textile goods increased. Grain exports also greatly increased.

Russian industry took a step forward at that time, but Russia still remained a backward country compared with Western Europe, and was dependent upon foreign capitalists. There was no engineering industry in Russia, the capitalists who needed machines were obliged to import them from abroad. Nor was there a chemical industry in Russia; mineral fertilizers were not manufactured. In the manu-
facture of armaments Russia also lagged behind all other capitalist countries.

Hence, there were quite enough reasons why the first bourgeois revolution in Russia was defeated. The most important of these reasons was the absence of an alliance between the workers and peasants. Although the peasants felt that it was impossible to fight the landlords successfully without an alliance with the workers, they totally failed to understand that the landlords could not be defeated unless tsarism was overthrown. The peasants still believed in the good intentions of the “little father,” the tsar. This is why the peasants would not enter into an alliance with the workers for the purpose of overthrowing tsarism, and why the peasants’ sons in soldiers’ uniforms helped the tsar to suppress the workers’ strikes and insurrections. The peasants had more faith in the Socialist-Revolutionary compromisers than in the Bolshevik revolutionaries.

There were also shortcomings among the workers. The working class, of course, was the leading force of the revolution, but it was not yet united and solid, for its Party, the Social-Democratic Party, was split up into two groups, Mensheviks and Bolsheviks. The former were compromisers and did not want to carry the revolution out to the end. The latter, the Bolsheviks, were consistent revolutionary Leninists and called upon the workers to overthrow tsarism. Owing to this split, the workers were not always united in their actions and the working class was unable to become the real leader (or hegemon) of the revolution.

The hasty conclusion of peace with Japan also helped the tsar to suppress the revolution. As long as the war continued and the tsar’s army suffered defeat, the tsar remained weak and was compelled to yield to the pressure of the workers. After peace was concluded the situation changed and the tsar was able to muster his forces for the purpose of combating the revolution.

50. REVIVAL OF THE REVOLUTION

Lenin goes abroad. Stalin’s underground work in Russia. In spite of the numerous arrests and executions of revolutionaries, the Bolsheviks continued the revolutionary struggle. They printed and distributed leaflets, newspapers and pamphlets. They took advantage of the opportunities presented by the State Duma elections and the meetings of the Duma itself openly to present their revolutionary demands and to express the people’s hatred for the existing system.

The whole of the tsar’s police force was mobilized for the purpose of catching the elusive Lenin. To escape from the police the Party urged Lenin to go to Finland and then to Switzerland. While abroad, he continued to guide the workers’ struggle.

Comrade Stalin, Lenin’s associate and comrade-in-arms, remained in Russia. His seething energy inspired the Bolsheviks in their hard and persistent labours. In 1908 Comrade Stalin was again arrested and exiled to Siberia; but neither prison nor exile could break Stalin’s iron will, and a year later he escaped from Siberia and returned to Baku. A year after that Comrade Stalin was again arrested and again exiled to Siberia, but once again he escaped. Soon after, however, he was tracked down by the tsar’s spies and arrested, and the government exiled him to the sparsely populated region of Narym. But this staunch revolutionary would not yield. In the summer of 1912 he secretly returned to Petersburg.

Lenin abroad, and Stalin working underground, or secretly, in Russia, continued the great struggle for Socialism, ready to give all their blood, drop by drop, for the cause of the working class.

The heroic Bolsheviks helped the working class to live through the hard times that followed the defeat of the revolution and to rise for the revolutionary struggle once again.

The Lena shootings. In the remote Siberian taiga, or
forest, on the River Lena, there were gold fields belonging to English capitalists. The conditions of life of the workers employed in these gold fields were hardly to be distinguished from those of convicts. The English capitalists, however, made profits out of these gold fields amounting to 7,000,000 rubles a year.

In the spring of 1912 the workers in the Lena gold fields went on strike.

The English capitalists appealed to the tsar’s government for troops, and a unit was sent under the command of an officer of the gendarmes. This officer immediately arrested all the workers’ leaders, among whom were a number of exiled Bolsheviks. The workers demanded the release of their leaders. They marched to the offices of the company to present their demand, following a narrow path, three or four abreast. Suddenly a bugle call was heard. At the command of the officer the soldiers lined up along this path. Then the order was given—“Fire!”

Shots rang out, followed by many more. The soldiers were shooting down the workers. In the snow, in pools of blood, 250 dead and 270 wounded workers were lying.

The news of the shooting on the River Lena spread like wildfire throughout Russia. Hundreds of thousands of workers threw down their tools and poured into the streets to protest against this new massacre.

On May 1, 1912, 500,000 workers went on strike. In the rural districts the peasants again took up their axes, scythes and pitchforks and wrecked the landlords’ manors. From 1910 to 1914 there were over 13,000 cases of revolutionary peasant disturbances.

The Russian people were rising for another struggle and marching out to meet the new revolution.

The Bolsheviks form an independent Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. In 1912, in the city of Prague, in Czechoslovakia, representatives of the Bolshevik Committees in Russia gathered at a conference. This conference decided to expel all the Mensheviks and all waverers from the Party.

Thus, the united, militant, Leninist Party of Bolsheviks was formed. This Party led the working class and the peasantry towards a new revolution for the overthrow of tsarism and the establishment of the rule of the workers and peasants, for an eight-hour day for the workers, and the transfer of all the land to the peasants without compensation.

In Russia the Bolsheviks strengthened their secret Party organizations as well as the trade unions, the workers’ clubs and other legal workers’ organizations which were under their leadership.

In Petersburg, Bolshevik newspapers, Zvezda (The Star) and later Pravda (Truth), were published. The Bolshevik Pravda was written in simple language which all the workers could understand. It helped the workers to learn the prin-
ciples of the Bolshevik Party. The police continuously per-
secuted the paper, prohibited it from being sold, and arrested
and imprisoned its editors. V. I. Lenin wrote articles for
Pravda and guided it while he was abroad. Comrades Stalin,
Molotov and other leading Bolsheviks also worked on the
paper.
By this time the Party had trained many staunch and
brave revolutionary Bolsheviks. Among them was J. Sverd-
lov. He began to take part in the revolutionary struggle when
he was 17 years of age. He spent many years in prison, had
been in exile from which he escaped several times, and
finally made his way to Petersburg, where he carried on a
fearless struggle against tsarism. Another of these fearless
Bolsheviks was S. Kirov, who began his revolutionary career
as far back as 1905 and did not cease his revolutionary
activities for a single moment. Prison and exile alone tore
this ardent revolutionary from his work for a time. Others
in this noble band were M. Frunze, G. Ordjonikidze, V. Kui-
byshев and F. Dzerzhinsky—all brave champions of labour’s

cause. Among the tireless and self-sacrificing Party workers
were M. Kalinin, K. Voroshilov, L. Kaganovich, E. Stassova,
N. Krupskaya and many others. This was the Iron Guard of
the Party, indefatigable and staunch pupils and comrades-in-arms of Lenin and Stalin.

Lenin left Paris, where he was then living, to go to
Austria so as to be nearer to the Russian frontier and more
easily direct the work of the Bolsheviks in Russia.

At this time strike after strike broke out in Russia. In
Baku, where Comrade Stalin had built up a strong Bolshe-
vik organization, the oil field workers declared a general
strike. The workers continued their struggle for about a
month, but the employers proved to be the stronger.

In the summer of 1914 the workers of Petrograd once
again brought the factories to a standstill. They marched
through the streets carrying red flags. They were attacked
by the soldiers and police, but they built barricades and
put up stern resistance. The country was on the verge of
revolution.

The revival of the revolution, however, was checked by
the outbreak of the World War. Once again the tsarist gov-
ernment hoped to escape revolution by means of war.
XI
THE SECOND BOURGEOIS REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA

51. THE WORLD IMPERIALIST WAR

Defeat of Russia. In the summer of 1914 the World War broke out. Preparations for this war had been going on for a long time. The big capitalist states were in rivalry with each other. At the beginning of the 20th century there was not a scrap of territory that had not been seized by some state. The capitalists of the various countries tried to seize from each other rich lands with large populations. Germany, particularly, looked with envy upon the lands which had been seized by England, France and Russia. She longed to take several African colonies from England, and the Ukraine, Poland and the Baltic regions from Russia. Russia longed to capture Constantinople from Turkey. England wanted to gain possession of Mesopotamia and Palestine. France wanted to seize Alsace-Lorraine from Germany. In preparing for this robber war the capitalists separated into two camps. One camp consisted of England and France, and also Russia, which was dependent upon them. This alliance was called the Entente. In the other camp were Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria. The Entente was supported by nearly all the states of Europe. Japan and the United States of America were in alliance with it.

The bourgeoisie of the belligerent countries prepared for this predatory war in secret. The people knew nothing about it. When the war began the bourgeoisie of all belligerent countries deceived the people by saying that they were fighting to save their countries from enemy invasion. The Russian bourgeoisie were assisted in deceiving the people by the petty-bourgeois, compromising parties, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries. The Social-Democrats who belonged to the Second International also betrayed the cause of the workers and incited the workers and peasants in the different belligerent countries against each other.

The World War lasted four years and cost the lives of over 30,000,000 people. The heaviest losses were suffered by the army of tsarist Russia.

While the Germans were pouring a hail of shot and shell at the Russian army, the tsar’s Ministers and generals failed to provide the Russian army with sufficient arms and ammunition.

Tens of thousands of Russian soldiers died every day from the fire of German guns and machine guns, and also from disease. But the tsar’s generals, obedient to the orders of Tsar Nicholas II and of the Entente, again and again
commanded the soldiers to attack. The generals paid no heed to the losses; to them the soldiers were only cannon fodder. In the very first months of the war the incompetent tsarist generals lost a whole army of 200,000 men on the battlefields of Germany. In Russia, hundreds of thousands of new recruits were conscripted. At first only young men were conscripted, but later older men up to 40 years of age were taken. Russia conscripted a total of 19,000,000 men for the war; but this huge army did not save Russia from defeat. The defeat was caused by the Russian Ministers and generals themselves. Jointly with the Russian Tsarina, they betrayed military secrets to the Germans. Bleeding to death, dying from gas attacks, freezing in the trenches, the tsar’s army, betrayed by its generals, was compelled to retreat. In 1916 the Germans had captured Poland, Lithuania and part of Latvia. But the end of the war was not in sight.

The war greatly disturbed the economic life of Russia. There was a shortage of metals, of coal and oil. Factories were brought to a standstill. The railways could not even handle the transportation of troops. The army and the people were in rags. The people at home and the soldiers at the front starved. The amount of grain that was sown diminished, for there were few people left to work in the fields. Large numbers of horses and cattle were taken from the peasants for the needs of the army. This long drawn out war was a terrible burden upon the shoulders of the workers and peasants.

The Bolsheviks during the war. The Bolshevik Party opposed the World War. Lenin and the Party called upon the workers and peasants to turn their weapons against their oppressors, and exposed the despicable conduct of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries and of their masters, the capitalists. In the very first days of the war the workers’ organizations were suppressed. The Bolshevik newspaper, Pravda, was suppressed even before the declaration of war.

The Bolshevik deputies in the Fourth State Duma were exiled to Siberia for calling upon the workers to oppose the war and to make a revolution.

It was very hard indeed for the Bolsheviks to carry on their work during the war. Lenin was cut off from Russia by frontiers and the fronts. The other leaders of the Bolshevik Party were in exile. Many Bolsheviks were in prison. But the Bolsheviks carried on their work nevertheless.

The revolutionary movement during the war. In Russia mass strikes broke out under the leadership of the Bolsheviks.

In 1915 there were 928 strikes; in January and February of 1917 the number of strikes reached 1,330. The workers continued their struggle under the slogans: “Down with the war!” “Down with the tsarist autocracy!”

The workers of Petrograd (this is what Petersburg was called from 1914 to 1924) were in the front ranks of the struggle. In October 1916 they organized a huge political strike against the war and the tsarist autocracy. They even succeeded in winning a regiment of soldiers to their side.

The workers were also supported by the peasants. In their villages they rose for the struggle against the war, the landlords and the Stolypin land laws.

But the most advanced peasants were in the army. In the army discontent grew, and under the influence of the Bolsheviks whom the Party had sent into the army to carry on revolutionary work, the soldiers began to protest against the war.

At the front the soldiers of the tsar’s armies began to fraternize with the German and Austrian soldiers. Similar fraternization between the soldiers of the various belligerent countries occurred on other fronts. The soldiers demanded that the butchery be stopped.

During the war the oppressed nationalities also began to rise for the revolutionary struggle against the tsarist government. Heavy taxation, the requisition of cattle and the vio-
lence perpetrated against the toilers gave rise to great discontent. This discontent increased still more when the people were conscripted for labour in the rear of the army.

In 1916 the Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Uzbeks, Tadjiks and Turkmens rose in rebellion. They attacked the towns, fought pitched battles with the tsar's soldiers and police and killed their volost elders, who were the servants of the tsarist authorities.

The Kazakhs formed armed units. The leader of this rebellion was the brave hero of the Kazakh people, Aman- geldi Imanov.

The Uzbek rebels tore up the railway lines to prevent the despatch of troops, burned down railway stations and cut the telegraph wires.

In Kirghizia the rebels secured arms by capturing a munition train. In the mountains they erected gunsmith shops and workshops for making gunpowder.

The tsarist authorities sent troops equipped with guns, machine guns and armoured cars against the rebels. They crushed the revolts in blood and in the smoke of burning villages.

But the struggle of the workers, peasants, soldiers and oppressed peoples against the war and against the tsarist government steadily increased in intensity.

52. THE OVERTHROW OF TSARISM IN FEBRUARY 1917

Insurrection in Petrograd. Tzar Nicholas II and his Ministers were thrown into consternation by the defeat at the front and the advancing revolution. They rushed hither and thither, not knowing what to do. Even the bourgeois party, known as the "Cadets," and its leader Milyukov, ceased to support the tsar because of the defeats at the front; but this party also feared revolution. The bourgeoisie decided to depose Nicholas II, put his brother Michael on the throne, suppress the incipient revolutionary movement and continue the war.

The tsar's courtiers advised him to stop the war, conclude peace with the Germans separately from the Allies and then take measures to crush the revolution.

The plans of the tsar and the bourgeoisie never materialized. They were forestalled by the uprising of the workers and soldiers which began in February 1917.

In the beginning of 1917, the workers of Petrograd, starved and exhausted by the war, went on strike. The Bolsheviks led the workers in their struggle. They also succeeded in penetrating the soldiers' barracks and called upon the soldiers to support the workers in the struggle against the tsar. The working men and working women marched through the streets shouting:

"Down with war!" "Down with the tsarist government!"
"Bread!" "Peace!"

Soon the workers began to realize that the tsarist government could not be vanquished by strikes alone, that armed insurrection was necessary. And they rose in arms.

The tsarist Ministers ordered the workers to be shot down without mercy. On the roofs and attics in the centre of the city the police placed machine guns and shot at the demonstrators.

The heroic struggle of the Petrograd workers drew the soldiers to the side of the revolution.

On February 27 the soldiers in Petrograd refused to shoot at the workers and began to go over to the side of the people.

The rebel workers and soldiers arrested the tsar's Ministers and put them in jail. All the imprisoned revolutionaries were released. Crowds of people set fire to the police stations and the courts. The young workers and the work-
ing women took part in the insurrection side by side with their brothers and husbands.

Tsar Nicholas II, who was out of Petrograd at the time, ordered soldiers from the front to be sent against the insurgent people. But the revolutionary workers and soldiers went out to meet these soldiers from the front, explained to them what they were fighting for and urged them to refuse to carry out the orders of the tsar and the generals. The soldiers obeyed the workers. The revolution triumphed over tsarism.

When the news of the victory of the revolution in Petrograd reached other towns and the front, the workers and soldiers there also overthrew the tsarist rule.

As was the case in the first revolution of 1905, Soviets were set up everywhere; but these were Soviets not only of workers' deputies as was the case in 1905, but Soviets of workers' and soldiers' deputies. This is what marked the difference between the revolution of February 1917 and the revolution of 1905. Actually, the soldiers' deputies in the Soviets were peasant deputies who, because of the war, were wearing soldiers' uniforms. Consequently, the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies were really Soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies. This signified that the alliance between the workers and peasants against tsarism had been established, and the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies were the bodies which represented this alliance.

Without this alliance the people could not have overthrown the tsar, and the revolution could not have been victorious.

Two powers. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, however, had the majority in the Soviets. The bourgeoisie succeeded in using these petty-bourgeois politicians as its tools, and with their aid it took power. The traitors to the revolution, the Mensheviks and Socialist-

Revolutionaries, enabled the bourgeoisie to set up its bourgeois Provisional Government.

But the Soviets continued to exist side by side with the Provisional Government. Thus, two powers were created. The bourgeoisie and the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in the Soviets wanted to continue the war against Germany until victory had been achieved. The land continued to remain the property of the landlords. The capitalists continued to rob the workers. The oppression of the different nationalities in Russia went on as before.

Lenin, in letters he sent from abroad, and the Bolsheviks in Russia headed by Comrade Stalin who had returned from exile, exposed to the people the real nature of the
Provisional Government and the deception perpetrated by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries.

On April 3, 1917, after encountering many difficulties, Lenin returned to Russia. The whole of revolutionary Petrograd, the workers, sailors and soldiers, came out to welcome him. Lenin was cheered and cheered without end. He climbed to the top of an armoured car to address the people and amidst the tense silence of the crowd he issued the passionate call: "Long live the World Socialist Revolution!" This was a call for the struggle against the bourgeois Provisional Government and for the establishment of the rule of the working class. It was the call for Socialism.

XII
THE GREAT
OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION
IN RUSSIA

53. THE BOLSHEVIKS PREPARE FOR THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

The masses follow the Bolsheviks. On Lenin's arrival the Bolshevik Party called a conference in Petrograd. Delegates representing 80,000 members arrived from all parts of Russia. Among those present were Molotov, Voroshilov, Sverdlov, Kuibyshev, Dzerzhinsky, Kossior and many others. The work of the conference was guided by Lenin and Stalin. They showed that the working class had only performed its first task; it had overthrown the tsarist autocracy in Russia. It was now necessary, they said, to perform the second task: to bring about the Socialist revolution; and this meant that the Party still had a hard and stern struggle ahead of it, because the bourgeoisie, which had begun to rule the country, would not yield power without a bitter fight.

They called upon the Party to win the majority in the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, and rid them of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries.

Lenin and Stalin called upon the Bolsheviks to organize the masses for the fight for the Socialist revolution. In order to achieve the victory of the Socialist revolution, they said, the working class, in close alliance with the poor peasants, must overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie. It was necessary to curb the bourgeoisie, to take the land
from the landlords and place it at the disposal of the peasants, to liberate the oppressed nationalities in Russia, and immediately to stop the war.

The conference adopted Lenin’s and Stalin’s proposals. The Bolsheviks carried on extensive and vigorous work among the masses of the workers, soldiers and sailors. They

also worked energetically among the peasants. They explained to the people the decisions adopted by the Party conference and called upon them to fight against the Provisional Government and for the establishment of the power of the Soviets, for the cessation of the war and for the immediate transfer of all the land to the peasants.

In Petrograd, workers’ and soldiers’ demonstrations began to be held. Such a demonstration was held in April.

The demonstrators carried placards and banners inscribed with the Bolshevik slogans:

“Down with the war!”

“Down with the capitalist Ministers!”

“All power to the Soviets!”

The Provisional Government, jointly with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, were compelled to dismiss Guchkov and Milyukov, the capitalist Ministers who were most hated by the people, and appointed several Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries to the government.

But the government’s policy remained unchanged. The war continued, the land remained in the possession of the landlords, the oppressed nationalities remained disfranchised, the workers were threatened with lockouts.

The revolutionary temper of the masses rose still higher. They began more and more to heed the voice of the Bolsheviks. The Bolshevik Party was becoming stronger.

In the beginning of June 1917 the First All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies was held in Petrograd.

At this congress the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries still had the majority. They succeeded in persuading the Congress of Soviets to support the bourgeois government and to agree to an offensive at the front.

The offensive at the front was started immediately. It ended in the defeat of the Russian army. The soldiers refused to go into battle. They did not want to fight for the interests of the bourgeoisie, they demanded that all power be transferred to the Soviets. In vain did the Socialist-Revolutionary Kerensky, the Minister of War in the Provisional Government, try to persuade the soldiers to shed their blood for a cause that was not their own. “The bourgeoisie want the war, let them go and fight,”
answered the soldiers. The Provisional Government ordered those soldiers who refused to go into battle to be shot.

The soldiers became more and more convinced that the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries were betraying their interests, and went over to the side of the Bolsheviks. Again demonstrations of workers and soldiers were organized in the principal cities of Russia.

The July demonstration and General Kornilov’s mutiny. The summer of 1917 arrived. The Provisional Government still refused to concede a single one of the demands of the workers, soldiers, peasants and the oppressed nationalities in Russia.

Meanwhile, the chaos in industry and on the railways had increased. Mills and factories came to a standstill, there were no raw materials and no fuel. There was a shortage of bread and meat. Famine was approaching.

The struggle waged by the workers against the capitalists and their government became more intense. Strikes were breaking out continuously. The workers organized armed detachments, called the Red Guard. In the rural districts, peasant revolts broke out.

The soldiers left the front in thousands. The oppressed nationalities, not having been liberated by the Provisional Government, came forward with their just demands.

On July 3, 1917 the masses of Petrograd workers, soldiers and sailors marched in a demonstration carrying Bolshevik slogans. The bourgeoisie, in agreement with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, summoned from the front picked units made up of Junkers, that is, students of military schools, and kulaks and these shot at the demonstrators and wrecked the workers’ organizations.

The Junkers and army officers raided the editorial offices of Pravda. Bolsheviks were arrested and flung into prison. Once again the Bolsheviks had to go underground. The Provisional Government issued an order for the arrest of Lenin. On the Party’s insistence Lenin went into hiding. Dressed as a workingman and with a passport made out in the name of Ivanov, a workingman, he went to live in a shack in a field at Sestroretsk, near Petrograd; somewhat later he crossed into Finland. The bourgeois police hounds sought for Lenin in vain. The workers were carefully guarding their beloved leader.

The bourgeoisie gave vent to its fury at home and at the front. Even the most backward workers began to understand what the policy of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who were defending the interests of the bourgeoisie, was leading to. Larger and larger numbers of workers began to join the ranks of the Bolsheviks. The membership of the Bolshevik Party rose to 200,000.

At the end of July, the 6th Congress of the Bolshevik Party was held in Petrograd.

Lenin was not present at the congress. He was in hiding. The work of the congress was guided by Comrade Stalin.
He called upon the Party to prepare for armed insurrection.

The congress mapped out the path to the victory of the Socialist revolution and drew up measures for combating the economic chaos in the country.

After the congress the delegates dispersed all over Russia and began to prepare the workers and poor peasants for rebellion against the Provisional Government, for the overthrow of its power and the establishment of the power of the Soviets, the power of the workers and peasants.

The bourgeoisie and the landlords then organized a plot against the revolution. On their instructions, General Kornilov gathered a large force of army officers, Cossacks and backward units of the army and marched them on Petrograd to smash the Soviets of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies, to crush the workers and peasants, and to proclaim himself the unrestricted ruler of Russia.

In response to the call of the Bolsheviks, the workers of Petrograd and the Petrograd troops rose to resist Kornilov. Revolutionary agitators—workers and soldiers—were sent out to meet Kornilov’s forces and they explained to the soldiers the real designs of their general. The soldiers in Kornilov’s regiments refused to fight against the revolution. The bourgeoisie plot failed. Under pressure of the workers and peasants Kerensky was obliged to arrest Kornilov and put him in prison.

The victory of the workers and soldiers over Kornilov still further strengthened the influence of the Bolshevik Party.

After the Kornilov mutiny the workers and soldiers began to rid the Soviets of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries and to elect Bolsheviks in their place. In the autumn of 1917, the Bolsheviks had the majority in the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets. The Soviets became genuine centres of the proletarian revolution. They issued arms to the workers, organized a Red Guard and prepared for armed insurrection.

In the beginning of October Lenin secretly arrived in Petrograd to lead the insurrection. He said that now the victory of the workers was ensured and that it was necessary to start the armed insurrection at once, to overthrow the government of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and to establish the rule of the Soviets.

54. THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION IS VICTORIOUS

The victorious insurrection of October 25 (November 7) 1917. The Bolshevik Party prepared for the last decisive battle, for the overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie by armed force.

The moment for the insurrection was happily chosen. The World War was still continuing. In Russia, the majority of the workers followed the lead of the Bolsheviks. The compromising parties, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, had lost the confidence of the toilers. Many of the Soviets of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies were controlled by the Bolsheviks. The workers had strong trade unions and a Red Guard. The peasants refused to wait until the Constituent Assembly was convened, as the compromising Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks advised them to do, and followed the lead of the Bolsheviks who demanded the immediate seizure of the landlords’ land. The peasants drove the landlords out of their estates and took possession of their land. The soldiers did not want the war to continue. They rejected Kerensky’s order to continue the war until victory was achieved and demanded peace. Against Kerensky’s Provisional Government rose, not only the workers and peasants, but also the peoples of Trans-Caucasia, Ukraine, Byelorussia, Central Asia and Finland. The Bolsheviks made energetic preparations for
the insurrection. The plan of the insurrection was carefully worked out.

During the most decisive days of preparation for the insurrection, however, Kamenev and Zinoviev deliberately, and Trotsky by his boastful bragging, betrayed the plan and the date of the insurrection to the bourgeoisie. On hearing from these traitors about the impending insurrection the Provisional Government mobilized all the forces which still remained loyal to it for the purpose of crushing the insurrection. But the days of bourgeois rule were numbered. The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party set up a fighting centre, a special committee, headed by Stalin, to guide the insurrection. In accordance with Lenin's instructions, this committee started the insurrection on **October 24 (November 6), 1917.** Lenin took his place at the head of the insurrection.

The Red Guards, the revolutionary soldiers and the sailors of Kronstadt rose to a man in response to the call of the Bolshevik Party. The courage, revolutionary fervour and discipline of the soldiers of the revolution soon did their work. All the government offices and strategical points in Petrograd were captured by the Red Guards. The Min-

isters of the Provisional Government together with units of army officers and Junkers made a last stand in the Winter Palace.

On the morning of October 25 (November 7) the revolutionary forces closely surrounded the Palace. The revolutionary cruiser Aurora, with three torpedo boats, steamed up the Neva. The siege of the Palace lasted until evening. Darkness set in. The huge Winter Palace alone was illuminated. During the night the fight became hotter. Machine guns were rattling. Volleys of rifle fire rang out. Firing began between the
Junkers continued to fire, but they soon surrendered. Following a narrow corridor in the Palace, the Red Guards entered a round room. Sitting at tables were a few frightened men. This was the last bourgeois government of Russia. Kerensky was not there; he had managed to escape.

The Ministers were arrested in the name of the Revolution and taken to the fortress.

The proletarian revolution is victorious all over the country. The working class triumphed. On October 25 (November 7), the inhabitants of Petrograd read with deep emotion the manifesto written by Lenin. In this manifesto Lenin wrote that the Provisional Government had fallen and that power had passed into the hands of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. The cause for which the people had fought—the cessation of the war, the abolition of the landlords' ownership of the land and the creation of a Soviet Government—was now ensured. It was now possible to establish workers' control over the factories in order to combat the economic chaos.

On that very day the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies was held. Lenin introduced and the congress confirmed the first three decrees of the Great Proletarian Revolution: the decrees on peace, land and state power.

The decree on peace contained the proposal to all belligerent countries immediately to start negotiations for stopping the war and for concluding peace on the basis of equality.

The decree on land abolished the landlord class by abolishing the private ownership of the land and placed the land at the disposal of all the toilers. The peasants obtained from the Soviet Government over 150,000,000 hectares of land.

The decree on state power transferred all power in the country to the Soviets.
Our country became a Soviet Republic.

The congress elected an All-Russian Central Executive Committee and a Council of People's Commissars. At the head of the Council of People's Commissars was Comrade Lenin. Comrade Stalin was elected People's Commissar of Nationalities.

Soon after the congress, Comrade Sverdlov was elected President of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

The news of the victory of the proletariat in Petrograd quickly spread over the whole country. In a number of cities the workers had to fight fiercely to capture power.

In Moscow the army officers and Junkers captured the Kremlin and a number of big buildings. The workers' Red Guards were obliged to dig trenches and conduct a real war against the counter-revolutionaries. Fighting in Moscow lasted a whole week. Only by means of artillery were the workers and soldiers able to compel the army officers and Junkers to surrender.

Telegram came pouring in from all towns of Russia announcing the transfer of power to the Soviets. With the aid of the Soviet Government the peoples of Siberia, Central Asia, Byelorussia, the Volga and the Ukraine east of the Dniepr, liberated themselves from the age-long yoke of the bourgeoisie and the landlords.

The victory of the Socialist Soviet Revolution was thus due to the following reasons:
1. The bourgeois government of the Socialist-Revolutionary Kerensky had become utterly discredited in the eyes of the workers and peasants. Kerensky wanted to continue the war until victory was achieved, but the workers, peasants and soldiers demanded that the war be stopped and peace concluded. Kerensky wanted to keep the land for the landlords, but the workers and peasants demanded the immediate seizure of the landlords’ land for the benefit of the peasants. Kerensky wanted to curb the workers, but the workers and peasants demanded that the factory owners be curbed and placed under the control of the workers’ organizations.

2. The second reason was that these demands served as the basis for a strong alliance between the workers and peasants in the form of Soviets of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies against the bourgeois Provisional Government and its henchmen, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and in support of the Bolshevik Party.

3. The third reason was that the vast masses of the workers and peasants abandoned the compromising Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, rallied around the Bolshevik Party, and recognized it as their leader and guide.

It was for these reasons that the October revolution was victorious.

The Bolshevik Party organizes the Soviet state. In the very first days of victory of the Great Proletarian Revolution Lenin and Stalin set to work to organize the Soviet State in the form of a fraternal Socialist union of all the nationalities. At the hands of the Soviet Government the nationalities of Russia obtained complete liberation, which no other people in the world has enjoyed.

The issue of the decrees on peace and land was followed by a decree on workers’ control. Workers’ control was established over the capitalists in the factories, over the pro-
duction of goods, and over the warehousing, the purchase and sale of all goods and raw materials.

The Council of People’s Commissars announced the repudiation of all debts to foreign countries.

But the enemies of the Soviet Government, the landlords, capitalists, generals and priests, defeated in the capitals and in the central parts of the country, fled to the border regions of Russia. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries were in league with them.

They tried to entrench themselves on the Don, in the Ukraine west of the Dniepr, in the Caucasus, in the Orenburg steppe and Siberia, and began to organize for war against the Soviet Government. But they had few forces of their own; the workers and peasants did not follow them. The revolts and plots organized by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries failed. The Red Guard and the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution (or Vecheka, for short), at the head
of which stood Felix Dzerzhinsky, proved sufficient to crush the plots of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and their allies, the Cadets.

Later on it became much more difficult for the Soviet Government to combat counter-revolutionary plots, for the Cadet and Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik plotters began to obtain the direct military assistance of foreign capitalist governments. This was a military intervention of the capitalist governments against the Soviet Government and the Soviet system. The fight of the Soviets against intervention lasted three years.

55. THE SOVIETS FIGHT FOR PEACE. THE GERMANS SEIZE THE UKRAINE

Peace with Germany. Although the war continued, Russia’s old army was no longer capable of fighting, and the soldiers dispersed to their homes. They crowded the trains and even swarmed on the roofs and buffers of the cars. Exhausted by the war, the country and the army needed a respite. In accordance with the decree adopted at the Second Congress of Soviets, the Council of People’s Commissars addressed notes to all the belligerent countries proposing a general peace. The governments of England and France, which had been joined by that of the United States of America, did not reply to this proposal. Germany and her allies, however, more exhausted by the war than England and France, started peace negotiations with the Soviet Government. Germany wanted to retain part of the territory she had taken from Soviet Russia. The haughty German militarists were obliged to negotiate with the delegates of the workers and peasants of the Land of Soviets. The Germans submitted to the Soviet delegation exorbitant terms of peace.

As the old Russian army had disintegrated and there had been no time to create a new, regular Red Army, the Soviets were unable to continue the war. For this reason, Lenin instructed Trotsky, who was on the Peace Delega-
tion, to sign the peace treaty with the Germans. But Trotsky, obviously playing into the hands of the Germans and provoking them to start a fresh offensive against the unarmed Land of Soviets, broke off the peace negotiations. The Germans took advantage of this, started a new offensive, and occupied Soviet territory. The German troops were approaching Petrograd. On Lenin’s insistence, a peace treaty was hastily concluded with the Germans in the town of Brest. This was known as the Brest Peace. In addition to the loss of the Soviet territory that was captured by the Germans, the Soviet Government had to agree to other humiliating concessions to the German militarists. These losses were due to the treachery of Trotsky and his helper Bukharin, who did all they possibly could to prevent the conclusion of peace. Lenin and Stalin were in favour of concluding peace on these unfavourable terms because they were convinced that the revolution would be victorious in Germany, that the Soviet Government in Russia would gain in strength, succeed in creating a Red Army, and be able to regain what had been lost.

The Soviets had now gained a respite and set to work to build up the country’s industry and create a strong Red Army. The Red Army was created in 1918.

**The Germans seize Soviet territory.** Although the Brest Peace that was concluded between the Soviet Government and the Germans applied to the whole territory of the Soviet State, including the Ukraine, several Ukrainian delegates, who had been bribed by the Germans, refused to submit to the Soviet Government and concluded a separate peace treaty with the Germans. In this treacherous treaty the Ukraine was declared to be, not a Soviet Republic, but a bourgeois republic, and the Germans pledged themselves, in the event of the Soviets resisting this, to render military assistance to the Ukrainian bourgeois government, which was then called the Ukrainian Rada. The rapacious German militarists took advantage of this treaty to send their troops into the Ukraine. First they seized the Ukraine and then the Don region and Georgia. On their line of march the Germans dispersed the Soviets and hanged the Bolsheviks and workers and peasants who supported the Soviet Government.

The forces of the Red Army were then still weak, but they did not yield Soviet territory to the Germans without a fight. At the head of the workers’ detachments which
consisted of Donetz miners, poor peasants and revolutionary sailors, stood the beloved leader of the workers, the Lugansk mechanic, that brave and devoted Bolshevik, one of the best pupils of Lenin and Stalin, Kliment Voroshilov.

For six weeks Voroshilov’s detachments held the Germans and white Cossack units advancing on the Don at bay. In order to cut off Voroshilov’s detachments the Cossacks blew up a bridge across the Don. Under a hail of shot and shell fired by the White Cossacks, the Red fighters built a temporary bridge across the river. Part of the men worked on the bridge while the others fought against the Cossacks. Comrade Voroshilov cheered his men on, strengthening their determination by his own bravery, and succeeded in crossing the Don with his detachments and reaching Tsaritsin (now Stalingrad).

The German and Austrian troops quartered themselves all over the Ukraine. The Germans set up as hetman of the Ukraine the big Ukrainian landlord and tsarist general Skoropadsky. They restored the land to the landlords and the factories to the capitalists.

The workers’ organizations in the Ukraine were suppressed. Firing squads, gallows and torments from the landlords, capitalists and German militarists were now the lot of the working class and the peasants of the Ukraine. The Germans confiscated the peasants’ cattle and ransacked their grain bins. Every day trainloads of Ukrainian grain, sugar, lard, meat, coal and iron ore were dispatched to Germany and Austria. The plunder and violence of the German conquerors roused the Ukrainian workers and peasants to revolt. In this struggle against the Germans, Nicholas Shchors, son of a railwayman, acquired particular fame for his bravery. He fought as heroically against the enemies of the Ukrainian workers and peasants as that hero of the Russian people, Vasili Chapayev. The Germans did not keep the Ukraine for long. The German soldiers found it very hard to contend against the rebel Ukrainian workers and peasants; and at the end of 1918, when revolution broke out in Germany, the German soldiers fled back to Germany. The Ukraine once again became a Soviet country.

The predatory Brest Peace was annulled by the Soviet Government.

56. THE SOVIET REPUBLIC IN A RING OF INTERVENTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION

The mills and factories become the property of the state. The fight for bread. Impoverished by the World War, Russia started the Socialist revolution at a time when the whole economic life of the country was in a state of extreme decline. The factory owners refused to submit to workers’ control. They spoiled their machines, refrained from repairing them when required, did not trouble to provide their factories with raw materials and fuel, and often closed down their factories altogether. Their object was to strangle the revolution. The Soviet Government resolutely combated these enemies.

The banks, railways, and, later on, the factories were taken away from the capitalists. In 1918 the factories which formerly had belonged to the capitalists became the property of the Soviet State, and workers and Soviet engineers were appointed as managers. Owing to the shortage of fuel and raw materials, however, many of these mills and factories could not be started immediately.

There was a shortage of bread in the country. The kulaks, brutal enemies of the revolution, hid their grain in pits, allowed it to rot, or else they sold it to profiteers at tremendously high prices; they did all they could to prevent it from being used for the Soviet Government
and the Red Army. The working-class centres in Russia were cut off from the principal grain bearing districts by Russian counter-revolutionaries and foreign interventionists who were fighting the Soviet Government. Famine threatened to strangle the revolution.

In response to Lenin’s appeal the workers formed what were known as Food Detachments to go into the villages to fight the kulaks and collect the surplus grain. On Lenin’s proposal Committees of Poor Peasants were formed in the villages. These committees helped the workers’ Food Detachments to confiscate the grain from the kulaks and distributed among the poor peasants the horses and cattle taken from the kulaks.

The Party and the Committees of Poor Peasants won over the middle peasants as allies and friends of the working class and poor peasants. Seeing that the Soviet Government which had given them land was protecting them from the landlords and defeating the enemies of the country, the middle peasants began to fight for the Soviets side by side with the working class and poor peasants.

**England, France and Japan start military intervention in the Land of Soviets.** The foreign bourgeoisie were afraid that sparks from the revolutionary conflagration in Russia would set the revolution ablaze all over the world. Nor could the foreign capitalists become reconciled to the idea that they could no longer rob the workers and peasants of Russia as they had done before the revolution. In alliance with the Russian landlords and bourgeoisie, the bourgeois governments of England, France and Japan started war against the Soviet Government. In the spring of 1918, the Czechoslovak prisoners of war captured by the Russians during the World War, started a counter-revolutionary rebellion against Soviet Russia with the aid of France. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in conjunction with the Czechoslovaks seized part of the Volga Region, the Urals and Siberia. In the summer of 1918 the British government landed troops in Archangel, on the White Sea coast, and helped the Whiteguards there to overthrow the Soviets. The Japanese landed troops in Vladivostok.

The bourgeois governments which started war against the Soviet Government were then collectively called the Entente, which means an alliance, or the Allies.

The Entente raised rebellions in different cities in Soviet Russia with the aid of the Cadets, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. The bourgeoisie hired bandits to kill the leaders of the Revolution. In this way the Bolshevik Uritsky and the favourite orator of the Petrograd workers, the Bolshevik Volodarsky, were killed. In the autumn of 1918 the Socialist-Revolutionaries made an attempt to kill Lenin as he was leaving a meeting at a large factory in Moscow. Bleeding from his wound, Lenin was taken home and for many days he fought against death. All the toilers of the
country were torn with anxiety about Lenin and breathed with relief and rejoiced when at last he recovered and returned to his work of administering the State.

By this time the Entente governments had captured the White Sea coast, the Urals and Siberia. The White Cossacks tried to capture Tsaritsin, a large town on the Volga, and to cut off the grain supplies from Central Russia. The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party sent Comrade Stalin to direct the defence of Tsaritsin. Here Stalin met Voroshilov, who, with his Red detachments, had arrived from the Donetz Basin. Knowing no rest, Stalin worked day and night strengthening the Tsaritsin front. He tracked down and exterminated the traitors who had managed to steal into the rear of the Red Army, took measures to arm and equip the Soviet troops, and sent grain by the River Volga to the workers of Moscow, Petrograd and other cities. The Cossack Whites made repeated attempts to capture Tsaritsin, but in vain. Stalin and Voroshilov struck blow after blow at them and held this important city on the Volga.

While Tsaritsin was staunchly holding out against the Whites, Comrade Kirov was leading the Red Army against them in Astrakhan. Here, too, the efforts of the Whiteguards to capture the town failed.

Civil war in Trans-Caucasia and Central Asia. Germany helped the Georgian Mensheviks, the enemies of the Georgian people, to entrench themselves in Georgia. The Mensheviks got into power by shedding rivers of blood. They shot large numbers of workers and peasants who were fighting for the rule of the Soviets.

The Armenian workers and peasants also failed to liberate themselves from the yoke of the bourgeoisie immediately. In Armenia the Entente assisted the enemies of the Armenian people, the Dashnaks.

Turkey wanted to seize Baku, in Azerbaidjan, the imp-

portant centre of the oil industry. In 1918 the rule of the Soviets was established in Baku. At the head of the Baku Soviet stood the Bolshevik Stepan Shaumian and other old Bolsheviks, friends and pupils of Comrade Stalin. In the summer of 1918, the Mussavists, enemies of the Azerbaidjan people, cooperating with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, appealed to the British government to send troops to Baku, ostensibly for the purpose of protecting the city from the Turks. After occupying the city the English had Comrades Shaumian, Azizbekov, Djaparidze and other Baku Commissars, twenty-six in all, arrested on their way from Baku and taken into the desert in Turkmenia, where they were shot.

At the same time the rapacious English capitalists sent their troops into Central Asia. In Turkmenia the English abolished the rule of the Soviets and in its place set up the rule of their obedient tools, the Whiteguard Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks.

In Khiva and Bokhara the English helped the enemies of the Uzbek people, the Khan of Khiva and the Emir of Bokhara, to retain their power.
57. REVOLUTION IN WESTERN EUROPE

The November Revolution in Germany. The Great Proletarian Revolution in Russia divided the world into two camps. In Russia, comprising one-sixth of the globe, the rule of the proletariat, the builder of Socialism, was established. In the other five-sixths of the globe the bourgeoisie still reigned.

Soviet Russia shone out like a beacon lighting the path to the victory of Socialism for the workers in capitalist countries. The first of the West European workers to rise were the proletarians of Germany. Germany’s defeat in the World War hastened the outburst of the anger of the masses. In November 1918, rebellion broke out in the cities, in the industrial centres, in the army and in the navy. Soon the rebellion spread to Austria.

The workers threw the emperors of Germany and Austria-Hungary from their thrones. With their generals and courtiers they fled to other countries to escape the anger of the people. Germany and Austria were proclaimed republics.

In Germany Soviets began to be set up, but the traitors to the revolution, the German Mensheviks who were known as Social-Democrats, secured the majority in them.

The bourgeoisie and their loyal servants, the Social-Democrats, formed armed units to fight the workers. These units shot down the workers who were fighting to transfer all power to the Soviets. The workers’ rebellion which started in Berlin, the capital of Germany, in the beginning of 1919 was crushed by these Whiteguards. Large numbers of workers perished in the revolutionary battles, and thousands of the best fighters for the revolution were flung into jail.

The leaders of the German workers, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, were arrested and killed.

The proletarian revolution was crushed. The bourgeoisie and their allies, the Social-Democrats, came into power. A few years later the bourgeoisie threw the Social-Democrats out of the government.

The Soviet Republics in Bavaria and Hungary. Only in one part of Germany were the workers in 1919 able to vanquish the bourgeoisie, establish their rule, and proclaim a Soviet Republic. That was in Bavaria.

The German bourgeoisie mobilized gangs of Whiteguards, spies and traitors to the revolution to fight the workers’ government in Bavaria. For two weeks the Bavarian workers heroically kept their enemies at bay, but their forces were too weak. The workers were defeated.

Immediately afterwards a proletarian revolution began in Hungary, a country situated close to Germany. In March 1919, Soviet rule was victorious in Hungary. A Soviet Republic was proclaimed and a workers’ government was set up. A Hungarian Red Army was formed. The factories, mines, banks and railways were proclaimed the property of the workers’ state. The workers’ families were removed from their dark and damp cellar dwellings to the well-lit and spacious houses of the rich. Comrades Lenin and Stalin, and all the people of Soviet Russia, warmly greeted the Hungarian Soviet Republic. But soon troops of the adjacent bourgeois countries were sent against little Soviet Hungary. Attacked from all sides, Soviet Hungary was crushed.

The Communist International. The proletarian revolution in Western Europe suffered defeat because there were no revolutionary Bolshevik parties there. The workers followed the treacherous leaders of the Second International. Lenin had fought these traitors even before the World War broke out. During the World War Lenin carried on a campaign for the creation of a new, Third International, the Communist International.
During the revolutions in the west, in the course of workers’ strikes and peasant movements, which increased after the World War, Communist Parties arose in a number of European countries. Their gaze was turned towards Red Moscow, towards the Bolsheviks and their leader Comrade Lenin.

On March 2, 1919, delegates from various countries: from Germany, England, France, Poland, Switzerland, Iran, Norway, the United States of America, China, Korea and other countries, at the risk of their lives and escaping from spies, made their way to Moscow to attend the first congress of representatives of the Communist Parties all over the world.

But these parties were still young; they lacked experience and were small in numbers. In Moscow they, with the Bolsheviks of Soviet Russia, founded the Communist International, known for short as the Comintern, which is the leader of the working class throughout the world.

The congress elected the Executive Committee of the Comintern, and Soviet Moscow was chosen as its headquarters.

The foundation of the Comintern was a great victory for the cause of Lenin and Stalin, for the cause of Communism. Notwithstanding the first defeats of the proletarian revolutions in Western Europe, the Communist parties all over the world grew and are still growing, preparing the working class for the victory of the proletarian revolution.

58. THE DEFEAT OF KOLCHAK, DENIKIN AND YUDENICH

Kolchak, the tool of the Entente. The bourgeoisie of the Entente countries resolved to destroy the Soviets in Russia. They sent their troops to North Russia, Siberia, Central Asia, the Caucasus and the Ukraine. The Entente also organized the armies and campaigns of the counter-revolutionary Russian generals against Moscow.

In Siberia, in 1918, the Entente proclaimed the tsarist admiral Kolchak supreme ruler of Russia. They provided him with guns, shells, rifles and equipment for his soldiers.

Kolchak formed a White army. He ruthlessly shot the workers and flogged and killed the peasants. All over Siberia he restored the tsarist methods.

The tsarist officers, landlords, capitalists and priests hurried to Kolchak’s standard from all parts of Russia, for they regarded him as the best protector of their interests.

Soon Kolchak started his attack upon Soviet Russia. He succeeded in capturing the town of Perm.

The Bolshevik Party mobilized its best forces and sent them to the front to defeat Kolchak. The Bolshevik forces strengthened their line in the Urals and checked the advance of the White armies.

In the spring of 1919, Kolchak, on the orders of the Entente, resumed his attack on Soviet Russia. Serious danger threatened Soviet rule from the east. General Denikin was marching to Kolchak’s assistance from the south, and, in the west, General Yudenich was marching against Petrograd. The Soviet people were now threatened by enemies on all sides. These enemies were equipped by the foreign capitalists.

But the principal enemy at that time was Kolchak. It
was against him that the main forces of the Red Army were hurled. The soldiers of the Red Army fought heroically against Kolchak’s army. Wherever the fighting was hottest the Bolshevik Red Commanders and Political Commissars rushed forward in the front lines to attack the Kolchak troops, encouraging the Red Army men by their boldness, courage and fearlessness.

The Red Army that was fighting against Kolchak was commanded by M. Frunze. Under his leadership the Red Army defeated Kolchak on the Volga and in the Urals in 1919. It was in Frunze’s army that the popular hero Vasily Chapayev arose. Chapayev’s division became the terror of the Whites. Kolchak repeatedly sent against Chapayev large forces, far superior in numbers to Chapayev’s division, but Chapayev always emerged victorious. One day, however, Chapayev with a detachment of his troops were surrounded by a White army and they perished in the fight.

Notwithstanding various setbacks, however, the Red Army, in the autumn of 1919, utterly routed Kolchak and drove the remnants of his army across the Urals into Siberia.

At that time the workers and peasants in Siberia rose in rebellion against Kolchak and everywhere formed irregular troops known as Partisans.

In December 1919, the workers of Irkutsk rose in rebellion and captured Kolchak and his Ministers. The Revolutionary Committee sentenced Kolchak to be shot.

The Red Army was victorious in Siberia.

The foreign interventionists and would-be annexationists were compelled to flee from Western and Eastern Siberia. The Red Army, assisted by the Siberian Partisan units which consisted of Russian workers and peasants, Buryat-Mongols, Yakuts, Evenks, Oirot and other nationalities inhabiting Siberia, drove them from our country.

**Denikin and Yudenich, the henchmen of the Entente.** The defeat of Kolchak did not put a stop to the Entente’s war against the Soviet Republic. The foreign governments organized another campaign against the Land of Soviets. In the south, General Denikin achieved some success and captured a number of districts in the Don Region and the Ukraine. The Entente gave him military assistance as it did in the case of Kolchak. Denikin mustered a large White army consisting of the conscripted local population and Cossack Whites commanded by counter-revolutionary officers, and started his march on Moscow.

The Soviet Government mustered all its forces against Denikin. Lenin addressed a letter to all the Party organizations in which he issued the call: “All to the struggle against Denikin.” The Bolshevik Party sent its best members to the southern front. Many thousands of workers and peasants joined the ranks of the Party and went to the front. Many Young Communist League organizations went
to the front to a man. In many cases notices were put up on the office doors of these organizations, saying: "Office closed; everybody has gone off to the front." In the autumn of 1919 the Red Army had in its ranks two and a half million workers and peasants.

![Sergei Lazo—hero of the Civil War in the Far East. In 1920 Comrade Lazo was burned to death in the furnace of a locomotive by the Japanese interventionists.](image)

The Central Committee of the Party commissioned Comrade Stalin to organize the defeat of Denikin. Stalin quickly grasped the seriousness of the situation at the front, and drew up a plan of campaign against the Denikin Whiteguards.

At this time Denikin had seized all of the Ukraine and was approaching the very heart of the revolution, Moscow.

Semen Budyonny

This was the most dangerous period of the revolution. In every district he captured Denikin restored the rule of the landlords and capitalists. He restored the land to the landlords and the factories to the capitalists, imposed heavy taxes upon the people and shot the Communists and workers and peasants who fought on the side of the Soviet Government. Denikin's officers set fire to villages and organized pogroms, or massacres, of Jews.

The task of the Red Army was to smash the advancing Whiteguards. In October 1919 the cavalry corps led by S. Budyonny struck at Denikin's forces. Like a hurricane Budyonny's invincible horsemen swept down on Voronezh and inflicted a crushing defeat upon the White cavalry.
The Red Cavalry was followed up by the shock troops of the Red Army marching from the Orel district. Here Comrade Ordjonikidze was in charge. Denikin’s White army wavered under the crushing blow of the Red forces and hurriedly fled to the south.

Amidst winter’s icy blasts, crossing frozen fields, the Red regiments and Budyonny’s cavalry continued, almost without stopping, to pursue the Whites further and further to the very shores of the Black Sea. Denikin’s forces fled in panic, and in their rear Partisan rebellions broke out. This movement was particularly widespread in the North Caucasus. Under the leadership of Comrade Kirov and other Bolsheviks the workers and peasants of the mountain peoples made repeated raids upon Denikin’s forces. The Partisans captured towns from the Whites and exterminated the landlords and army officers. The bigger Partisan units fought pitched battles with the White troops.

In order to help Denikin the Entente ordered General Yudenich to march his army against Petrograd. In October 1919 Yudenich almost reached the gates of Petrograd.

The workers of Petrograd rose like a wall of steel in defence of the first city of the revolution. Day and night the workers, their wives and children dug trenches and put up barbed wire entanglements, and Petrograd was transformed into an impregnable fortress. Tens of thousands of workers and Young Communists poured into the ranks of the defenders of Petrograd. They marched out to the attack and at the end of 1919 struck Yudenich a crushing blow. The remnants of Yudenich’s army were pursued right up to the frontiers of Estonia.

Once again the Entente’s campaign against Soviet Russia ended in the utter defeat of the White generals. Denikin and Yudenich fled abroad. The Entente hastily withdrew its troops from the Land of Soviets. The Red Army drove them out of Archangel and Murmansk. The peoples of the Ukraine and North Caucasus threw off the yoke of the landlords and capitalists, of the tsarist generals and foreign usurpers. The Red Army helped them to become equal citizens of the Land of the Soviets.

In the Crimea, however, General Wrangel was still in occupation at the head of the remnants of Denikin’s forces. And in the west, Poland, carrying out the orders of the Entente, was mustering forces for another attack on Soviet Russia.

59. WAR AGAINST THE POLISH PANS.
THE ROUT OF WRANGEL

The war with White Poland. The year 1920 arrived. The Entente continued to wage war against the Soviet Republic. This time it instigated Poland against the Soviets.

At the end of 1918 Poland was restored as an independent state. The Great Proletarian Revolution granted the Polish people the right to secede from Russia. The Polish pans who were in power in Poland did not appreciate this. In 1919 they captured Minsk, the capital of Byelorussia, and a part of the Ukraine.

The Council of People’s Commissars repeatedly called upon the Poles to put a stop to their encroachment upon Soviet territory and violence against the peaceful Byelorussian and Ukrainian people and offered to conclude peace with them, but the Polish pans refused to hear of it. They dreamed of conquering the Ukraine right up to the Black Sea. The Entente supplied the Poles with guns, machine guns and rifles. France provided them with 135 airplanes and sent her best military experts to help them. In the spring of 1920 the Poles went to war against Soviet Russia and captured Kiev. Crossing the Dniepr, the Polish army made ready to capture the Ukraine, east of the Dniepr.
Their aim was to join with the remnants of Denikin’s army in the Crimea under the command of Baron Wrangel, who was also a henchman of the Entente.

Units of the Red Army were quickly withdrawn from various fronts in order to muster an army to strike at the Polish aggressors. Budyonny’s cavalry army was transferred from the Caucasian front. By means of forced marches these bold horsemen crossed a thousand kilometres almost without leaving saddle. Budyonny’s Cavalry broke through into the rear of the Polish army and struck at it near Kiev. The Poles fled, closely pursued by the Red Army. Soon, Byelorussia was cleared of Polish troops and the Red Army was approaching Warsaw, the capital of Poland. But Warsaw was not captured; the Red Army retreated.

Notwithstanding the retreat of the Soviet forces the Poles suffered such heavy losses in the war that they were unable to resume the offensive and offered to conclude peace with Soviet Russia. To this the Soviet Government agreed and the war was brought to an end in the autumn of 1920. The lands of Byelorussia and Ukraine which had been captured by the Polish pans were restored; but sections of the Byelorussian and Ukrainian people are under the yoke of Poland to this day.

In this war the Red Army taught the Polish pans a lesson which they still remember.
The rout of Wrangel. One important enemy still remained, however. This was Wrangel. Assisted by the Entente, Wrangel built strong fortifications on the Isthmus of Perekop, in the Crimea. The Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government commissioned M. Frunze to lead the campaign against Wrangel. In conjunction with Voroshilov and Blucher he carefully drew up his plan of campaign.

Stubborn battles were fought. Defeated in the Ukraine, Wrangel took up his positions behind his fortifications in the Crimea. On the night of November 7, the third anniversary of the proletarian revolution, Comrade Frunze gave the order to storm Perekop, Wrangel's stronghold. The Red forces advanced over territory that afforded no cover whatever. The Whiteguards bombarded the Red Army men with heavy guns and rained a hail of machine gun bullets down upon them. Led by Comrade Blucher, the heroic Red Army men marched in impregnable ranks against the concrete fortifications of the Whites. Amidst a hurricane of bursting shells and flying bullets they broke into the enemy's trenches and drove him out. The battle of Perekop ended in the victory of the Red Army. The Whiteguards fled in panic. Wrangel and the remnants of his forces took ship, and fled across the Black Sea to his protectors, the Entente.
Neither the Poles nor Wrangel could help the Entente to crush Soviet rule in our country.

The third and last Entente campaign suffered defeat, as did the first two.

The establishment of Soviet rule in Central Asia and Trans-Caucasia. During the Civil War the population of Central Asia suffered great privation. The foreign usurpers, the baiis, as the kulaks were called in Central Asia, and mullahs, or Mohammedan priests, organized robber bands known as Basmachi. The Basmachi robbed the people and set fire to their villages. Lenin and Stalin sent large forces of the Red Army under the leadership of M. Frunze and V. Kuibyshev to the aid of the toilers of Central Asia. Fighting in the deserts and rocky mountains, the Red Army exterminated these Basmachi brigands and freed Central Asia from the rule of its oppressors.

In 1920 the Uzbek toilers rose in revolt against the rule of the Khan of Khiva. They achieved victory over the khan's forces and established the rule of the people. The rebellion in Khiva was followed by a rebellion in Bukhara. There, the toilers, to whose aid the Red Army came, overthrew the emir, and also established the rule of the people. At this time, also, the Turkmens liberated themselves from the power of their English and Socialist-Revolutionary executioners.

Trans-Caucasia was under the rule of the bourgeois nationalists—the Georgian Mensheviks, the Armenian Dashnaks and the Azerbaidjan Mussavatists—who were assisted by the Entente. In the spring of 1920 the workers and peasants of Trans-Caucasia rose in rebellion. The Red Army under the leadership of Comrades Ordjonikidze, Kirov and Mikoyan came to their aid. The rule of the bourgeoisie was overthrown and the Trans-Caucasian peoples—Azerbaidjan, Armenia and Georgia—joined the friendly family of nations of the Land of Soviets.

The principal enemies of the workers and peasants were now defeated and driven from Soviet territory. The Soviet Government was able to achieve victory over the foreign and Russian capitalists because at the head of the toilers marched the Communist Party. The Party united the workers and peasants for the fight against their enemies and made use of all the resources of the country for the purpose of crushing these enemies.

In the fight to thwart the plans of the interventionists great assistance was rendered the Soviet Republic by the workers of Germany, England and France. They hindered the shipment by land and sea of arms and munitions that were to be used in the fight against the Soviets. They demanded that the war against the Soviet Republic be stopped, and waged a struggle under the slogan of "Hands off Soviet Russia."

Having defeated the interventionists, the toilers of the Soviet Union could now turn to peaceful labours, they could now set to work to build Socialism, to heal the wounds inflicted by the World War and the Civil War.
During the Civil War the peasants gave up all their surplus grain to meet the needs of industry, the workers and the Red Army. This expressed the military alliance between the workers and peasants in the fight against the landlords and factory owners. Now an alliance was needed for the economic restoration of the country and to build Socialism. Lenin therefore proposed that the peasants cease to give up all their surplus grain, but pay a definite tax in kind, that is, in agricultural produce, and dispose of all the produce that is left at their own discretion. To carry this out it was necessary to permit private trade. Therefore, said Lenin, private manufacturers and traders must be permitted to open small factories and shops. Let the private manufacturers and traders manufacture and sell goods for the time being. In the meantime we will rapidly become strong and squeeze out private capital, and when the time comes we will completely abolish the remnants of the capitalists and kulaks in our country. Lenin’s plan was adopted. This plan was known as the New Economic Policy, or N.E.P., for short.

To hasten the economic restoration of the country the Communist Party introduced subbotniki, as it did during the Civil War. During these subbotniki, which were held on Saturday (Sabbata in Russian) afternoons or Sundays, voluntary unpaid work was done for the benefit of the country. All the toilers took part in these subbotniki.

Lenin’s plan was quite successful. In the course of three or four years the country was put on its feet again. The factories began working again, and the work of the railways greatly improved. Agriculture also recovered. The peasants brought their grain, meat and eggs to market. They began to plant sugar beet and flax, and increased their cotton crops. The sugar refineries and cotton mills in the country began to hum.

The workers and peasants were now able to obtain bread, sugar, textiles and other goods. Many state and cooperative
stores were opened. These began to squeeze out the private traders.

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, that mountain eagle, as Comrade Stalin called him, saw very far ahead. He said that the workers and peasants could easily overcome the economic chaos and live happy lives. To do that they must build factories to manufacture machines, and these machines must be driven by electricity. He repeatedly said that the country must be covered with a network of power stations. A plan for the electrification of the country was drawn up. On Lenin's proposal the erection of the first big hydro-electric power station was started on the River Volkhov, near Leningrad (as Petrograd began to be called in 1924). This power station was completed in 1926, after Lenin’s death, and provided electricity for the factories and mills in Leningrad. This enabled the industry of Leningrad, which was very important for the country, to be restored.

Power stations were also erected in other parts of the country; in the Urals, Ukraine and Trans-Caucasia.

**End of Japanese intervention.** While the entire land of Soviets was engaged in the work of economic restoration, our rich region, the Far East, was still occupied by the Japanese, who had been there since 1918. But in 1922, the Red Army, together with the Siberian Partisans, at last put an end to the war in this region and liberated the whole of the Far East from the Japanese robbers and the White guards. The Red Army, under the leadership of V. Blucher, gained brilliant victories over the Whites and Japanese in the battles of Spassk and Volochayevka. In the village of Volochayevka, the Whiteguards had built strong barbed wire defences. In the depth of the winter, amidst bitter frost, the Red fighters, in rags and almost barefooted, rushed at these defences, tore them down with their bare hands and hacked at them with their swords. The defences were captured. The Whites and Japanese fled.

In October 1922 the Red Army liberated Vladivostok. The Japanese yoke in the Far East was overthrown.

But the toilers of Siberia and the Far East will long remember the violence and plunder of the Japanese army. The workers and peasants will never forget how the Japanese burned Red Partisans alive in locomotive furnaces. This
is how the hero, Sergei Lazo, died for the liberation of the Far East.

The formation of the U.S.S.R. The whole country was now cleared of White forces and interventionists. The country had to be safeguarded from future armed attack by bourgeois countries. The country had to be strengthened economically, and Socialism had to be built. Assistance had to be given to all the nationalities in the Land of Soviets to revive and develop their national culture. To do all this it was necessary to create a single union state. For this purpose, on the proposal of Lenin and Stalin, a congress of delegates from all the Union Republics was held in Moscow in 1922. This was the First All-Union Congress of Soviets. At this congress the voluntary state federation of the peoples, the union state known as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, or U.S.S.R., for short, was formed.

At first the U.S.S.R. consisted of a few Soviet Republics. They were the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (R.S.F.S.R.), with its capital in Moscow; the Ukraine Soviet Socialist Republic (Uk. S.S.R.) with its capital, first in Kharkov, and later in Kiev; the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (B.S.S.R.), with its capital in Minsk. The Trans-Caucasian Soviet Socialist Republics, namely, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia, formed one federation known as the Trans-Caucasian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, with its capital in Tbilisi. Somewhat later, three independent Soviet Republics were formed in Central Asia. They were the Uzbek Republic, with its capital in Tashkent; the Turkmen Republic, with its capital in Ashkhabad; and the Tadjik Republic, with its capital in Stalinabad. These republics became constituent parts of the U.S.S.R.

The peoples of the U.S.S.R. began to live as a friendly family. Under tsarism many nationalities were becoming extinct; they were downtrodden and illiterate; but now they revived and began to build Socialism in fraternal alliance with all the other nationalities. The development of national culture made rapid progress in all the republics. Many schools, universities and libraries were opened; theatres were built, and numerous books began to be printed in the languages of the various nationalities. The nationalities of the U.S.S.R. which had not possessed an alphabet before now acquired one. The culture of the peoples blossomed forth.

61. LENIN DIED, BUT HIS CAUSE LIVES FOREVER

Death of Lenin. On January 21, 1924, at the age of 54, after a long and severe illness, the great Lenin passed away in Gorki, near Moscow. The toilers of the whole world lost their leader, who had prepared for and brought about the proletarian revolution, and in the years of hardship had saved it from innumerable enemies. There passed away the man who had done more for humanity than anyone had done before.

The toilers of Moscow filing into the Hall of Columns, Trade Union House, Moscow, to take their last farewell of Lenin
the Bolshevik Party, took a vow before the people in the name of the Party. He said:

“In departing from us, Comrade Lenin bequeathed to us the duty of holding aloft and guarding the purity of the great title of member of the Party. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that we will fulfil your behest with honour!...

“In departing from us, Comrade Lenin bequeathed to us the duty of guarding the unity of our Party like the apple of our eye. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that we will also fulfil this behest of yours with honour!...

“Only in our country have the oppressed and suppressed masses of toilers succeeded in throwing off the rule of the landlords and capitalists and in putting in its place the rule of the workers and peasants....

“This titanic struggle was led by Comrade Lenin and his Party....

“Lenin’s name has become the name most beloved by the toiling and exploited masses.

“In departing from us, Comrade Lenin bequeathed to us the duty of guarding and strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that we will spare no effort to fulfil also this behest of yours with honour!...

“In departing from us, Comrade Lenin bequeathed to us the duty of strengthening with all our might the alliance between the workers and the peasants. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that we will fulfil also this behest of yours with honour!...

“Russians and Ukrainians, Bashkirs and Byelorussians, Georgians and Azerbaoidjanians, Armenians and Dagestanians, Tatars and Kirghiz, Uzbeks and Turkmens—all are equally interested in strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat....

“Comrade Lenin tirelessly urged upon us the necessity
of establishing a voluntary alliance of the peoples of our country, the necessity for their fraternal collaboration within the framework of a Union of Republics.

“In departing from us, Comrade Lenin bequeathed to us the duty of strengthening and expanding the Union of Republics. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that we will carry out also this behest of yours with honour!...

“More than once Lenin pointed out to us that the strengthening of the Red Army and the improvement of its condition is one of the most important tasks of our Party....

“Let us vow then, comrades, that we will spare no effort to strengthen our Red Army and our Red Navy.”...

The last words of Comrade Stalin’s vow were:

“We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that we will not spare our lives to strengthen and expand the league of the toilers of the whole world—the Communist International!”

62. SOCIALIST INDUSTRY. COLLECTIVE FARMING

The building of Socialist industry. The old factories and mills that were restarted and the machinery with which they were equipped were obsolete. Besides, there were few of them, and the goods they produced were not enough to supply the needs of the country. The amount of pig iron produced was very little, and so also was the amount of oil and coal. Many kinds of goods which the country needed were not produced at all. They had to be imported from abroad.

In 1925, at the 14th Congress of the Communist Party, Comrade Stalin, on the Party’s instructions, declared that we must in a short period of time transform our agricultural country into an industrial country. To do this we must build many new factories and power stations. All the old mills and factories must be reconstructed and brought up to date. We must build tractors, harvester-combines, automobiles, new machines for the factories, and airplanes. We must train large numbers of skilled workers and experts. We must overtake and surpass the most advanced capitalist countries, “otherwise they will trample on us.” All this is called industrialization.

This plan of building Socialism in our country, however, was opposed by the traitors who at that time were in the
ranks of the Party: Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev. They did all they possibly could to hinder the building of Socialist industry. They said that it was impossible to build Socialist society in the U.S.S.R.

They said that the workers and peasants could not get on without capitalists and kulaks.

The foreign bourgeoisie took advantage of the struggle they waged against the Party to spread lies about the Soviet Union and to fight against it. They bribed a number of the old specialists and the remnants of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, and formed them into counter-revolutionary groups of wreckers for the purpose of disrupting the growing industry of the U.S.S.R. The wreckers spoiled machines and wrecked coal and iron mines. They blew up and set fire to factories, mills and power stations. The wreckers were caught and severely punished. But the Trotskyites continued to fight the Party and the people. The Party expelled the Trotskyites from its ranks. The people banished Trotsky from the Soviet Union, and he openly went into the service of the bourgeoisie.

In order to carry out the tasks which Comrade Stalin had set before the country, a plan of great works was drawn up in 1928. This was known as the First Five-Year Plan of Socialist Construction.

The toilers of the Soviet Union of all nationalities started on this great work of construction with enthusiasm and set numerous examples of labour heroism. In the Land of Soviets work became a matter of honour and glory, a matter of valour and heroism. Day and night strenuous work was carried on at the construction jobs so as to accomplish the plan of great works.

In the factories and on the railways Socialist competition spread on a wide scale. The workers beat all world records in laying bricks and in erecting factory buildings.
On the banks of the River Tom, near the town of Kuznetsk, where formerly the Siberian Tatar khans reigned, the erection of the huge Stalin Steel Works was started in 1930 and completed towards the end of the First Five-Year Plan period.

On the site of the former Zaporozhskaya Sech, where the Dniepr Rapids surged, the huge Lenin Dniepr Power Station was built. The electricity produced at the Dniepr Power Station helped to develop many districts of the Ukraine. Thousands of hectares of formerly barren land were made fertile; the Dniepr, which had been blocked by the rocks forming the Rapids, became navigable throughout its length, and many large mills and factories now producing goods the country needs are supplied with electricity from this station.

In 1930, across the arid steppe and desert, the Turkestan-Siberian Railway was built and now connects the wheat country of Siberia with flourishing Central Asia.

During the First Five-Year Plan period a particularly large number of factories were erected in the national republics. Scores of new factories were erected in Central Asia, Trans-Caucasia, Ukraine and Byelorussia.

All this enabled us to build Socialist industry, that is, industry without capitalists.

**Building collective farms.** For peasant agriculture, steel horses, that is, tractors, were built. During the First Five-Year Plan period the huge Dzerzhinsky Tractor Works were built in Stalingrad, and factories for building harvesters-combines were erected in Saratov and Zaporozhye.

All this was needed for the purpose of organizing peasant farming along the most up-to-date scientific and technical lines.

It enabled us to organize the small individual peasant farms into large collective farms (*kolkhoz*). This was not an easy task. At first the peasants clung very tight to their small farms.

But the Party succeeded in proving to the peasants, not only by arguments, but also by deeds, the enormous advantages of large-scale collective farming over small individual farming. The Soviet Government sent numerous tractors, harvester-combines and other machinery into the rural districts. In 1929 large numbers of middle peasants followed the poor peasants into the collective farms. The kulaks, realizing that the collective farms would sweep them away, began furiously to resist the organization of collective farms. They murdered the leading collective farmers, spoiled collective farm machines and set fire to collective farm fields. In their fight against the collective farms the kulaks were supported by a small clique of traitors to the people, headed by Bukharin and Rykov. They, too, like the Trotskyites, were opposed to the Five-Year Plan.

The Bolshevik Party, however, crushed these traitors and
helped the peasants to break the resistance of the kulaks and to destroy them.

The collective farms grew, became firmly established and began to advance rapidly towards a happy and prosperous life. In the collective farms the peasants began to plough more land. They gathered larger harvests. In the villages

A harvester-combine reaping a collective-farm field

more schools, libraries and clubs were built. In 1932, more than half the peasant households in the country were organized in collective farms.

The First Five-Year Plan of Socialist Construction was completed in 1932, that is to say, not in five years, but in four.

All this enabled us to build Socialist agriculture, that is, agriculture without landlords and kulaks.

The workers and peasants could celebrate their victory. By fulfilling the First Five-Year Plan, the U.S.S.R. ensured the victory of Socialism.

The U.S.S.R. now manufactured machines, extracted metals, built tractors and airplanes, and greatly increased the output of coal and oil. The U.S.S.R. was transformed into an industrial country.

Three times more goods were now being produced than in tsarist Russia. In 1933 the U.S.S.R. caught up with and surpassed a number of European countries. It took second place in the world output of oil, second place in the world output of steel, third place in the world output of pig iron, and fourth place in the world output of coal.

But the enemies of the U.S.S.R. within the country and abroad did everything to hinder the work of erecting factories. In 1929 the foreign capitalists incited China and compelled her to start war on the U.S.S.R. The troops of the Chinese generals and Whiteguards attacked our Far-Eastern frontiers. But our Far-Eastern Red Army was firm and strong and, under the leadership of V. Blucher, quickly routed the enemies. There were wreckers also within the country. In 1930 a large party of wreckers, consisting of old engineers and Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, was uncovered. These wreckers wanted to bring back the capitalists to Russia. They were preparing for another war against the U.S.S.R. The wreckers were caught and severely punished by the Soviet Government. After this the workers and peasants began to strengthen and equip their Red Army more than ever, and to help the organizations concerned with the safety of the Soviet state to expose the enemies of the Soviet people.

Thus, through labour and struggle, was the First Five-Year Plan of great work, drawn up by the Bolshevik Party, accomplished.
63. THE U.S.S.R.—THE LAND OF SOCIALISM

The cultural achievements and the people of the Land of Socialism. During the period of the First Five-Year Plan the face of our country greatly changed. But the whole life of our country underwent still greater change during the period of the Second Five-Year Plan (1933-1937). On one-sixth of the globe, from the North Pole to the torrid steppes of Turkmenia, from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific Ocean, a new Socialist system was built, a new life was created, a life without exploitation or oppression, without capitalists or landlords, without merchants or kulaks.

The country began to work in a new way. The people of the Land of Soviets brought to light the riches concealed in the bowels of the earth. Coal, oil, gold, platinum, iron ore and non-ferrous metals were now produced in quantities never produced before. In the rich forests of the U.S.S.R. people began to obtain huge quantities of the most varied kinds of timber. In our oceans, seas, lakes and rivers they began to catch sea animals and the most valuable kinds of fish in quantities never seen before. As a result of the Second Five-Year Plan over 220,000,000 hectares of Socialist fields are now supplying the country with increasing quantities of grain, cotton, flax and sugar beet.

Our Socialist fields, orchards and gardens are producing increasing quantities of tea, tangerines, lemons, oranges, apples, pears and grapes.

Scores of most up-to-date huge mills and factories built by Soviet engineers and equipped with Soviet machines are year after year increasing their output and improving the quality of their manufactures. Hundreds of new factories have been built in branches of industry which did not exist in our country before. Our automobiles, tractors, harvester-combines, airplanes and machines for factories are in no way inferior to those manufactured abroad.

Our thousands of mills and factories are now producing everything that is required to supply human needs. Our country is illuminated by electricity. Over 14,000 power stations supply electricity to our mills and factories.

Only the workers and peasants of the U.S.S.R., who were liberated from the exploitation of the capitalists, could build up such a mighty industry and mighty agriculture in so short a time. Solicitude for the welfare of the individual—the seven-hour day, high wages, rest homes, sanatoriums, safety measures in the factories, good houses, free technical and other education—all served to bring about an increase in the productivity of labour never witnessed before. Work ceased to be a burden.

New people of a special kind arose in the Soviet Union.

In the Donetz Basin, the coal miner, Alexei Stakhanov, hewed in one shift 102 tons of coal, which was over fourteen times the ordinary output.

In the automobile works in Gorky, forgeman Busygin forged in one shift 1,050 crankshafts, instead of the ordinary output of 675.

The two weavers, Dusia and Maria Vinogradova, began to tend 144 looms instead of 10. The example of these advanced people, who were called Stakhanovites, was followed by hundreds and thousands of others.

The Stakhanov movement spread throughout the country; from industry it spread to agriculture. The collective farmers
began to gather harvests of hitherto unseen dimensions. Maria Demchenko obtained 500 centners of sugar beet per hectare. In the course of the summer the women tractor drivers in Pasha Angelina’s brigade ploughed over 1,000 hectares with each tractor.

In order to carry the mountains of goods produced by the factories and mills, the billions of poods of the products of agriculture and the millions of passengers who wanted to travel, it was necessary to improve the work of the transport system. In a short space of time Lazar Kaganovich, People’s Commissar of Railways, set the railways running smoothly. The workers began to call him the “Iron Commissar.”

Great canals were built, such as the White Sea and Baltic Canal, which connects the Baltic Sea with the White Sea, and the Moscow-Volga Canal.

The Metropolitan, an underground railway of wonderful beauty, the finest in the world, was built in Moscow, the capital of the U.S.S.R.

Soviet airplanes fly higher and longer distances than any other. They opened the route to the hitherto unknown icy wastes of the Arctic and conquered the North Pole. There a radio station has been installed. Soviet airmen discovered the hitherto unknown route from the U.S.S.R. to America via the North Pole. The names of the Soviet Arctic explorers and airmen, the heroes of the Soviet Union, Schmidt, Chkalov, Baidukov, Belyakov, Gromov, Yumashev, Danilin, Vodopyanov, Molokov, Levanevsky, Slepnev and others are famous throughout the country.

New cities sprang up in the U.S.S.R. with fabulous speed—Stalinsk in Western Siberia, Magnitogorsk in the Urals, Komsomolsk in the Far East, and others. Old towns were rebuilt, and became unrecognizable.
The capitals of the Soviet Republics and the big industrial centres, particularly, expanded and became beautiful. Old Moscow with its crooked streets is now being transformed into a splendid capital of the Soviet Union. Hundreds of fine buildings were erected and work was started on the magnificent Palace of Soviets, which will be the largest and highest building in the world. And this lofty edifice will be crowned with a statue of the leader of the proletariat, V. I. Lenin. This statue will be 100 metres high.

The capitalist system was the grave of popular talent. In those times only a few individuals climbed to any height in art and science. Such a one was I. Michurin, the great horticulturist of our country. He grew many new kinds of fruits, fruits which do not fear the frost. Michurin apple trees blossom and bend with the weight of fruit in cold Siberia and the Far North. Only the Soviet Government appreciated the value of his scientific discoveries.

Another genius was the grandfather of Russian aviation, K. Tsioolkovsky. He designed an airplane thirteen years before the first airplane rose into the sky. He invented the metal dirigible airship several years before the first dirigible was built in Germany. But in tsarist Russia the value of these inventions was not appreciated. Only in the Land of Soviets were Tsioolkovsky’s discoveries put to use.

Only under the Soviet Government was the scientific work of Academician Ivan Pavlov extensively developed.

Surrounded with the care of the Soviet people and assisted by the Soviet Government, Pavlov made many discoveries concerning human life.

In its numerous schools and universities our country trained thousands of new scientists from the ranks of the workers and peasants. Everybody, young and old, now receives free education. Every schoolboy and schoolgirl can take up any career he or she wishes. All the nationalities inhabiting the Soviet Union have been given the opportunity to study in their own language.

In no country in the world are so many books and newspapers published as in the U.S.S.R. Nowhere are there so many libraries as in our country.

In the U.S.S.R. popular talent has been developed to a very high degree. It has found an outlet in the theatre, in literature and in the cinema. Under the guidance of the Communist Party, this talent was nursed and encouraged by the great proletarian writer, Maxim Gorky, the personal friend of Lenin and Stalin. Inspired by the building of Socialism in our country, Gorky wrote unforgettable works of great beauty and feeling. Together with the whole people, Gorky took part in creating a life of happiness in our country.

Soviet musicians and actors are among the best masters of their art. At international competitions the first prizes were obtained by Soviet pianists and violinists.

Only in the Land of Socialism could such brave people arise who, loving their country, are ready to lay down their lives for it.

At the 17th Congress of the Bolshevik Party, held in 1934, the great Stalin, leader of the peoples, said: “Everyone sees that the line of the Party has conquered,” that is to say,
the path of victory which the Party had mapped out was the right one.

And millions of toilers in the Soviet Union and abroad repeated Stalin's words: "The line of the Party has conquered."

The remnants of the parasite class, the capitalists and kulaks, were destroyed. The possibility of their reviving again was removed.

The Party thus carried out Lenin's great behest. Under its leadership, the people created a new Socialist system.

64. OUR ENEMIES AND FRIENDS ABROAD

The U.S.S.R. stands for peace, the fascists stand for war. The peoples of the Soviet Union are waging a heroic struggle for the happiness of all mankind. In the U.S.S.R. Socialism has been built. The Land of Soviets does not want alien territory, it does not want war. Our Government pursues an unswerving policy of peace with all the nations of the globe. It has concluded a number of peace treaties with many countries. In order to strengthen the peace of the world the U.S.S.R. joined the League of Nations, which was formed as far back as 1919. Treaties of mutual assistance against possible enemy attack have been concluded with Czechoslovakia and France.

"The U.S.S.R.," said Comrade Stalin, "does not think of threatening anyone, let alone of attacking anyone. We stand for peace and champion the cause of peace. But we are not afraid of threats and are ready to answer the instigators of war blow for blow."

These instigators of war are the fascists, the worst enemies of all the working people. The fascists are in power in Germany and Italy. The fascist militarists of Japan are at one with them. The fascists mete out cruel punishment to the revolutionary workers and peasants in their countries, and persecute all those who are not with them.

Most of all the fascists hate our country, the Land of Socialism, the powerful bulwark of the peace, liberty and happiness of the whole of mankind.

The fascist militarists of Japan have seized Manchuria and other territory in China. They test the strength of our Far-Eastern frontiers and every time they are vigorously repulsed. The Japanese militarists are preparing for war against us.

In their preparations for a world war the fascists send their spies to all countries. Fascist spies also managed to
penetrate the Soviet Union. Here they found active assistants in the persons of the adherents of Trotsky and Rykov. That contemptible enemy of the people, the fascist agent, Trotsky, and his contemptible friends Rykov and Bukharin, organized in the U.S.S.R. gangs of murderers, wreckers and spies. They foully murdered that ardent Bolshevik, S. Kirov. They plotted to murder other leaders of the proletariat, too. The fascist scoundrels, the Trotskyites and Rykovites, caused train collisions in the U.S.S.R., blew up and set fire to mines and factories, wrecked machines, poisoned workers, and did all the damage they possibly could. These enemies of the people had a definite program, which was to restore the yoke of the capitalists and landlords in the U.S.S.R., to destroy the collective farms, to surrender the Ukraine to the Germans and the Far East to the Japanese, and to prepare for the defeat of the U.S.S.R. in the event of war.

These brigands were caught and punished as they deserved.

But as long as the U.S.S.R. is surrounded by countries in which capitalism reigns, spies and wreckers will continuously strive to penetrate our country and cause us harm. The eyes of the workers and peasants must be sharper than ever. All the inhabitants of the Land of Soviets, young and old, must guard our frontiers with greater alertness than ever.

Spies worm their way into the mills and factories, into the big cities and villages. Every suspicious person must be carefully watched and every fascist agent must be caught.
The Red Army and our friends abroad. The Soviet Union is firmer and stronger than any other country in the world. Its strength lies in its Red Army which is equipped along the most up-to-date technical and scientific lines. It is famous for its marshals and commanders, and its heroic Red Army men.

They are the friends and comrades of the workers of the U.S.S.R. in the fight for peace, in the fight against fascism. Their support makes the U.S.S.R. mightier still.

65. THE NEW CONSTITUTION OF THE U.S.S.R.

The structure of our state. The Great Proletarian Revolution destroyed and abolished the hated tsarist monarchy and its laws, which kept the workers and peasants in chains.

On the ruins of old Russia the liberated workers and peasants built their own state. This was the workers' and peasants' state, the like of which had never been seen before. This state was called the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (R.S.F.S.R.).

For three years the Soviet Republic kept at bay the enemies who were attacking it from all sides. It defeated the landlords and capitalists, Russian and foreign, who had organized civil war against it. It helped all the oppressed nationalities in old Russia to throw off the yoke of landlord and capitalist violence. It helped them to establish Soviet rule in their liberated lands. Soviet Republics arose and became firmly established in the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Central Asia and Trans-Caucasia. By the joint efforts of all these Soviet Republics all the enemies were finally defeated. The liberated nations proceeded to restore the industry which had been destroyed by the war. In 1922, under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, they formed the great Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. At first the U.S.S.R. consisted of four Union Republics; later on, three more were added.

Nowhere in the world was there such friendship and mutual confidence between various nationalities as in the U.S.S.R. In 1924 the free peoples of the U.S.S.R. adopted the first Constitution (or fundamental law) of the U.S.S.R. In this Constitution they sealed all the victories the country had achieved. A long time elapsed. Industry was built up and
greatly enlarged; collective farms and state farms (sovkhоз) were organized; culture blossomed forth. The remnants of the landlords, capitalists and kulaks were uprooted, the exploitation of the toilers and the oppression of the people were abolished. This means that Socialism has triumphed in the U.S.S.R.

In 1936 a Commission headed by Comrade Stalin drew up a new Constitution for the U.S.S.R. This Constitution was submitted to the people for wide discussion and later ratified by the supreme authority of the Union, the All-Union Congress of Soviets. December 5, the day on which the Constitution was ratified, was declared a public holiday. In this Constitution are recorded the main achievements of the Land of Soviets during the first nineteen years of its existence.

In the former Constitution it was stated that our Republic was called a Socialist Republic because the working class was in power and was striving to build Socialism. In the new Constitution our state is called a Socialist state of the workers and peasants because, in the main, Socialism has already been built in the U.S.S.R.

In the U.S.S.R. all power belongs to the toilers of town and country, to the Soviets of Toilers’ Deputies.

The land, mineral deposits, factories, mines, mills, railways, the big apartment houses and the state farms are state property, the possession of the whole people.

Parallel with state property there is cooperative and collective-farm property, property which belongs to the various collective farms and cooperative societies.

The Constitution states that in the U.S.S.R. the law permits the small private economy of handicraftsmen and individual peasants, on the condition, however, that the handicraftsman or individual peasant works himself and does not exploit the labour of others.

Our state was able to achieve all this because it abolished the landlords, capitalists and kulaks, because it abolished the exploitation of man by man.

In the U.S.S.R. all able-bodied persons must work. “He who does not work, neither shall he eat.”

The U.S.S.R. is a voluntary and friendly federation of equal nationalities all enjoying equal rights. “And this friendship is a great thing: as long as it continues the peoples of our country will be free and invincible,” said Comrade Stalin.

The U.S.S.R. is a voluntary federation of the following eleven Union Republics possessing equal rights:

The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic
The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic
The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic
The Azerbaijjan Soviet Socialist Republic
The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic
The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic
The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic
The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic
The Tadjik Soviet Socialist Republic
The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic
The Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic

The highest organ of state in the U.S.S.R. is the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. In the U.S.S.R. the Supreme Soviet alone has the right to pass laws. The Supreme Soviet sets up the government of the U.S.S.R. called the Council of People’s Commissars of the Union.

The local organs of state power are the Soviets of Toilers’ Deputies. All the Soviets, the local Soviets, the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics and Autonomous Republics, as well as the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., are elected by the citizens of the U.S.S.R. on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage, with secret ballot. All citizens of the U.S.S.R., male and female, who have reached the age of eighteen, irrespective of race, nationality, religion, education, social origin, property status or past activities, have the right to elect deputies and to be elected as deputies. Only the insane, and those convicted to deprivation of the franchise by the courts, are excluded from this right. This is called universal suffrage, because all have the right to vote. It is called equal suffrage, because all citizens are equal in their right to vote. It is called direct suffrage, because every citizen votes directly for the candidate to be elected to the Soviets of Toilers’ Deputies.

Voting at elections takes place in secret; every citizen has the right to vote for the candidate he wishes to be elected.

The citizens of the U.S.S.R. are ensured the right to work, rest and leisure, education, and material security in old age.

Our state ensures these rights for all citizens.

while they are studying. In the U.S.S.R. care is taken of
The Soviet is a democratic soviet, which is elected by the People. The Deput Soviet as well as the Equal Right of Women is given to all citizens. It is the right to work, to enjoy the benefits of old age.

Our state ensures these rights for all citizens.

In the Land of Socialism there is no unemployment, from which millions of workers in capitalist countries suffer. Only in our country is there a seven-hour day, the shortest working day in the world.

Thousands of rest homes and sanatoriums are available to the toilers of our country. Every year all workers and office employees in the U.S.S.R. enjoy a vacation. Only in the U.S.S.R. can the toilers really study and become educated. Instruction in all educational establishments in the U.S.S.R. is free; many students are maintained by the state while they are studying. In the U.S.S.R. care is taken of
every person from the day he is born right up to old age. For babies and young children, crèches and kindergartens are provided. The aged and sick are provided for by the state. All citizens in the U.S.S.R. are ensured the right of free speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and street demonstrations.

But in addition to rights, every citizen of the U.S.S.R. has duties to the state. It is the duty of every citizen strictly to observe the laws of the Soviet Union, to maintain discipline, to perform his work honestly, to safeguard and
strengthen Socialist property. Whoever encroaches upon Socialist property is an enemy of the people of the U.S.S.R.

Defence of the Fatherland against all enemies of the U.S.S.R. is the supreme duty of a citizen of the U.S.S.R. Whoever goes over to the enemy, whoever betrays the military secrets of the U.S.S.R. to the enemy, thereby betrays his country, betrays his people, and is punished as an enemy of the U.S.S.R.

The object of our great Socialist state is to create for all citizens a cultured, prosperous, free and happy life.

Such is the great Stalin Constitution of the U.S.S.R.

In the U.S.S.R., Socialism, in the main, has been built; here all toilers work for society according to their ability and receive from society according to the amount of work they perform.

The task that lies before our country is to build Communism, under which every worker will work for society according to his abilities, and will receive from society all the things he requires, that is, will receive according to his needs.
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<td>1917 (October)</td>
<td>The Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia.</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1918</td>
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<td>1918</td>
<td>Defeat of the German interventionists in the Ukraine.</td>
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<td>Revolution in Germany and Austria-Hungary.</td>
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<td>1919</td>
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<td>Defeat of Kolchak, Denikin and Yudenich.</td>
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<td>1920</td>
<td>War against the Polish pans and the defeat of Wrangel.</td>
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<td>1922</td>
<td>The defeat of the Japanese interventionists in the Far East.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1928-1932</td>
<td>Period of the First Five-Year Plan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1933-1937</td>
<td>Period of the Second Five-Year Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>The foul murder of S. Kirov by the enemies of the people, the Trotskyites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>Ratification of the new Constitution of the U.S.S.R.</td>
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