Fall Of Winter Palace Essay, Research Paper

The Fall of Winter Palace

Czar Nicholas II?s reign lasted twenty-one years and ended with the Bolsheviks seizing power. However, from the very start of Nicholas?s rule, fate was not in his favor. For a long time Czars have ruled Russia with power all in their hands. The society that the Czars have created was society extremes and deep poverty. While the Czar and his family lived an aristocratic life, the people of Russia were living a nightmare.

The last Romanov family lived in the palace. Their family was very well off. Czar Nicholas II and the Tsarina Alexandra were happily married. They first had three daughters Olga, Tatiana, and Marie. The house of the Romanovs was very well until the Tsarina?s fourth child Anastasia was born. The disappointment of not gibing the Tsar a son an heir almost made her insane. The Tsarina felt as all of Russia were rejecting her for being German and she knew that the women in St. Petersburg ridiculed her.

Then in 1904 her wishes were granted and Alexis was born. Alexis was born with a disease that was very uncommon during the time. The disease was inherited by his mother bloodline. The slightest bruise or scratch would cause the young boy much pain. By being so weak the young boy was not prepared to rule Russia after his father would die. There were many who questioned if the Tsar were to pass would Alexis be strong enough to let Alexis rule? Nonetheless, the Tsar was determined that Alexis, despite his handicap, would inherit the autocratic rights passed down by his father (Seth 94).

Alexis had a holy monk to help him through his disease. The monk was known as Rasputin. Once when Alexis was very ill the Tsarina?s friend, Anna Vyrubova, sent out a messenger (Mulherin 56). An hour later a tall priest, stinking of alcohol, walked in with a long ragged beard miraculously was able to get Alexis to sleep. The Romanovs were convinced that Rasputin had performed a miracle. There after Rasputin was a common visitor at the court and son became like family to the Romanovs.

The Tsar?s main objective was his family. He would spend his leisure time with his daughters, son, and the Tsarina Alexandra Feodorovna. The more that Russia?s economy was crumbling the more the Tsar would run to his family. By always spending time with his family he was not dedicated too much of his work.

The Tsar did not seem to be interested in Russia?s public affairs at all. The Tsar was able to fulfill all his duties, yet showed no compassion in his work. For instance free food, refreshment, and mugs were given out to the people of Russia after a coronation. Nicholas was poorly arranged, and at least half a million people gathered only to be crushed together. The huge masses began to push on towards the tables for their free food, causing much chaos and death. Over two thousand died at Khodynka Meadow, the site for the outdoors post-coronation festivities, and many were injured. To make matters worse, the Tsar and his wife attended an elaborate ball the very next night. Through the eyes of the people, Nicholas and Alexandra had no compassion.

The defects of the Tsar?s personal character would not have mattered so much if the ministries of Russia were able to advise him. Russia seemed to have no real government except a power hungry man. All the government was made up mostly based on the Tsar and numbers of ministries. None of the ministries had any coordination among them; the Tsar was independent and responsible for the well being of Russia. By having so much independence none of the parts of the government had any part to what he did.

In result to all the Tsar?s power the Russo-Japanese war broke out. the Japanese had destroyed the Russian Far Easters Fleet. Each defeat Russia faced it brought greed and discontent at home. Many people started to put together secret organizations against the Tsar. They wanted to establish a democratic system of government in Russia (Lionel 27).

The workers of Russia took their lead in January 1905. The workers were lead by Father Gapon. In that month of January the workers put down their tools and protested in front of the gates of the Winter Palace. Father Gapon led 30,00 singing women and man to the palace (Resnich 95). They wanted the present the Tsar with reforms, lower taxes and better working condition. The crowd were peaceful with no arms, only icons. The Tsar?s Cossacks, who were his soldiers, became alarmed and fired into the mass crowds of people. Shots hurdled across the square hitting hundreds of people and blood was spilled throughout the square. ?The march was crushed on that Bloody Sunday, but the revolutionary movement led mainly by liberal and union worker demanding a constitution gained sympathy and strength? (Resnick 97).

In response to the first revolution Tsar Nicholas II created the Duma. Each of the four classes: landowner, townspeople, industrial workers, and peasants elected delegates who in turn chose the member of the government. The Tsar still had the power to veto the Duma acts; however, the Duma?s consent was regarded for all legislation, but this rule was often disregarded in practice.

With Russian industries growing greater the economy expanded rapidly, but not as quickly as other Western European countries. Russian labor was mainly unskilled and desperately poor. ?Most Russians were peasants. Until 1861 they had been serfs; landless laborers owned by the state or the wealthy.? (Mulherin, 49) Eventually, when they were freed, a few peasants borrowed money to buy land and became burdened with debt. The others had too little land to keep them and face d starvation when the harvest failed.? (Mulherin 49)

Gradually, Russia developed a declining economy and national affairs. Between 1911 and 1913 the Balkan wars broke out. For the most part, they were confined to a certain region. On the date of June 18, 1914 a Serbian man in Sarajevo murdered the Austrian Archduke Francis Ferdinand. Austria blamed the small Slavic country of Serbia and threatened to punish her. Russia took up the cause of the little nation. Tempers flared up everywhere. Both Austria and Russia made threats within a short time Austria had declared war on Russia (Kochan 16).

The war with Germany became so corrupt with the lose of many battles. Tsar Nicholas was trying to become an exemplar left home and became Commander-in- Chief and went to the front. Although he was greatly praised by soldiers major loss demoralized the soldiers.

Since the Tsar was no longer in Russia, no one was present to take care of affairs in Russia. The Tsar left this job to the Tsarina and the Monk Rasputin. While little was going well for Russia, the decline in war effort was blamed on the Tsarina and Rasputin. The decisive action to put these people in power showed to be disastrous for Russia. The Tsarina, whose mental and physical health was breaking down, was under the influence of Rasputin. He revealed his power, advising the Tsarina to appoint the worst ministers. He even attempted to dictate to the Tsar how to run the war, proclaiming he was in direct contact with God. Without Nicholas the Russian Empire was rapidly faltering (Halliday 21).

The extended Romanov family knew something had to be done about Rasputin. Some nobles started to believe he could be a secret agent working with the Germans. Prince Yuspov invited him to his home, offering him poisoned food and wine. Rasputin ate and drank merrily and it took three hours for the cyanide to take effect. Rasputin fell into a chair and stared at Yussupov with a penetrating glare of hatred, for he must have known. An hour later, he was still alive, so Yussupov fired his pistol at Rasputin, who slumped to the floor. At dawn, Yussupov returned and kneeled down to touch the body. One of Rasputin?s eyes flickered open and his two powerful arms lunged out to grab his killer, who struggled free and ran upstairs in terror. Rasuptin was shot again, beaten with sticks, then shoved into a car and dropped into the river (Mulherin 58).

With the war in shambles, Rasputin out of the way, large amount of soldiers deserting, and the Duma doing little to satisfy the people the revolutionaries and others began to take matters in their own hands. Many of the laborers showed no enjoyment at all. Alexandra wrote to her husband about the riots but he was too far away to realize how serious they were.

Russia?s economy was dropping dramatically. Massive price rises and severs e shortages of food and fuel caused anger against the whole government. The Duma was at loss and had nothing they could do to help the people. During February of 1917, there were riots all over Petrograd. The Tsar ordered Khabolov, the general command in the capital of Petrograd, to use force against the demonstrators, but even some mutinied. The soldiers soon mixed freely with the demonstrators. Many of the protester and troops put t

Many of the protesters and troops put their hopes on the Duma. Some even urged Grand Duke Michael Alex Androvitch, brother of the Tsar to take over the government (http://netwwalk.com/~narsa/today.html).

In the end, the party leaders in the Duma formed themselves a provisional government under the premiership of Prince Lvov, and the Tsar was abdicated.

A day after the abdication, the Petrograd Soviet Workers and the Soldiers Deputies passed a decree on the arrest of Nicholas II and the other members of the Romanov Dynasty. The family had no time to make arrangements to leave the country and even if they did Nicholas and Alexandria were too emotionally distraught. The Tsar was unable to return home, but left his army (http://home.Icon/fi/~timhappa/Articly06.Html)

After his return to the family Nicholas was sent to Moscow with Alexandra and their daughter Marie to be given a trial. The destination plans of Moscow were changed to Ekaterinburg a town located in Siberia. In May the whole family was reunited with the arrival of the other. The family was held at the Ipative House the family?s place of imprisonment. Without the Tsar and his family Russia had no government.

None of the parties represented in the government at first thought of exploiting the unstable situation in attempt to claim power for them. However, the situation changed dramatically when Lenin, the leader of the Bolsheviks, returned to Russia. Once the reality of the government situation became clear to him, he was very eager to exploit the weakness of the Provisional Government. Lenin?s greatness and power was never denied making him a powerful leader of Russia. To fulfill Lenin?s hopes for Russia the whole Romanov bloodline had to be demolished.

Just after midnight on July 17 1918, after more then a year of imprisonment, the imperial family was awakened. They were told to dress and report to the basement of the Ipatiev House where they had been confined. The family was told that a photograph would be taken to suppress the growing rumors of their possible escape. Nicholas, his wife and their children were not fearful or suspicious. The family suspected nothing. (http://netwwalk.com/~narsa/today.html.). Of course it was not a photo session, but a round up of eleven victims: Nicholas and Alexandra, their children Olga, Tatiana, Marie, Anastasia, and Alexis, their servants Trupp, the valet, Demidova the maid, and Kharitonov the cook followed the family into the basement with Dr. Botkin, the family physician.

The eleven prisoners all stood in two rows, except for Alexandra and her boy Alexis who were seated in chairs. Eleven armed men entered the room while Yurovsky stood before the former Tsar and read from a piece of paper. “In view of the fact that your relatives are continuing their attack on Soviet Russia, the Ural Executive Committee has decided to execute you”(http://netwalk.com/~narsa/today.html). In utter dismay, Nicholas quickly looked at his family and then turned back to Yurovsky and said,”What? What?”(http://netwwalk.com/~narsa/today.html). “Yurovsky quickly repeated what he said, then jerked the Colt out of his pocket and shot the Tsar point-blank”(http://netwwalk.com/~narsa/today.html). Then all the gunmen opened fire, each one assigned to a specific prisoner and instructed,”to aim for the heart to avoid excessive quantities of blood”(http://netwwalk.com/~narsa/today.html.). This did not happen. Nicholas, Alexandra, Olga, Trupp, Kharitonov, and Botkin died quickly. Yurovsky shot Alexis, alive on the floor, in the ear; the remaining daughters and Demidova were still alive. “Mystified, then terrified and almost hysterical, the executioners continued firing”

(http://netwwalk.com/~narsa/today.html.). The girls were finally motionless on the floor and Demidova still survived. The men then used dull bayonets on her and she collapsed.

?The room, filled with smoke and the stench of gunpowder, became quiet. Blood was everywhere”(http://netwwalk.com/`narsa/today.html). The executioners then collected the bodies and put them in a truck for their burial. In the deep forest of Ekaterinburg the bodies were to be left in an abandoned mine shaft. At the site, the bodies were all stripped of their clothing. While stripping the daughters, the gunmen then realized why it took so long to kill the girls. From the ripped sash gleamed rows of diamonds, which had been sewn tightly together and hid the Romanov gems. They had formed an armor against the bullets. The men understood why earlier bullets in the room flew off the girls? bodies.

In the end, eighteen pounds of diamonds were collected along with a hidden stash of pearls sewn into Alexandra’s clothing. Their clothing and other items without value were burned. The men then began to strike the bodies with rifle butts. This might have been done out of anger, frustration, or maybe to make the corpses less recognizable (http://netwwalk.com/~narsa/today.html). Covered with acid, the bodies were dumped into a small mineshaft.

Many people do not know why the whole bloodline was killed off. ?One reason why was so many Romanovs were caught and killed is that hey did not abandon Russia at the first sign of trouble. Many held on to the last, according to research done by ?professor Kent Sole, of Georgia Southwestern State University? (http://home.Icon/fi/~timhappa?Article 06. Html). Another reason was because the executioners wanted the whole bloodline massacred. If there were any Romanovs left his could lead to children still in the same blood. By having everyone in the family killed there was no way of having a monarchy government.

The stories of the Russian family are greatly expressed in many forms. For example how the Tsar showed much cruelty to his people and how he no strong government. Many books and stories have been written about his fallacies. George Orwell was one of those writers who expressed the idea of the Tsar in his two novels Animal Farm and 1984.

In Animal Farm the farmer, Mr. Jones, satirizes Tsar because Mr. Jones is drunk and can not keep control of his animals. And the animals are symbolized as the proletariat. The animals get upset with Mr. Jones and eventually run him off the farm; this is similar to the Russian Revolution. Orwell?s other example is in 1984. One character of the story is Big Brother. Much like the Tsar he owned everything and did not listen to anyone. Big brother had absolute power and showed no affection towards the society. Orwell?s books portrays how many people become power mad and loose their sense of self and shows no remorse to others.

While the Romanov dynasty ended its 305-year reign in 1917, and the last Tsar and his family were executed in July 1918, the Romanov dynasty itself continued in exile. The Tsar?s effort to help the nation failed by the overthrow of his people. The Romanov dynasty had a large impacting the history of Russia. The revolutionaries set out to bring a sudden change to the government of a country, but ended up nowhere. They seeked to overthrow an existing from of government, and to replace it with one having completely different ides, purposes, methods, and ways of operation. The throw of the dynasty utterly unprepared lands of the former Russian Empire now dominated by Lenin?s Bolsheviks.

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