Tsarist & Communist Russia





From Autocracy To Revolution: Part I "Background"

- By the end of 1800s: Russia was controlled by a single monarch (Tsar: *supreme ruler*)
- Majority of Russian population trapped in:
- Poverty and Ignorance
- Tsar totally resistant to change
- Tsar was considered:
 - All powerful
 - Unchallengeable
 - Divinely Chosen
 - Each Tsar (Tsarina)
 believed they had been
 chosen by the hand of God
 to lead the nation



THE ROMANOVS: Russian Ruling Family 1600-1917

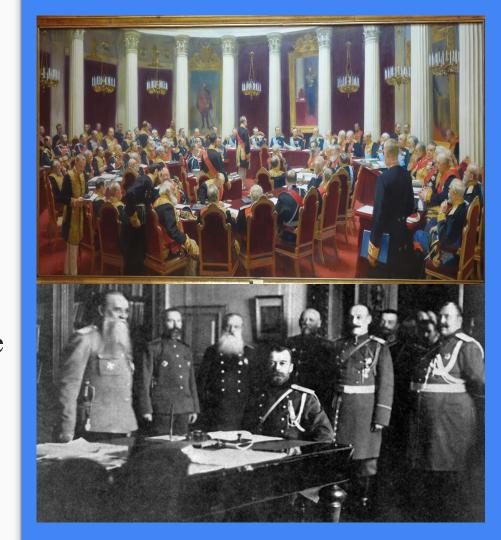
- Under the Tsars
 - Tsar had total control
 - Tsar appointed all government officials
 - Tsar approved all decisions
- Until 1905
 - Russia had no elections
 - No political parties
 - No legislature to challenge
 Tsar's decisions
 - Press strictly censored
 - No civil liberties
 - Total submission of the people



Tsar Nicholas II: The Last Tsar of Russia 1894-1917

Tsar's authority based on 3 major organizations:

- 1. **The Bureaucracy** (a system of government in which most of the important decisions are made by state appointed officials)
 - a. Hierarchical system
 - i. 14 ranks
 - 1. Nobility (Top)
 - a. Permanent service
 - b. Dismissed at will
 - 2. Lower ranks
 - a. Civil servants
 - i. Poorly paid
 - ii. Dismissed



2. The Orthodox Church

- Greek Orthodox branch of Christianity
- Function: To prove the Tsar's reign
 - Church claimed the Tsar was the earthly representative of Christ on earth
 - To disobey the Tsar was a sin
 - Church taught:
 - Tsarism was permanent, unchanging, and unchangeable



3. The Police & The Army

- Brute force and terror
- No freedom allowed
 - Contradicted Tsarism
- Broke up political meetings
- Critics of the Tsar and the government:
 - Harassed & Tortured
 - Imprisoned
 - Sent into exile & death
- Secret Police (Okhrana)
 - Spies
 - Root out opponents of the government
 - Opened mail, etc.



Tsar Nicholas II

- Last Tsar of Russia
- Reign unspeakably cruel
- Made huge mistakes
- Created enormous disasters
- Unfit ruler
 - o Ineffective leader
 - Lazy
 - Dull & Unintelligent
 - Weak Character
 - Politically shortsighted
 - Viewed democracy as a "threat to the Russian soul"
 - Favored ultra-conservative causes



Tsarina Alexandra

- Tsar Nicholas II's wife
- Authoritarian
 - Contempt for reform
- Huge influence over her weak husband & political affairs
- Her mission:
 - Preserve the autocracy (monarchy) at all costs
 - Son and heir, Alexei
 - Rare form of Hemophilia
 - Accident left him confined to a wheelchair

