Analysis Of The Russian Revolution Essay, Research Paper

As the Russian revolution reached its preliminary stage class antagonism grew because of the Serfdom system put in place by the Czar, Ivan the Terrible. In order to compensate for the Czar taking power away from the nobles, the Czar increased the nobles power of their land and its occupants. By the time Catherine the Great became Czar she enjoyed virtually autocratic rule over the nobles, and the nobles had a virtually autocratic rule over the serfs, who by this time had been reduced to a state closer to slavery than to peasantry. As Russia became more industrialized, its political system experienced even greater strain. Attempts by the lower classes to gain more freedom provoked fears of anarchy, and the government remained extremely conservative. In October 1905, a general strike swept through Russia which only ended when the Czar promised a constitution, and in December 1905, in response to the suppression of the Petrograd Soviet, the Moscow Soviet organized a disastrous insurrection that the government suppressed after five days. These two examples from 1905 demonstrate the class antagonism which was occurring in Russia at the time. This was a contributing factor to the commencement of the revolution, and led to the public?s growing lack of tolerance towards their inept ruler, and the insufficiency of their government.

Another key factor of the preliminary stage in the Russian revolution was the ineptitude of the Czar Nicholas the Second. Although the Czar made many inept decisions regarding his country the most significant decision was dragging ten million peasants into World War One in order to expand his empire. This led to his country becoming unable to support its citizens with sufficient food supplies, since the farmers were sent to war. Other examples of ineptitude on the part of the Czar occurred in 1906 when the Czar dissolved the promised parliament (Duma), when it produced an anti government majority. These decisions by the Czar left the Russian people with no food, no money, and definitely no sense of security while living in their country.

The decision to involve Russia in World War One while the government was on the verge of bankruptcy, led to the majority of the Russian people being forced to starve. This occurred because of the lack of food in the country, since the majority of the farmers were off at war. This act of government inefficiency also took the women off their farms and forced them to work in textile plants to feed themselves and their families. These acts demonstrated that the Russian government was performing inefficiently and there was a clear cause for concern regarding the well being of the country, and its people without a drastic change being made.

In January 1905, Czarist troops opened fire on a peaceful demonstration of workers in St. Petersburg, and This was a clear illustration by the people that force by the Russian government would not stop them from seeking their civil rights. In fact the failure of force by the Russian government gave strength to those who were enlightening the Russian citizens. These actions by the government caused many citizens to see that they were indeed entitled to more opportunity, and a better quality of life than they were being granted by the Russian government.

By February 1917 the financial breakdown of Russia became apparent when long queues of women and boys were told that there was no longer enough bread to support the Russian people, and in fact there was practically no bread at all. The people refused to believe this, and began to riot. The police tried to stop the rioting people, but the people fought back, and the riots intensified. Many regard this as being the point at which the Russian people haphazardly began their revolt against the Czar.

During in the month of February 1917 government protests began to become more frequent and began to intensify. The Russian citizens wanted an end to the war, and bread to feed their families. After several days of demonstrations in Petrograd the government ordered troops to open fire on the demonstrators, but although there were over 160,000 troops in Petrograd, they were nearly all recent recruits. This definitely played into the hands of the revolutionaries, because these troops were not properly trained due to their lack of experience, and they did not obey orders unthinkingly. Because of this the soldiers refused to shoot down the people of Petrograd who were only asking for bread and peace. On July 3rd 1917, the demonstrators and soldiers in Petrograd demanded that the Soviet take over power of the country. As a result sporadic fighting took place between the police who were still loyal to the Czar, and the people, along with the soldiers. This was the first time that the Russian people took an actual stand for themselves against the Czarists. The financial breakdown of the country made apparent by the bread shortage, ultimately led to the increase in government protests, and the occurrence of dramatic events such as the actual beginning of the revolution in February because of public disbelief that there was a lack of bread.

In Brinton?s model of the stages of revolution the transformation from the First Stage to the Crisis Stage occurs when radicals take over control of the country. This is exactly what happened in Russia. As Lenin heard of the commencement of the revolution while he was in exile in Finland, he knew that this would be a great opportunity for him to lead the Russian people and have them follow his beliefs. Lenin was the perfect strongman to take control, and lead the radicals that have taken control of the country. He was impressed with the revolution in February which freed Russia from the Czar. Lenin took it upon himself to lead the Russian people, and to bring about a second revolution which would give control of Russia to the workers and peasants. Lenin also desired to influence all Russians to revolt in all parts of the country. During September 1917, the Bolsheviks won control of Petrograd Soviet, and the countryside peasants began seizing the land from the nobility, which reached levels of near insurrection in Tambov. In the month of October 1917 the Bolsheviks overthrew the provisional government, which was set up by the Duma?s committee as a temporary government once they felt that the Czar?s government was at an end. Shortly after the overthrow of the provisional government, the Bolsheviks gained control of Moscow in November. These events demonstrated exactly how powerful the Bolshevik?s were under their Lenin, their leader. With the arrival of Lenin to lead the Bolshevik?s the revolutionists gained strength, and numbers, which allowed them to truly control the country.

As the revolutionary?s obtained control over Russia, there was a slow return to quieter times. Aid from foreign countries helped Russia recover form the famine that had ravished the country in the past. During this time Russia started becoming a more industrialized country, because of this more goods were being produced, and the harvests became better with the new machinery made available to farmers.

With the death of Lenin, Russia was unknowingly about to become ruled by a tyrant who became a dictator like the Czar, only far more ruthless. This eventual dictator was named Joseph Stalin. Under the rule of Stalin Russia experienced great success as a country, and eventually experienced equal industrialization to the United States. Although the country was successful the Russian people lived under fear, for Stalin was well known to assassinate anyone who opposed him, and his ideas. In fact with the insertion of Stalin as the leader of Russia the people were brought back to the state that they were in before the revolution of 1917, which was being ruled by a dictator. With all of the trouble the Russian people went through to fight for their rights, they now had lost all of the freedoms they had gained with their revolt. This reinstating of a dictatorship led Russia on its way for another revolution to follow in the future.