

Chronology of the Russian Revolution

This Chronology is provided for those new to the study of the Russian Revolution. It offers a fairly detailed time line of the events of 1917 itself but features only major historical events before and after the Revolutionary year. Events occurring in Russia are dated according to the Julian calendar; events occurring abroad are dated according to both the Julian and (Western) Gregorian calendars, until January 31 1918 when Russia adopted the Gregorian calendar.

1861: Emancipation of Serfs by Tsar Alexander II.

1870: Birth of Lenin.

1881: Assassination of Tsar by the People's Will terrorist organisation. Accession of Tsar Alexander III.

1894: Alexander III dies. Nicholas II becomes Tsar.

1898: Foundation of Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP).

1903: Second Congress of RSDLP. Split into Bolshevik and Menshevik factions.

1905

January 22: Bloody Sunday massacre of workers who march to the Winter Palace. Beginning of 1905 Revolution. Wave of mass strikes.

October 13: Formation of St.Petersburg Soviet (workers' council) . Trotsky becomes its Chair.

October 17: Tsar's Manifesto – under the heel of the Revolution Tsar promises to expand civil liberties and announces calling of first State Duma (parliament).

December 3: Soviet suppressed. Trotsky and other leaders arrested.

December 5-7: General Strike followed by armed uprising . Army remains loyal.

December 18: Uprising surrenders – about 1000 dead.

1906: Revolution recedes. 21 July Duma is dissolved by Tsar.

1907: Stolypin Coup – full scale reaction sets in.

1908-11: Russian revolutionary movement in retreat and disarray.

1912 4 April: Massacre of miners at the Lena Goldfields. Wave of mass strikes. The movement revives. Bolsheviks start to produce Pravda, daily workers' paper.

1914

July 19-August 1: First World War begins. Lenin and Bolsheviks denounce the war as imperialist.

July 22-August 4: German Social Democracy supports the War.

August 23-September 5: Lenin arrives in Berne (Switzerland).

October 12-November 4: Bolshevik deputies in the Duma arrested and sent to Siberia.

1915

August 23-26 - September 5-8: Anti-war Zimmerwald Conference.

1916

December 1915-June 1916: Lenin writes *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*.

April 11-17 - April 24-30: Anti-war Kienthal Conference.

December 16-17 - December 29-30: Assassination of Rasputin.

December 1916-February 1917: Lenin works in the Zurich library on the Marxist attitude towards the state. His notes, are gathered together under the title *Marxism on the State*.

1917

January 9: Street meetings and a printers' strike celebrate the anniversary of 'Bloody Sunday.'

February 23: Celebration of International Women's Day begins the revolution.

February 24: 200,000 workers on strike in Petrograd.

February 25: General strike in Petrograd. Shootings and arrests of revolutionists.

February 26: Duma dissolved by the Tsar. The deputies disperse but decide not to leave

town. Tens of thousands of workers in the streets.

February 27: Mutiny of the guard regiments. Formation of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies. Formation of the Provisional Committee of the Duma.

February 28: Arrest of the Tsar's Ministers. Capture of Schlüsselberg Prison. First issue of *Izvestiia*, 'The News of the Soviet.'

March 1: *Order No.1* is issued to the soldiers. Formation of the Soldiers' Section of the Soviet. First session of the Moscow Soviet.

March 2: The Tsar abdicates in favor of the Grand Duke Mikhail. The provisional government is formed by the Provisional Committee of the Duma, with the support of the soviet and with Kerensky as minister of justice.

March 3: The Grand Duke Mikhail abdicates. The provisional government announces the revolution to the world by radio.

March 5: The first issue of Pravda, central organ of the Bolshevik Party.

March 6: The provisional government declares an amnesty for political prisoners.

March 8: The Tsar arrested at Moghilev.

March 23: Funeral of martyrs of the revolution.

March 29: All-Russian Conference of the Soviets.

March 28-April 4: All-Russian Conference of the Bolshevik Party.

April 3: Lenin, Zinoviev, and the other Bolsheviks arrive from Switzerland.

April 4: Lenin's *April Theses* outlining his policy of proletarian revolution.

April 15: Foreign Minister Miliukov sends a note to the allies promising war to victory on the old terms.

April 20: Armed demonstrations of protest against the note of Miliukov – the 'April Days.'

April 24-29: The Seventh (April) All-Russian Conference of the Bolsheviks.

May 1: The Petrograd Soviet votes for a coalition government.

May 2: Miliukov resigns.

May 4: Trotsky arrives from America seconding the policies of Lenin.

May 5: A coalition government is organized with Kerensky as minister of war.

May 17: The Kronstadt Soviet declares itself the sole governing power in Kronstadt.

June 3: First All-Russian Congress of Soviets.

June 18: Russian offensive in Galicia begins. Mass meetings in Petrograd organized by the Soviet turn into pro-Bolshevik demonstrations.

July 3-4: Violent anti-government demonstrations in Petrograd.

July 5: Arrest of Bolshevik leaders ordered.

July 7: Lenin goes into hiding.

July 8: Prince Lvov resigns; Kerensky appointed head of an interim government.

July 16: General Kornilov appointed commander in chief of the Russian Army.

July 23: Trotsky arrested by the provisional government.

July 24: Kerensky forms a new coalition government.

August 20: Bolshevik success in Petrograd municipal elections.

August-September: Lenin writes *The State and Revolution*.

August 27-30: Abortive counter-revolutionary putsch led by General Kornilov.

September 1: The Petrograd Soviet carries a Bolshevik motion.

September 4: Trotsky freed on bail.

September 5: The Moscow Soviet carries a Bolshevik motion.

September 9: The leaders of the Petrograd Soviet go over to Bolshevism.

September 15: The Central Committee discuss Lenin's letters *The Bolsheviks must assume power* and *Marrism and insurrection*.

September 24: Kerensky forms a third and last coalition government. Bolshevik victory in the Moscow municipal elections.

End of September-October 1: Lenin writes *Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?*

October 9: Formation of Military Revolutionary Committee of the Petrograd Soviet.

October 10: Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party declares for an armed insurrection.

October 15: The soldiers' section of the Petrograd Soviet votes to transfer all military authority from headquarters to a Military Revolutionary Committee.

October 18: Zinoviev's and Kamenev's letter to Gorky's paper opposing the insurrection.

October 19: Lenin demands the expulsion of Zinoviev and Kamenev from the party.

October 20: The Military Revolutionary Committee begins actual preparations for insurrection.

October 22: A review of soviet forces in Petrograd under the guise of huge meetings.

October 23: The Peter and Paul fortress, last important obstacle to the success of the insurrection, declares for the Petrograd Soviet.

October 24: The provisional government issues orders for the arrest of the Military Revolutionary Committee, suppression of Bolshevik papers.

October 25: October Revolution begins (2 a.m.). Troops of the Military Revolutionary Committee close Council of the Republic (12 noon). Lenin comes out of hiding; appears at a session of the Petrograd Soviet (3 p.m.); is introduced by Trotsky. Operations against the Winter Palace (seat of the provisional government) begin (9 p.m.). Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets opens (11 p.m.) with Bolshevik majority.

October 26: Organisation of Revolutionary government – Council of People's Commissars. Decrees on Proposal of immediate Peace and Nationalisation of Land.

October 27-November 1: Kerensky's attempt at counterrevolution defeated. Kerensky flees.

November 2: Victory of Bolsheviks in Moscow.

November 13: Decree establishing workers' control of all industrial enterprises.

December 9: Beginning of peace negotiations in Brest-Litovsk.

December 14: Nationalisation of banks.

1918

January 5-6: Opening and dissolution of Constituent Assembly.

February 20: Formation of Red Army. Civil War starts to develop.

March 3: Signing of Peace of Brest-Litovsk.

March 8: Bolsheviks adopt name 'Communists'.

July 6: Rebellion of Left SRs.

August 30: Attempted assassination of Lenin by Left SR, Fanya Kaplan. Lenin wounded in neck.

November 9: Revolution breaks out in Germany.

1919

Civil War rages across Russia. Desperate economic situation – famine and disease.

March 2-7: First Congress of Communist International.

March 21: Hungarian Revolution.

August 1: Fall of Hungarian Soviet Government.

October 11: White Army attacks Petrograd.

October 22: Whites pushed back from Petrograd. Tide starts to turn in Civil War.

1920: Red Army winning Civil War. Civil War more or less ends in December.

1921 February 28-March 17 Kronstadt Rebellion.

March 21: Adoption of New Economic Policy.

1922: Lenin seriously ill. Suffers stroke.

December: Lenin launches struggle against Stalin over bureaucracy and national question.

1923 March 7: Lenin's third stroke. Loses power of speech. Zinoviev, Kamenev and Stalin assume leadership.

October: German Revolution defeated. Trotsky forms Left Opposition.

1924 January 21: Lenin dies.

1925-26: Trotsky's Left Opposition join with Zinoviev and Kamenev in United Opposition against Stalin. Debate party democracy, industrialisation and socialism in one country.

1927: Stalin victorious. Opposition expelled from CP.

1928-29: Trotsky deported to Alma Ata on Chinese border and then to Turkey. Stalin launches Five Year Plan and forced Collectivisation of Agriculture. Bukharin expelled. Stalin now absolute dictator of Russia.