

# The Russian Revolution

-Key Concepts-

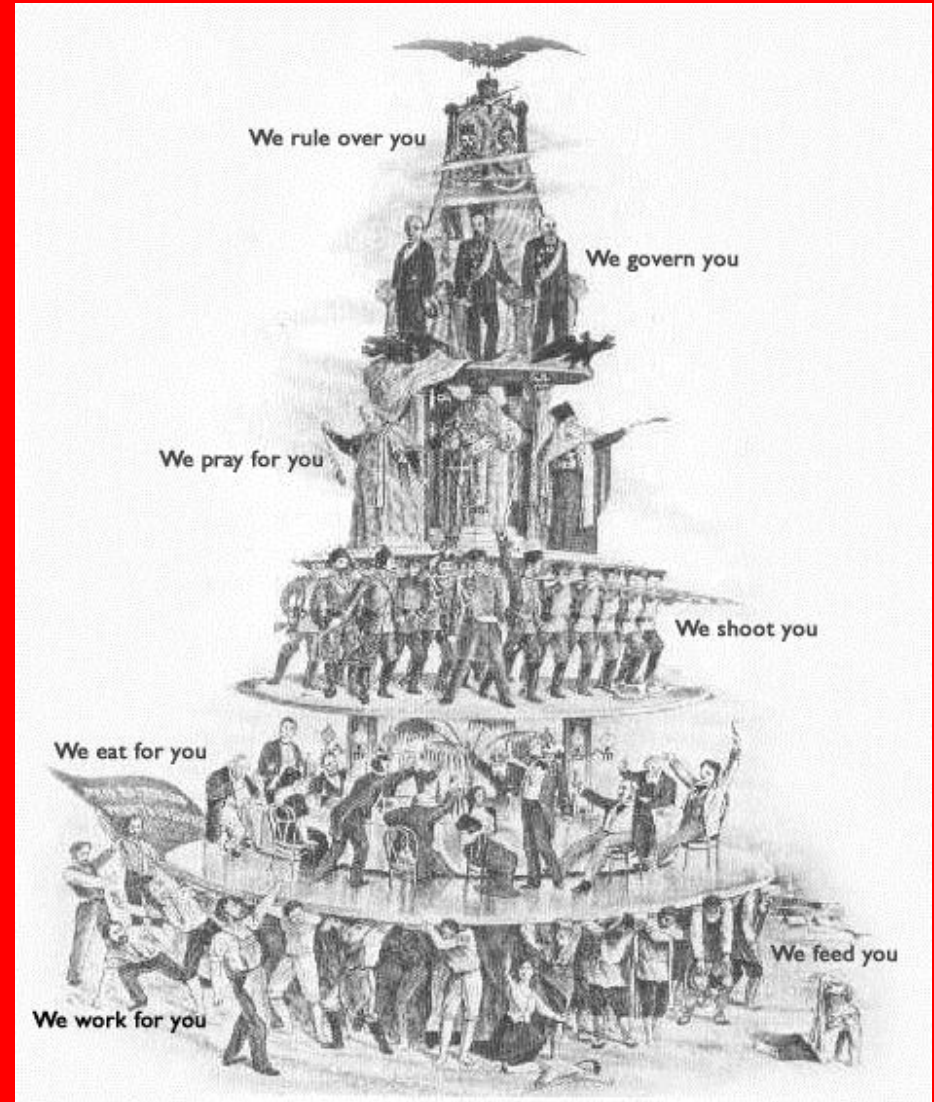
# I. Pre-Revolutionary Russia



- Only true autocracy left in Europe
- No type of representative political institutions
- Nicholas II became Tsar in 1894
- Believed he was the absolute ruler anointed by God
- Russo-Japanese War (1904)
- Revolution broke out in 1905

# Russian Society

- The period between 1860s & 1905 was one of rapid growth of capitalism and industrialization.
- Rise of an urban middle class ('bourgeoisie') and urban working class (derived from peasantry)
  - great social instability
  - a proliferation of political movements, parties, and ideologies
  - strikes, demonstrations, and disturbances.
  - Fascination with mysticism and sensual delights, because the government was hopeless, so why the heck not.



# Change in society?

- Tsars Alexander III and Nicholas II resisted calls for codifying civil rights and for institutions of political representation. There were no elections for national governance.
- On the assassination of his father in 1881, 'Temporary Regulations' were introduced, a mild form of martial law; Alexander III maintained and extended them.
- They included the government's right to:
  - fine, exile, or imprison people without a court decision
  - suspend or close newspapers or journals
  - prohibit meetings and demonstrations
- Did everything possible to limit and control the local administrative organs, such as the *zemstvo*.

# 1905 Rehearsal for 1917 Revolutions



- Tsarist government won't accept liberal ideologies
- 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese war leads to hardships and embarrassing defeat
- Liberal and radical groups press for change
- January 22, 1905, workers gather to peacefully protest economic hardships
- Tsar's troops fire on the crowd ("Bloody Sunday")

Bloody Sunday Anniversary Poster

## II. The Revolution of 1905



- The creation of a discontented working class
- Vast majority of workers concentrated in St. Petersburg and Moscow
- Help from the countryside: poor peasants
- No individual land ownership

## II. Revolution of 1905 (cont)



- Russia industrialized on the backs of the peasants
- Tremendous historic land hunger among peasants
- Real winners of the 1905 Revolution: Middle Class
  - Constitutional Democratic Party (Kadets)
  - Duma Created