

The First Russian Revolution of 1905:  
Prelude, Events, Consequences, 1890-1914  
[“The Long 19<sup>th</sup> Century”]



Last Emperors



Nicholas II,  
1868/1894-1917



Alexander III,  
1845/1881-1894

"... it has come to my knowledge that during the last months there have been heard in some assemblies of the zemstvos the voices of those who have indulged in a senseless dream that the zemstvos be called upon to participate in the government of the country. I want everyone to know that I will devote all my strength to maintain, for the good of the whole nation, the principle of absolute autocracy, as firmly and as strongly as did my late lamented father." Nicholas II, May 1895

# Unrestricted Autocratic Rule

dynastic monarchy and the rational  
bureaucratic state

illegitimacy of popular  
sovereignty

agrarian conservatism and noble  
privilege

internal order and police power

imperial nationalism [“Russian”  
Empire]

Unitary state: power and economic  
wealth



Moscow, May 1895, coronation of  
Nicholas II

# Alternatives: Marxism and the Intelligentsia Tradition

## [Five Facets of Marxism]

a) All individuals are social beings. Individual human action is social, i.e. interrelational: a new-born infant seeking a mother for nourishment; a Robinson Crusoe with his man “Friday;” or man surviving in nature, which required labor with other individuals and within nature itself to transform nature into wealth..

b) Human history reflects distinct socio-economic orders in response to this challenge: slave societies; feudalism; capitalism; socialism.

c) distinct relations of production (regard feudalism and capitalism): 1) the means of production that produce wealth (arable land; machines and the factory system that generate capital); b) a class that owns the means of production (nobility; bourgeoisie); c) a class that labors and produces wealth (enslaved peasantry; industrial proletariat).

d) distinct class structures and political superstructures: absolutism, nobility, peasantry; democratic republic, bourgeoisie, proletariat; socialist republic and majority working class; communism and the classless society

e) historical materialism: unfolding of human history toward this end is inevitable: the birth, maturation, and death of each of these distinctive orders is as inevitable as life itself. The only thing more inevitable is the fact that human beings possess the wherewithal to create utopia.

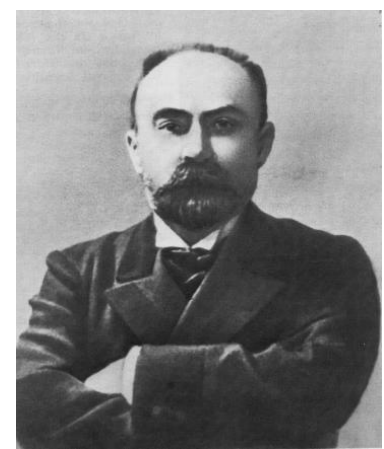
### III. Socialism and Political Freedom

“...Political freedom is not only the first step towards the achievement of socialism, but also the first principle of its existence...The party has set itself the task of uniting all oppositional elements in the country and of organizing an active force which should...attain the overthrow of autocracy and secure for everyone the rights of citizen and man. These include: representative government on the basis of universal suffrage; basic civil liberties (conscience, assembly, personal inviolability); national self-determination for all the nationalities entering into the composition of the Russian Empire.”

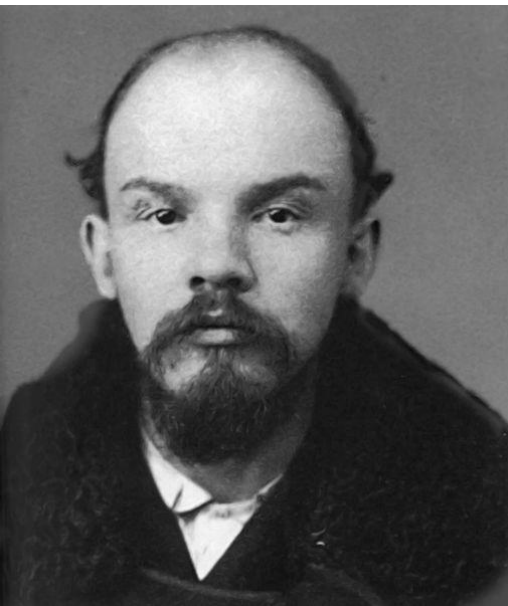
Manifesto of the Party of the People's Rights (1893-94)

# Social Democracy, Social Democrats, Origins of Bolshevism

- St Petersburg Union of Struggle for the Liberation of the Working Class, 1895
- Russian Social Democratic Worker's Party, 1898, 1903
- *Iskra* [*The Spark*]



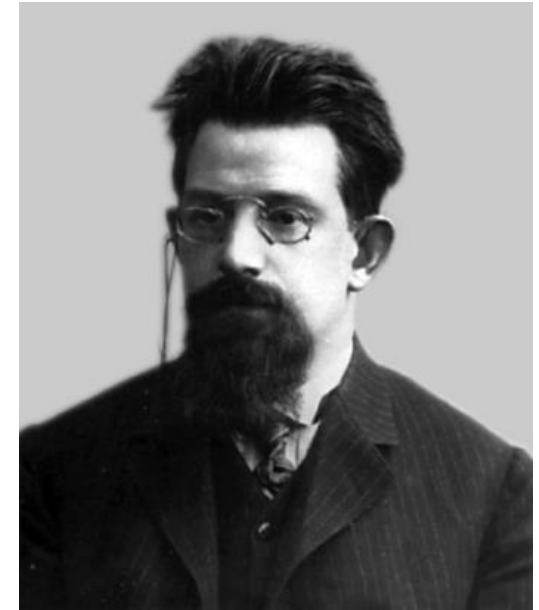
Georgii Plekhanov, 1857-1918



1895: Vladimir Ulianov (Lenin), 1870-1924 [eventual Bolshevik]



Iulii Tserderbaum (Martov), 1873-1923 [eventual Menshevik]



Peter Struve, 1870-1944 [eventual liberal nationalist]

# RSDRP/RSDWP [Russian Social Democratic Worker's Party] Social Democracy

- \*a democratic republic created by a constituent assembly
- \*universal, equal, and direct suffrage for all men and women, ages 20 or older (1904)
- \*abolition of estates and equality of all citizens
- \*freedoms of person, dwelling, religion, speech, press, assembly, union, and strike
- \*separation of church and state
- \*self-determination of all nations in the empire
- \*equality of taxation and progressive income tax
  
- \*rights of the working class: 8-hour day; 42-hour respite; prohibition of child and female labor; workplace childcare; employer-funded old-age and disability insurance; govt regulation of industrial housing and workplace; medical and sanitation conditions; criminal responsibility of employers for violations of labor law; municipal labor exchanges
  
- \*Eliminate vestiges of serfdom: redemption payments, restrictions on land sales; return of redemption payments
- \*confiscation and sale of lands of church, state, and royal family

# Liberalism

Rule of law

Inviolability of private property

fundamental civil liberties (person, speech, conscience, assembly)

representative government and constitutional monarchy

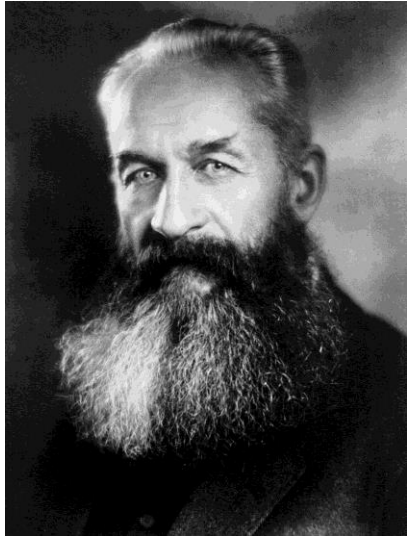
universal male suffrage

preservation or federation of empire

*Liberation [Osvobozhdenie]*, 1902, “The all-nation cause is the cultural and political liberation of Russia.”



Pavel Miliukov, 1859-1943  
Foreign Minister, First PG



Prince Georgii L'vov, 1861-1925; Prime Minister, First PG

## VI. Populism and the Party of the Socialist-Revolutionaries

- \*PSR formed 1901

- \* “the democracy (*demokratiia*)” and all “toilers” ---peasants, workers, professional-intelligenty, students

- \*democratic republic determined by a constituent assembly

- \*universal, equal, and direct suffrage for all men and women, ages 20 or older

- \*full civil and social rights

- \*revolutionary violence

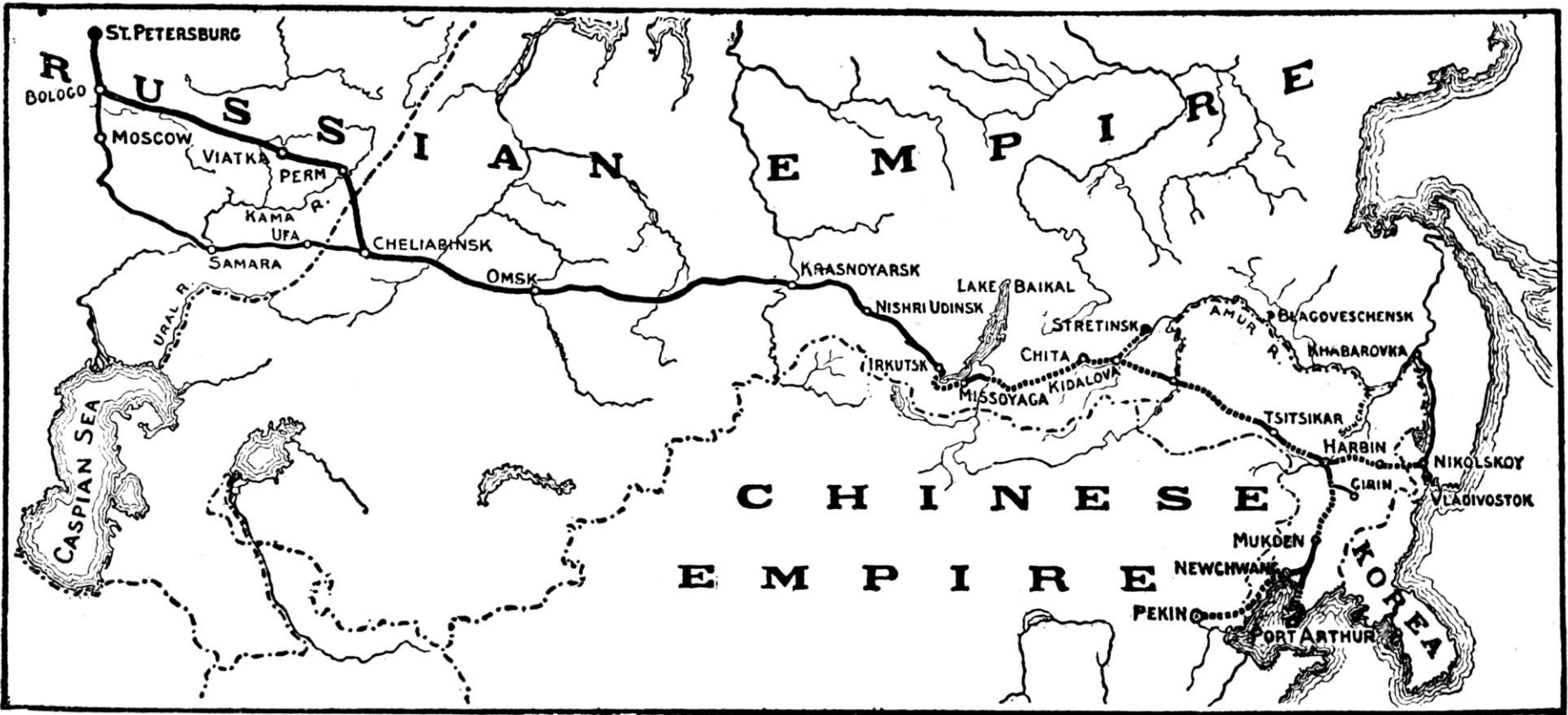
- \*municipalization of private property and redistribution of landholding in rural locales based on calculated “labor norms”



Victor Chernov, 1873-1952



# The Trans-Siberian Railway, Far Eastern Foreign Policy, and Confrontation with Japan, 1892-1904



A Map of the Trans-Siberian and Chinese Eastern Railway, 1901  
The World's Book of Knowledge and Universal Educator (Boston, MA: J. R. Spaulding & Co. ,  
1901)  
Downloaded from Maps ETC, on the web at <http://etc.usf.edu/maps> [map #06751]

# Russo-Japanese War, January 1904-August 1905



THE BATTLEGROUND IN THE FAR EAST

# Bloody Sunday, 9 January 1905

Sire,

We working men of St. Petersburg, our wives and children, and our parents, helpless, aged men and women, have come to you, O Tsar, in quest of justice and protection. We have been beggared, oppressed, over-burdened with excessive toil, treated with contumely. We are not recognized as normal human beings, but are dealt with as slaves who have to bear their bitter lot in silence...

Such is the future that confronts us, Sire, and therefore we are gathered together before your palace walls. Here we await the last means of rescue. Refuse not to help your people out of the gulf of rightlessness, misery, and ignorance. Give them a chance to accomplish their destiny. Demolish the wall between yourself and the people, and let them govern the country in conjunction with yourself. You have been sent to lead the people to happiness, but happiness is snatched from us by the officials, who leave us only sorrow and humiliation. Consider our demands attentively and without anger. They have been uttered not for evil, but for good; for our good, Sire, and yours. It is not insolence that speaks in us, but the consciousness of the general necessity of escaping from the present intolerable state of things

# Industrial Unrest (Factory Inspectorate) and Political Unrest

1895-1904 1765

Jan 1905 1989

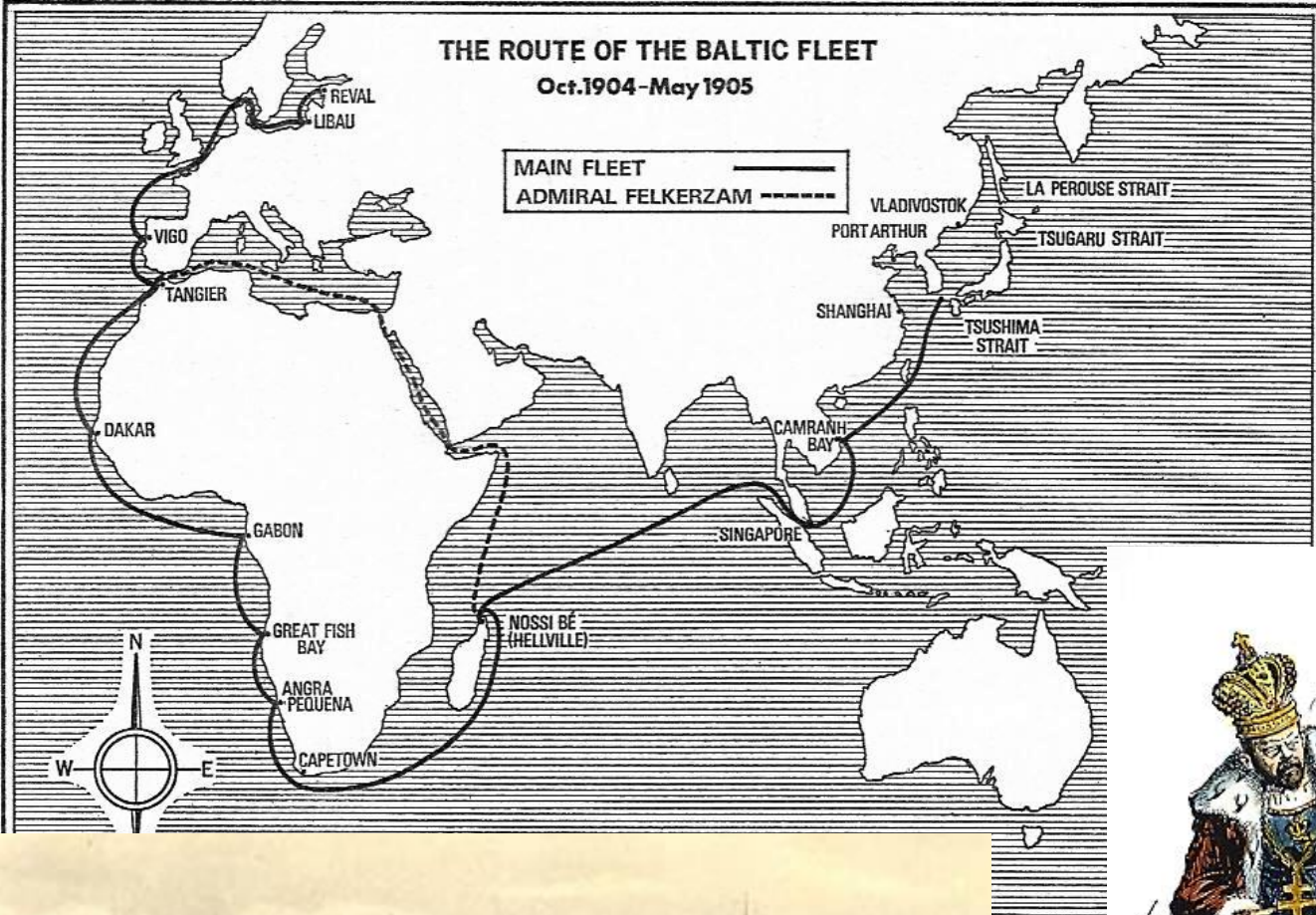
*The Problem of Social Stability in Urban Russia, 1905-1917* 377

<i>Year</i>	<i>Strikes</i>	<i>Strikers</i>	<i>Number of Strikes Listed as Political</i>	<i>Number of Strikers Listed as Political</i>
1905	13,995	2,863,173	6,024	1,082,576
1906	6,114	1,108,406	2,950	514,854
1907	3,573	740,074	2,558	521,573
1908	892	176,101	464	92,694
1909	340	64,166	50	8,863
1910	722	46,623	8	3,777
1911	466	105,110	24	8,380
1912	2,032	725,491	1,300	549,812
1913	2,404	887,096	1,034	502,442
1914	3,534	1,337,458	2,401	985,655

See Ministerstvo torgovli i promyshlennosti, *Svod otchetov fabrichnykh inspektorov za 1913 god*, and *Svod . . . za 1914, passim* (St. Petersburg, 1914; Petrograd, 1915).



“Russia Being Emancipated,” [c.1904-5]



# Battle of Tsushima and Treaty of Portsmouth, May-August 1905

36 of 45 ships lost  
6000 sailors killed



## September 1905: To Live like this any longer is impossible”

...he remembered arriving home in mid-September and finding “Russia in total upheaval, with the revolution breaking out of the underground into the open.” The government “had lost the initiative (*sila deistviia*)” as officials ceased to act or contradicted each other, ensuring that “the authority of the existing regime and its supreme standard bearer entirely was trampled.” *Smuta* “grew not by the day but by the hour, a revolution (*revoliutsiia*) that leapt out onto the streets ever more ominously, it was enticing all classes of the population.” The entire upperclass was “dissatisfied and embittered.” University and even high school youth rejected all authority “but that of those preaching the most radical revolutionary and anti-state theories.” Much of the professoriate proclaimed “ ‘enough, everything has to be overturned.’ ” Liberal oppositionists in zemstvos and municipal councils, increasingly unified in what had come to be known as the “liberation movement,” were concluding “ ‘salvation only in a constitution.’ ” The “commercial-industrial class, rich people” lent moral and financial support to such opposition. “Workers” entirely had fallen under the influence of “revolutionaries of all sorts.” “All non-Russian aliens, ...some 35% of the entire population,” saw authority weakening and concluded the time had come to realize “their dreams and desires” ---Poles for autonomy, Jews for equal rights, and all for “the elimination of those restrictions in which they were living their lives.” Peasants were beginning to seize property and act against unjust law. “Petty officials (*chinovniki*),” who daily witnessed how corruption and patronage had grown “in the reign of Nicholas II to gigantic proportions, stood against the regime they served.” The army was “agitated by all the disgraceful failures of the war,” and now, with peace, by the desire to return home. “One could say without any exaggeration,” Witte concluded, “that all Russia had been swept up in the troubles and that the general slogan was a cry from the soul: ‘To live like this any longer is impossible,’ in other words---the existing regime had to come to an end.” Zapiski, Biarritz, Sept. 1907, pp. 201-3/120 ob-121.

# The October Manifesto [17 October 1905]



“Only under the peaceful course of state life (spokonoe techenie gosudarstvennoi zhizni) is the collaborative, creative work of the government and the future elected representatives of my people possible.”  
telegram to S. Iu. Witte from Nicholas II,  
Peterhof, 13 October 1905

“I took up the administration of the empire at a time of wholesale confusion, if not madness. ... In a word, by (17 October)...a complete revolutionary nightmare in the country.”  
*Notes*, August 1912, Biarritz



# Manifesto of 17 October 1905

We, Nicholas II, By the Grace of God Emperor and Autocrat of all Russia, King of Poland, Grand Duke of Finland, etc., proclaim to all Our loyal subjects:

Rioting and disturbances in the capitals and in many localities of Our Empire fill Our heart with great and heavy grief. The well-being of the Russian Sovereign is inseparable from the well-being of the nation, and the nation's sorrow is his sorrow. The disturbances that have taken place may cause grave tension in the nation and may **threaten the integrity and unity of Our state.**

By the great vow of service as tsar We are obliged to use every resource of wisdom and of Our authority to bring a speedy end to unrest that is dangerous to Our state. **We have ordered the responsible authorities to take measures to terminate direct manifestations of disorder, lawlessness, and violence and to protect peaceful people who quietly seek to fulfill their duties.** To carry out successfully the general measures that we have conceived to restore peace to the life of the state, We believe that it is essential to **coordinate activities at the highest level of government.**

We require the government dutifully to execute our unshakeable will:

(1.) To grant to the population **the essential foundations of civil freedom, based on the principles of genuine inviolability of the person, freedom of conscience, speech, assembly and association.**

(2.) Without postponing the scheduled elections to the State Duma, to admit to **participation in the duma (insofar as possible in the short time that remains before it is scheduled to convene) of all those classes of the population that now are completely deprived of voting rights;** and to leave the further development of a general statute on elections to the future legislative order.

(3.) To establish as an unbreakable rule that **no law shall take effect without confirmation by the State Duma** and that the elected representatives of the people shall be guaranteed the opportunity to participate **in the supervision of the legality of the actions of Our appointed officials.**

We summon all loyal sons of Russia to **remember their duties toward their country, to assist in terminating the unprecedented unrest now prevailing,** and together with Us to make every effort to restore peace and tranquility to Our native land.

Given at Peterhof the 17th of October in the 1905th year of Our Lord and of Our reign the eleventh.

# Social Disorder and “Social Revolution” Summer 1905-Spring 1906

Urban Unrest

National Unrest

Rural Unrest

Industrial strikes

Baltic provinces

50% of all European counties

St. Petersburg Soviet  
Of Worker Deputies  
(December 1905)

Caucasus  
Poland  
Ukraine

2/3 of Central Agricultural  
Region and Volga provinces

Moscow Uprising  
(December 1905)

Trans-Siberian Railroad

1000 estates and 32 million R  
property damage (Dec-Feb 1905)

hooliganism

mob violence

criminality

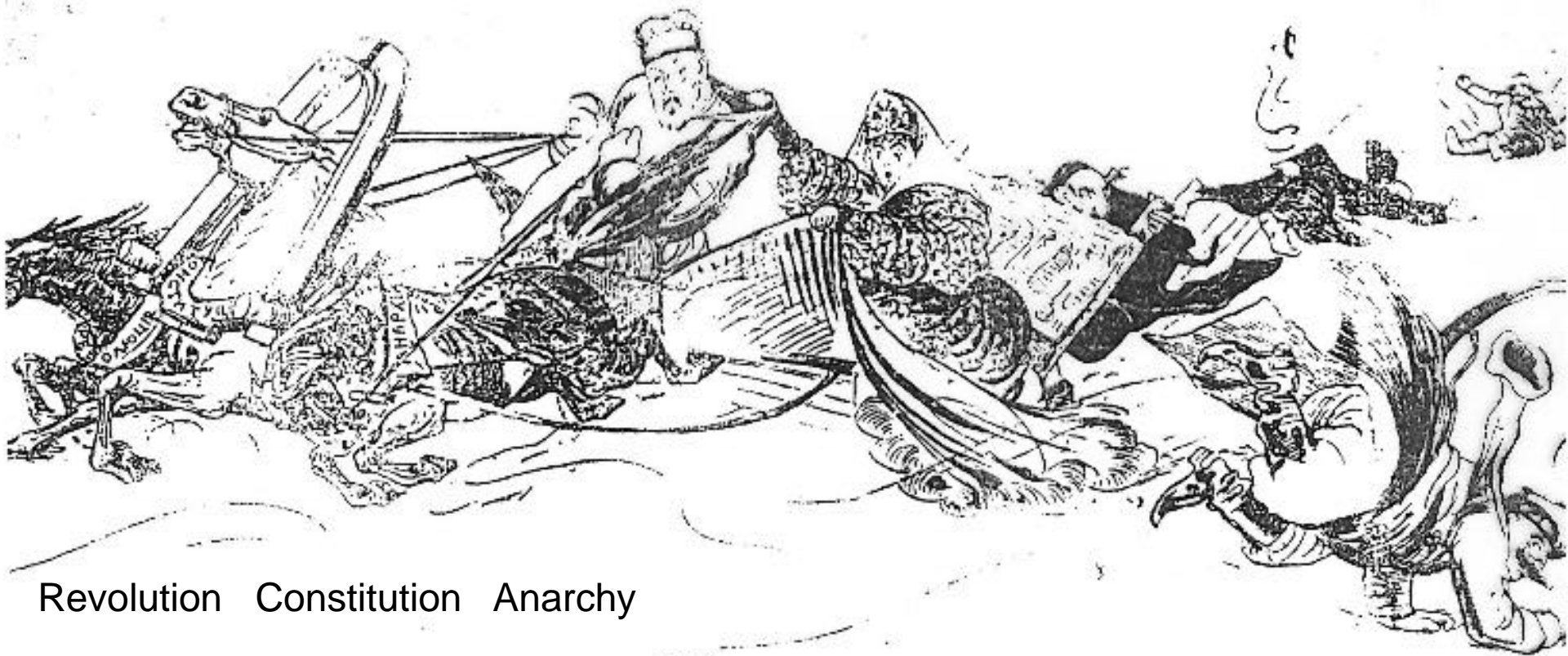
anti-semitic pogroms

arson

# Witte Ministry, Order and Reform, Oct. 1905-April 1906

10-го ноября 1905 г. — № 10852

НОВОЕ ВРЕМЯ



Revolution   Constitution   Anarchy

! ? \* \* \* \*

# Autocratic Constitutionalism: Order and Reform

## Military power

“punitive expeditions” to Baltic provinces, Moscow, Trans-Siberian Railroad  
military field courts-martial in countryside  
return of the army from Manchuria

## Extralegal governance

~70% of imperial population ruled by extraordinary statute by March 1906

## Fundamental Laws of the Russian Empire (April 1906)

Autocratic crown and empire; appointment of ministers; command of the military;  
responsibility for foreign policy; veto of legislation; article 87 allows “recess  
legislation” (law via decree during Duma recess); reformed State Council

Statute of State Duma (legislative sanction, elections, popular representation,  
annual budget, taxation, legislative initiative, review of ministerial action  
(interpellation); parliamentary immunity

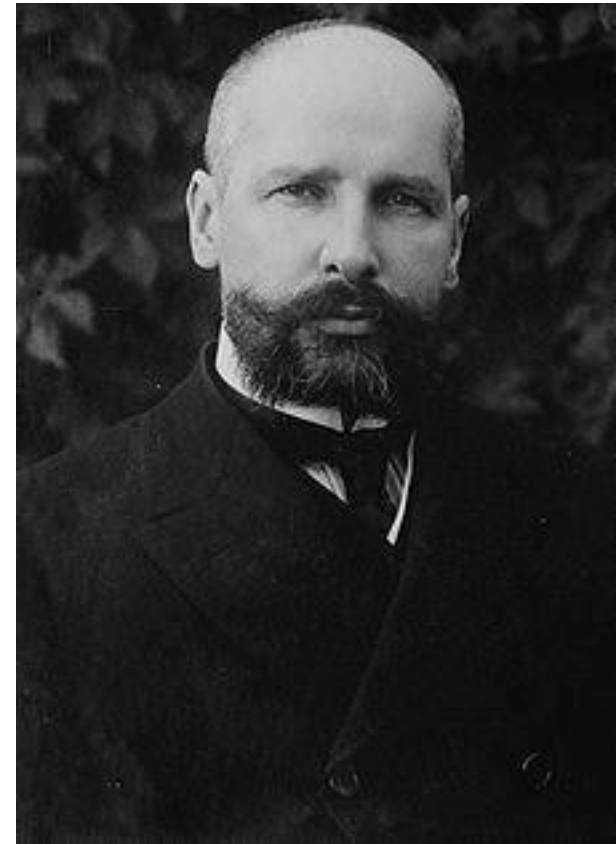
## State reform

Land reform (right of peasant households to exit the commune); property law;  
censorship law; unions and assembly; primary education; criminal liability of  
officials; military education; corporate law; trade and industry; religious  
toleration; civil administration; police

# Peter Stolypin and State Authority

Reform at a time of revolution is necessary because the shortcomings of the domestic order in large measure spawned the revolution. Solely engaging in struggle with the revolution at best eliminates the consequences and not the cause: one sore is healed, but the infected blood creates a new ulceration. Moreover, this path of reform has been solemnly proclaimed, the State Duma has been created, and there is no going back. That would be a dreadful mistake---where a government has repressed revolution (Prussia, Austria), it succeeded not exclusively by physical force, but, by relying on strength, by bravely standing in the forefront of reform. To reduce all the creativity of the government to police measures is to admit that the ruling authority is powerless. (Jan-Feb 1907)

Peter Arkaadeevich Stolypin, 1862/1906-1911



# Imperial State Duma and The 3rd of June System

First State Duma, April-July 1906

peasant center; radical land reform and expropriation of private property; Kadet plurality; July 1906 Vyborg Manifesto calling on population not to pay taxes and not to join army

Second State Duma, February-June 1907

40% SR, SD, Trudovik; 36% Kadet; 14% Octobrist-Right

Third State Duma, 1908-1912: 43% Octobrists-Right;

50% provincial noble landowners



# Reform in the Stolypin Era

## 1) Development of primary education

- Increased investment: R 9.6 million (1907) → R 47 million 1912

- Universal primary education in 1925

- Literacy rates, 20-24 years-old:

Males: 51% [1897] → 88% [1920]

Females: 22% [1897] → 47% [1920]

## 2) Increased state investment in agriculture [agronomy, veterinary science, livestock breeding, consumer and producer cooperatives]

~R 150 million annually post 1907 [war ministry, R614 million annually]

## 3) Land reform

- Cancellation of redemption payments, 1906

- Release of crown and state lands for sale through Peasant Land Bank

- Abolition of land commune's power over individual peasant landholders  
("the wager on the strong")

- Of 15 million peasant households, 15% had assumed title to their land by 1914. Of these, some 1.3 million households (10.5%) had consolidated their strip holdings into a single farmstead (8-10% of all peasant-farmed land)



# The Russian Empire on the Eve of WW I

In 1913, as the Russian Empire celebrated 300 years of Romanov rule and Europe unknowingly meandered toward the war to end all wars---was tsarist Russia becoming more or less stable---socially, culturally, politically? Was it evolving toward more “normalized,” “European,” or “western” forms of political, social, and cultural life...or was it becoming increasingly unstable?

