

At turn of century, several groups pushed for change in Russia

- ◆ **Constitutional Democrats**
 - ◆ limit the Czar's power
 - ◆ create Constitutional Monarchy
- ◆ **Revolutionaries** - 2 types
 - ◆ Those who appealed to the peasants - **Social Revolutionaries**
 - ◆ Those who appealed to the industrial workers - **Social Democrats**
 - ◆ **Social Revolutionaries:**
 - ◆ Believed that the force to overthrow czar would come from the peasants
 - ◆ Revolution would more likely come from larger peasant class than smaller urban working class
 - ◆ Goals:
 - ◆ redistribute land fairly among peasants
 - ◆ replace czar with a democratically elected govt.
 - ◆ **Social Democrats**
 - ◆ Marxists - believed workers would overthrow ruling class - share equally in society's wealth
 - ◆ Among their leaders - **Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov** - known as **V.I. Lenin**
 - ◆ Planned to overthrow czar and start worldwide Marxist Revolution
 - ◆ Became a revolutionary after brother executed for plotting to kill Czar Alexander III *Lived Revolution 24/7 a fanatic*
- ◆ A split developed between the Social Democrats
 - ◆ Most believed Russia would have to industrialize before a Marxist revolution could happen *- Marxist doctrine recognized the necessity of initial capitalism to build wealth to distribute*
 - ◆ Lenin thought that it should happen immediately
 - ◆ Lenin and followers called **Bolsheviks** - Russian for Majority

- ◆ Main opponents called Mensheviks - Minority
 - ◆ Choice of name Bolshevik was propaganda on Lenin's part - make party seem more popular than it was
- ◆ At turn of century, most radical leaders were in prison or, like Lenin, in exile abroad.

- ◆ WWI hard on Russia - many dead from war and hunger - fuel also in short supply
 - ◆ People fed up
 - ◆ Protest over lack of bread turned into riots and strikes (Feb. 23-25) that forced Nicholas II from throne
 - ◆ Troops refused to fire on protestors - *a mutiny of the military*
 - ◆ Czar's military and political advisors told him to step down - he did on March 2, 1917
 - ◆ czar turned power over to the Duma, an elected body first formed after reforms in 1905 - a weak body
 - ◆ The Duma chose several leaders to act as a Provisional (temporary) Government
 - ◆ Most members of Duma wanted a constitution
 - ◆ Radicals ignored Duma and Prov. Govt.
 - ◆ Beyond the Duma, elected councils of workers called Soviets began forming in the cities
 - ◆ In the capital of St. Petersburg, renamed Petrograd, workers and soldiers sent representatives to the city soviet (**Moscow became capital in 1918**)
 - ◆ The soviets were more powerful locally than Provisional Govt
 - ◆ Most members belonged to one of the radical groups but they were divided
 - ◆ Made it possible for Prov. Govt. to try to run country

- Alexander Kerensky the dominant figure in Provisional Govt.
 - Kerensky a Social Revolutionary - Not a Bolshevik

From Soviet Democratic Council in Exile - late 1903

a shadow Govt.

- A member of the St. Pete Soviet - had respect of both organizations
- Big mistake of Prov. Govt. was continuing the war against Germany
 - Many in the Prov. Govt. felt duty bound to stick with Allies
 - Others feared the Germans would take St. Pete and restore Nicholas II to throne
 - There was a fear of pro-Germans taking power in Govt. Court.
 - Problem - the army was no more willing to fight and die for the Prov. Govt. than for the czar.
 - Peasant soldiers were deserting - going home to get land being redistributed to peasants
 - * sought land from gov. by Finnish part
 - show parts on map
 - Kerensky called for calm - asked them to wait until after the war
- Hoping to undermine Prov. Govt. and their ability to continue the war - Germans smuggled Lenin into Russia after 17 years of exile. Was greeted enthusiastically by crowds in St. Pete.
 - From Switzerland through Germany to Finland.
- Bolsheviks opposed to the war
 - Had little popular support but were organized and disciplined - helped them a lot
 - April - Govt. "April Theses" before Petrograd Soviet called for immediate peace without annexation of land and all power to the Soviets

During summer and fall of 1917:

- War going very badly but Prov. Govt. continued to fight
- General Lavr Kornilov tried to seize power *a conservative*
- Favored by the upper and middle classes - believed he would restore czar
- He gathered an army and moved on St. Pete
- Kornilov prevented from reaching St. Pete by railway workers who tore up the track
- Bolsheviks formed Red Guard to protect the capital.
- Workers and soldiers loyal to Bolsheviks convinced most of Kornilov's troops to join them
 - Prov. Govt. appealed to the Bols. for help.
- Bolsheviks gained popular support in St. Pete. People did not want the return of the czar or continuation of war
 - Workers of Prov. Govt. becoming afraid - Bols. being seen as protectors.

- Lenin promised **peace, land, & bread**
- Promised to pull out of war and redistribute land immediately
- By late September, most deputies in St. Pete Soviet supported Bolsheviks
- Soviets other cities also came under Bolshevik control
- By **October 24, 1917** The Provisional Govt. no longer had support - it had no loyal troops to support it.
- Bolshevik Red Guards took over government offices in a bloodless takeover
- Kerensky and his colleagues were overthrown
 - The next day, Lenin addressed the All-Russian Congress of Soviets and proclaimed "**We shall now proceed to construct the socialist order.**"