



**CALIFORNIA CONTENT  
STANDARD 10.7.1**

## *Causes and Consequences of the Russian Revolution*

**Specific Objective:** Understand the causes and consequences of the Russian Revolution, including Lenin’s use of totalitarian means to seize and maintain control.

**Read the summaries to answer questions on the next page.**

### **The Russian Revolution**

The Russian Revolution is dated to November 1917 (October 1917 on the Russian calendar), when Bolshevik Party forces took over the government offices in Petrograd. However, the problems that led toward revolution had been developing for generations. The revolution’s consequences, too, were far-reaching—the Communist Party, which formed to lead post-revolutionary Russia, remained in power until 1991.

### **Causes**

- Widespread suffering under **autocracy**—a form of government in which one person, in this case the czar, has absolute power
- Weak leadership of **Czar Nicholas II**—clung to autocracy despite changing times
- Poor working conditions, low wages, and hazards of industrialization
- New revolutionary movements that believed a worker-run government should replace czarist rule
- Russian defeat in the Russo-Japanese War (1905), which led to rising unrest
- **Bloody Sunday**, the massacre of unarmed protestors outside the palace, in 1905
- Devastation of World War I—high casualties, economic ruin, widespread hunger
- The **March Revolution** in 1917, in which soldiers who were brought in for crowd control ultimately joined labor activists in calling “Down with the autocracy!”

### **Consequences**

- The government is taken over by the **Bolshevik Party**, led by **V. I. Lenin**; later, it will be known as the Communist Party.
- Farmland is distributed among farmers, and factories are given to workers.
- Banks are nationalized and a national council is assembled to run the economy.
- Russia pulls out of World War I, signing the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, conceding much land to Germany.
- Czarist rule ends. Nicholas II, his wife and five children are executed.
- Civil war, between Bolshevik (“red”) and anti-Bolshevik (“white”) forces, sweeps Russia from 1918 to 1920. Around 15 million die in conflict and the famine
- The Russian economy is in shambles. Industrial production drops, trade all but ceases, and skilled workers flee the country.
- Lenin asserts his control by cruel methods such as the **Gulag**, a vast and brutal network of prison camps for both criminals and political prisoners.

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Directions: Choose the letter of the *best* answer.

- 1 One factor that led to the Russian Revolution was**
  - A problems associated with industrialization.
  - B civil war between “red” and “white” forces.
  - C nationalization of the banking industry.
  - D the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.
  
- 2 Who was the leader of the Bolsheviks?**
  - A Nicholas II
  - B Karl Marx
  - C V. I. Lenin
  - D Joseph Stalin
  
- 3 After the Russian Revolution, the czar and his family were**
  - A exiled to Siberia.
  - B executed by revolutionaries.
  - C figureheads—political figures with no actual power.
  - D advisers to Russia’s first parliament.
  
- 4 The Gulag was a network of**
  - A labor activists.
  - B revolutionaries.
  - C prison camps.
  - D worker-owned factories.
  
- 5 Which event was a *direct* result of the Russian Revolution?**
  - A The Russian economy rebounded.
  - B Factory workers began to demand their rights.
  - C Russia was defeated in the Russo-Japanese War.
  - D Russia pulled out of World War I.
  
- 6 Which statement *best* describes conditions surrounding the March Revolution of 1917?**
  - A Lenin was concerned about competition from other revolutionaries.
  - B Support for revolutionary activity was increasing.
  - C Peace with Germany was considered more important than keeping territory.
  - D The czar would stop at nothing to protect the autocracy.