

CHAPTER III

A BRIEF SKETCH OF RUSSIAN REVOLUTION IN 1917

The Russian revolution in 1917 is one of the event that left big impact for Russian and its government. This revolution happens in the midst of chaos in Russia after Germany-Russia war. There are some events that happened at that time, started from the February revolution, the October revolution, some betrayal and the government alter in Russia.

In this chapter, the writer will discuss about the history of Russian revolution in 1917 in short. The following explanation will include about the condition of Russia before revolution, the cause of revolution, the events, the condition in Russia after revolution, and the important characters in the revolution.

3.1. Russia Before Revolution

Russia in 1917 is considers as a chaos and dominated by revolution. It is considers as chaos because by 1917 the bond between the Tsar and most of the Russian people had been broken. Governmental corruption and inefficiency were rampant. Beside that, the tsar's reactionary policies, including the occasional dissolution of the Duma, or Russian parliament, the chief fruit of the 1905 revolution, had spread dissatisfaction even to moderate elements (www.britannica.com).

But it was the government's inefficient prosecution of World War I that provided the challenge the old regime could not meet. Not well equipped and poorly led, Russian armies suffered catastrophic losses in campaign after against German armies. The war made revolution inevitable in two ways: it showed Russia was no longer a military match for the nations of central and Western Europe, and it hopelessly disrupted the economy.

At that time, Russia's towns had no tradition of political organization or self government, and its nobility had similarly failed to develop a corporate sense of identity strong enough to force concessions from the throne (Fitzpatrick 15). Nicholas II, as Russia last Tsar seems failed to lead his country. His people were hungry because of the bread shortages that happen after the war. Other than that, there are some conflicts and betrayal that happen inside the palace. The dynasty fell by shaking, before the revolution even had time to approach its first problems (Trotsky 57). In short, Russia was in a situation never happened before.

3.2. The Cause of the 1917 Revolution

The 1917 revolution began in the last week of February. Just like the writer explained shortly in the chapter one, the cause of this revolution are bread shortages, strikes and locks out that happen in Russia. In addition of that, the weakness in leading the country and regime which had done by Tsar Nicholas II as the emperor of Russia make worse the situation (Fitzpatrick 44). The food shortage itself happens because of some events that happen in Russia. Those events are:

3.2.1. The Russo-Japanese War

In January 1904, the war with imperial Japan broke out in the northern Chinese region of Manchuria. The Tsar, according to tradition personally announced to the Russian people the opening of hostilities. The Tsar did so, however, from the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg rather than from the ancient walled fortress of the Kremlin in Moscow, as had been customary for Russian monarchs. Many Russians believed that this breach of protocol boded ill for the imperial war effort (Davenport 23). Initially, the public mood reflected the upbeat tenor of such pronouncements, but that soon changed. The war dragged on, month after bloody month. Russian battlefield defeats mounted, as the Japanese Army penetrated deeper into Manchuria. Accompanying the dark news from the front were food and fuel shortages at home caused by the war. Inflation ran rampant as demand for staples and consumer goods rapidly outstripped supply. Soaring prices drained the finances of ordinary Russians. Resentment grew, as did a gnawing sense that the tsar's government was unable or unwilling to remedy the situation (24).

Liberal reformers began issuing calls for immediate action in the shape of political change, and moderate socialists soon joined them. The Union of Liberation, founded in 1904, demanded nationwide elections and the creation of a representative assembly with the power to mend the economy and stop the war. Radical socialists, chief among them are the Bolsheviks, went even further and began hinting at possible revolutionary action to bring about the needed changes. When one radical in Russia assassinated the interior minister, the Bolsheviks

hailed the attack as a sign that the people were ready for an armed seizure of power by the working class. The St. Petersburg Bolsheviks, in particular, wanted to act. On December 19, 1904, the Bolshevik committee in the capital wrote to Lenin begging for more support, but Lenin did not respond.

Many Bolsheviks were determined to begin preparing for revolution, even though it was clear that the working class they intended to empower was not yet ready to rise up against the tsarist order and smash the monarchy. Segments of it, however, were ready to organize their ranks for peaceful collective action. The first one to do it was the factory workers in St. Petersburg. Using the model of a fraternal organization, a group of labourers in the Russian capital came together as the Assembly of St. Petersburg Factory Workers, under the leadership of a reformist priest, Father Georgii Gapon, to urge Nicholas II to improve the lot of working people by repairing the Russian economy and ending the war (25).

3.2.2. Bloody Sunday

Yet the war against Japan went on, and so did the failure of the Russian armies. The prospect of victory faded as utter defeat became more likely. On the home front, the anger and frustration of the Russian people rose, along with skyrocketing costs of food and fuel. The scarcity of common staples bore down on average Russians, workers and peasants alike. The flashpoint of the tensions was reached in January 1905, when 150,000 workers took to the streets, led by Father Gapon, to demand labour reforms and an end to the war. Heartened by the workers' obvious willingness to stand up for themselves, Gapon announced his intention to organize a march to the Winter Palace, where Nicholas II was tending

his pregnant wife, in order to deliver his protest document to the tsar in person (Davenport 26).

The capital's Bolshevik and Menshevik committees took lukewarm stands on Gapon's plan. The Mensheviks and their SR allies offered grudging support but little else. The Bolsheviks, with Lenin in exile, opposed the march in both theory and practice. The Bolshevik leaders ordered party members to stand down and await further instructions, despite frantic pleas for action. The Bolshevik chief himself would follow events from Switzerland, where he kept up on developments by reading local Swiss newspapers (27).

Even though abandoned by the moderate and radical factions of the Social Democratic Labour Party, but Gapon, his strikers, and their families gathered together on the afternoon of Sunday, January 9. Converging on the Winter Palace from several directions at once, Gapon's columns made for Palace Square, where they were supposed to meet at 2:00 p.m. The processions, as promised, were orderly and peaceful. But, more than that, they were reflective of the traditional attachments the Russian people still harboured to the Orthodox Church and the Tsar. As they moved toward the palace, marchers held aloft banners proclaiming their love for the tsar notwithstanding their disappointment in his government's policies. Some also carried Nicholas's portrait along with the national flag. Other workers cradled religious icons or crucifixes in their arms. From nearly every column, voices arose singing church hymns or reciting prayers. Gapon's protesters wanted the tsar to know that they advocated reform, not revolution (27).

In the heart of St. Petersburg, near the Narva Arch, a monument to Russia's triumph over Napoleon, the line of marchers with Gapon at its head was brought to a halt by tsarist troops. The commander of the soldiers instructed the workers and their families to disperse immediately or suffer the consequences for challenging the regime. The demonstrators refused to comply. Instead, they pushed forward. Under strict orders to prevent the workers from reaching the royal palace, the officer once again told them to turn back. Getting no positive response from the people or Gapon, the commander ordered his men to open fire. Eight successive volleys of rifle fire later, 10 workers lay dead in the snow and dozens ran or crawled away wounded (27).

Similar tragic scenarios played out all over St. Petersburg on Bloody Sunday. By evening, the death toll had reached 96 dead and 333 wounded, of whom 34 would later die from their injuries. Gapon himself fled to Finland, where he was murdered a year later. His petition to the tsar, so humble in its sentiment and so costly in innocent blood, was never delivered. Nicholas could only mourn when he informed that his soldiers had shot down hundreds of his loyal subjects (28).

3.2.3. The October Manifesto

The public reaction to the Bloody Sunday massacre came swiftly and was nearly unanimous in its condemnation of the shootings. A liberal newspaper editorial proclaimed, that Tsar Nicholas has revealed himself as the enemy and butcher of the people. A socialist pamphlet issued soon after the events of January

put its denunciation in slogan form: “Down with the Tsar murderer! Down with autocracy! Long live social democracy! . . . Long live the revolution!”

Nicholas, stung by the severity of the criticism directed at him personally, responded with contempt. The tsar rejected the complaints of the St. Petersburg workers and dismissed their protests as the product of agitation by “ill-intentioned leaders” who wanted to establish in the motherland a “form of government, alien to our country.” The tsar accepted no responsibility whatsoever for the state terror unleashed on the Sunday marchers (Davenports 28).

In his ignorance and denial, Nicholas failed to notice that the strikes begun by Gapon and the Putilov workers continued after the brutal suppression of January 9. Far from bringing the stoppages to an end, Bloody Sunday only served to energize those pushing for substantial reforms, and thus contributed to the spread of the strikes far beyond the confines of the St. Petersburg industrial district (28).

On May Day 1905, massive demonstrations held across the country provoked counter demonstrations and violent attacks by tsarist thugs known as the Black Hundred. A mixed bag of petty criminals, racists, religious fanatics, and heavy drinking street toughs, the Black Hundred targeted those who in any way challenged the status quo of the Church and the tsar. Encouraged by imperial bureaucrats, local officials, and Orthodox clergymen, the gangs beat and openly murdered liberals, socialists, and strikers. The Black Hundred target is anyone suspected of participating in labour actions or even giving moral support to the workers. Special hatred and violence were reserved for the minority that was

traditionally held in the lowest regard and was perennially blamed for all of Russia's ills: the Jews. Using the strikes as an excuse to vent their extreme anti-Semitism, Black Hundred mobs descended on every Jew they could find, politically active or not (29).

Reviled by the tsar and subjected to a campaign of state sanctioned terror, reformers and radicals alike prepared to move to a new level of action (29). The revolutionary tension finally broke on May 14, 1905, when news reached Russia that an imperial fleet sent to retake Port Arthur, Russia's main naval base, seized by the Japanese at the war's outset had been destroyed by the Japanese in the Tsushima Straits off the coast of Korea. Support for the tsar's government collapsed. Street fighting broke out in Kharkov, Baku, and Odessa, where 2,000 people died before martial law was declared on June 15 (30). On that same day, the sailors on the battleship *Potemkin* mutinied and commandeered their ship, steaming it toward Odessa and firing two shells at the city before eventually abandoning it near the port of Constanza in Romania and fleeing (31).

By the late summer of 1905, strikes had paralyzed nearly every aspect of social life in Russia. Violence was flaring up across the empire. Soldiers and sailors looked with increasing favour upon the actions taken by the *Potemkin's* crew, reports of sporadic refusals by enlisted men to obey orders began coming in to the imperial military headquarters. Russia stood on the verge of national chaos. Nicholas had no choice but to relent. On August 6, the Tsar announced that elections would be held the following January for representatives who would sit in a new state Duma, which was designed to serve Nicholas as a popular advisory

body. Seventeen days later, Nicholas's commissioner to the peace talks with the Japanese, who was being hosted by U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, cabled St. Petersburg that there had been a breakthrough in the negotiations. Given certain concessions on Russia's part, Japan was willing to sign a treaty ending the war. One of the main causes of the popular upheavals had been eliminated (31).

The promised elections and the Treaty of Portsmouth should have been enough to satisfy those who calling for change in Russia. Instead, the civil unrest not only continued, but worsened. Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, and SRs urged the Russian people to boycott the January elections as a sham. Furthermore, Bolsheviks told workers and students to demonstrate against any state Duma set up to rubber stamp the tsar's decisions. In the streets, the walkouts that had begun in January expanded and merged into a general strike, including nearly every category of worker from pharmacists to chocolate makers. By October, the St. Petersburg workers felt confident enough to form a representative assembly of their own to help organize and lead the nationwide labour action (31). It was christened the St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies, simply known as the Soviet, and it threatened to become a competitor for the proposed state Duma (32).

Faced with open defiance and a likely parallel government to his own, Nicholas bent once again. The Tsar issued a proclamation that acknowledged the civil rights of ordinary Russians, safeguarded political liberty, and provided for a Duma with legislative authority, albeit one that was quite limited relative to

parliaments in Western Europe. This October Manifesto is brief and rather vague, marked imperial Russia's tentative first step toward the kind of representative government and limited monarchy that reformers had imagined for decades (33). But the Bolsheviks were not satisfied. The manifesto in their thinking was nothing more than a small concession thrown to the masses to quiet them and to allow the state to survive the turmoil in the streets.

3.2.4. The First World War

By 1914, Russia could be described as being in a state of profound tension. No one could confidently predict the empire's political future. Nor could anyone at the time appreciate the full impact of the tsar's decision to enter the First World War as part of an alliance that included Great Britain, France, Italy, and eventually the United States. Opposing these Allies were the Central Powers of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey. Among these nations, powerful Germany was the most feared by the Russians. The Tsars in the past had admired Germany and had often tried to emulate German ways, but in 1914, Nicholas II wanted none of that. In order to highlight Russia's belligerence, he ordered the name of the imperial capital to be changed from the Germanic St. Petersburg to the more Slavic, Petrograd (Davenport 38).

From the newly christened Petrograd, Tsar Nicholas led Russia into its second war in just 10 years. But this would be no ordinary war for empire. It would be a total war, one that required total commitment on the part of the Russian state and the Russian people. The inherent stresses and strains of such a conflict contained enough negative power to break a fragile nation like Russia.

Nicholas was willing to gamble that his subjects would be able to endure. He was convinced that ordinary Russians loved him, were devoted to their country, and could withstand the rigors of a global war.

The tsar's confidence was soon put to the test. Russia and Germany went to war on August 1, 1914. Less than a month later, the German army inflicted a staggering defeat upon Nicholas's forces at the Battle of Dannenberg. Two weeks after that, another Russian command was crushed at the Masuria Lakes. Russia's combined losses in men and materiel for August and September 1914 topped 250,000 men and more than 650 artillery pieces. From the outset, Russia was losing the war. Yet battlefield defeats represented only one terrible reality in that first year of World War I. At home, the Russian people once again suffered through wartime shortages of food, fuel, and transport. The shift in industrial production from consumer goods to military hardware was felt as a sharp drop in the national standard of living. The demand for factory labour compounded Russia's problems by swelling the already burgeoning urban population. Workers needed to be fed, clothed, and housed as they strived to equip the tsarist armies. Bread, meat, coal, oil, and soon housing supplies, as a consequence, rapidly dwindled (39).

By mid 1915, Russia was in retreat from the German divisions and experiencing urban and rural unrest at home. Peasants endured long, hard days of labour in the fields only to have their grain seized by troops who left little or no surplus behind. Hunger became commonplace once more. The military draft also weighed heavily on a peasantry dependent upon male workers on the land. Thus,

The 23rd of February was International Woman's Day. The social-democratic circles had intended to mark this day in a general manner: by meetings, speeches, and leaflets. There is no one who thought that that it might become the first day of the revolution. Not a single organisation called for strikes on that day. The February revolution was begun from this time, overcoming the resistance of its own revolutionary organizations, the initiative being taken of their own accord by the most oppressed and downtrodden part of the proletariat, such as the women textile workers and some soldiers' wives. About 90,000 workers, men and women, were on strike that day. The fighting mood expressed itself in demonstrations, meetings, and encounters with the police (Trotsky 75).

This movement began in the Vyborg district with its large industrial establishments, then it crossed over to the St. Petersburg (now the name changed into Petrograd) side. There were no strikes or demonstrations elsewhere, according to the testimony of the secret police. On that day, detachments of troops were called in to assist the police, but there were no encounters with them that happened. A mass of women flocked to the municipal Duma demanding bread. Red banners appeared in different parts of the city, and inscriptions on them showed that the workers wanted bread, but neither autocracy nor war.

Woman's Day passed successfully, with enthusiasm and without victims. But on the following day the movement not only fails to diminish, but doubles. About a half of the industrial workers of Petrograd are on strike on the 24th of February. The workers come to the factories in the morning. Instead of going to work, they hold meetings. Then they begin processions toward the centre. New

districts and new groups of the population are drawn into the movement. The slogan “Bread!” is crowded out or obscured by louder slogans: “Down with autocracy!” “Down with the war!” Continuous demonstrations on the Nevsky first compact masses of workmen singing revolutionary songs (75). This Woman Day becomes the first day of the February revolution and becomes the starter of the long revolutions in Russia.

In the course of three days it broadened and became practically general. This is gave assurance to the masses and carried them forward. Becoming more and more aggressive, the strike merged with the demonstrations, which were bringing the revolutionary mass face to face with the troops. This raised the problem as a whole to the higher level where things are solved by force of arms. The first days brought a number of individual successes, but these were more symptomatic than substantial (Trotsky 80).

But on the 23rd and 24th demonstrations, twenty eight policemen were beaten up. The military commander of the district, General Khabalov, almost a dictator, did not resort to shooting. It is not because he is kind hearted person, but everything was provided for and marked down in advance, even the time for the shooting (77). Khabalov meticulously adhered to the plan he had worked out. On the first day, at the 23rd, the police operated alone. On the 24th, the most part of the cavalry was led into the streets, but only to work with whip and lance. The use of infantry and firearms was to depend on the further development of events (78).

On the 25th, the strike spread wider. According to the government’s figures, about 240.000 workers participated that day. The most backward layers are

following up the vanguard. The streetcars are at a stand. Business concerns are closed. In that day, students of the higher schools join the strike too.

By noon, tens of thousands of people pour to the Kazan cathedral and the surrounding streets. Attempts are made to organise street meetings, a series of armed encounters with the police occurs. Orators address the crowds around the Alexander III monument. At that time, the mounted police open fire. But the crowd fight back, shots from the crowd kill a police inspector, wound the chief of police and several other policemen. Bottles, petards and hand grenades are thrown (79).

The following days, the demonstration is in its heat. On the 26th of February, the factories were closed, and this prevented the workers to gain more strength. But this calmness does not last long. The workers gradually concentrate, and move from all suburbs to the centre. But at that time, they find the city transformed. Posses, cordons, and horsepatrols are everywhere. The approaches to the Nevsky are especially well guarded. Every now and then shots ring out from ambush. The number of people who killed and wounded grows. The police shoot from windows, through balcony doors, behind columns, and attics (82). And at 27th of February, the members of the Petrograd Committee of the Bolsheviks were seized by Khabalov (94).

Even though the initiative of demonstration were taken by the workers which half of it were women, but actually the Bolshevik involve in the demonstration too. Between those masses, one of them is a worker of Bolshevik, Kayurov, one of the leaders in the worker's districts. For the famous

revolutionary, the Bolshevik, all their activity since 1905 was a preparation for the new revolution (77). And the activities of the government, an enormous share of them, were preparations to put down the new revolution.

At that day, before the women textile workers in several factories went on strike on 23rd of February, they sent delegates to the metal workers with an appeal for support. Kayurov, the worker's leader said that the Bolsheviks are agreed about the move, and they were followed by the workers Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries. But if there is a mass strike, the workers must call everybody into the streets and take the lead. That was Kayurov's decision, and the Vyborg committee had to agree to it. Actually the idea of going into the streets had long been ripening among the workers; only at that moment nobody imagined where it would lead (74).

In middle of the chaos, the situation becomes worse because the Nicholas II himself was absent. The Tsar is visiting Army Headquarters in Mogilev. He is having gone there not because he was needed, but in flight from the Petrograd disorders (57). His response to the crisis was a laconic instruction by telegraph that the disorders should be ended immediately (Fitzpatrick 44).

Actually, tension between the Tsar and Russian people was ongoing since Bloody Sunday, the tragic scene that happened in January 1905. The number of death had reached 96 dead and 333 wounded, of whom 34 would later die from injuries. Even though the Tsar was not in the palace and did not give order to the guards to shoot the participants in demonstration, but people blame the Tsar for this incident (Davenport 27).

Before the February revolution happen, by January 1917, Tsar Nicholas II was already living in a fog of distrust and fear (41). It was happen after Rasputin, the monk who claims that he possessed the requisite skills to cure the imperial heir, Alexei, of his hemophilia was murdered by a group of men led by a distant member of the royal family. The murder happened in the late of 1916, and Rasputin has such a big credibility from the Tsar.

Nicholas reacted to the assassination by flying into a blind rage that blended into a fit of paranoia. The Tsar, withdrew into his palace and his family. He trusted no one and refused to listen to, let alone consult, his staff. Nicholas turned an especially cold shoulder to the State Duma and the reform advocates. He became convinced that they were all part of a radical plot to bring down the Romanov dynasty (40).

After some incidents that happened in Russia, on March 2, Nicholas agreed to step down from government. He even rejects the crown for his son, Alexei, as well. Then he gives it to his brother, Grand Duke Michael. On March 3, Nicholas signed the abdication documents and left the throne to the grand duke, who wisely refused it in turn. Then, Nicholas II, his wife, and their son and daughters were taken into custody shortly after the tsar relinquished the crown (45). Within a matter of hours, the centuries old Romanov dynasty had fallen.

3.3.2. The Bolshevik Revolution in October 1917

After the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II, the Provisional Government, led in its final period by Alexander Kerensky, had replaced the imperial rule of Nicholas II in 1917, but itself lasted a mere eight months. The Soviet system that he led is a

start of the October revolution in 1917 (Sakwa 4). The October revolution was effectively four revolutions rolled into one:

1. The first was the mass revolution. This revolution is when peasants sought land, the soldiers (peasants in another guise) struggled for peace, and workers strove for greater recognition in the labour process.
2. The second revolution was the counter elite revolution, in which the alienated Russian intelligentsia repudiated the absolute claims of divine rule by the monarchy and fought to apply what they considered to be more enlightened forms of rule. The Bolsheviks from this perspective were only the most ruthless and effective part of this counter-elite, challenging the bases of the old order in the name of the radical emancipation of the people and in the name of a new set of social ideals.
3. The third revolution was the national one. Poland and Finland had broken away from the Russian empire, but the Provisional Government's failure to respond to the national aspirations of Ukraine, the South Caucasian and the Central Asian republics was the reasons for its downfall.
4. The fourth revolution was what could be called the revolution of internationalism. The Russian revolution reflected a trend of thought, exemplified by Marx, which suggested that the old style nation state was redundant, and that capitalism became a global system, so social orders would gradually lose their national characteristics. From this

perspective, the revolution could just as easily have taken place in Berlin or Paris. It just happened to start in what Lenin called by “the weakest link in the imperialist chain”, in St. Petersburg and Moscow, but would according to him inevitably spread.

The inter-relationship and tension between these four levels of revolution are what make the Russian revolution so perennially fascinating. This October revolution is usually called as the Bolsheviks revolution, because the Bolshevik is the one who did the revolution.

The revolution start when on the evening of October 10, Lenin secretly met with the members of the Central Committee in a small Petrograd apartment. The time for revolution had arrived, he contended, and violence was an absolute necessity if that revolution were to be secured. After all of the upside down in the July and August, Lenin added that the masses were now prepared to follow the Bolsheviks (Davenport 74), and that the Bolsheviks should act along with the masses. Any action taken prior to the Congress might look like a betrayal of the popular trust and could cost the Bolsheviks the strong support they had gained in the soviets (73).

Moderates and conservatives in Petrograd sensed that the Bolsheviks were up to something. And everyone recognized that Kerensky was trying to monopolize the available armed forces in preparation of the dissolution of the Soviet and the arrest of its members. Fearful for its very existence, the Soviet turned to the Bolsheviks for protection and formed a joint defense force built

around the Bolshevik (76). Military Organization that was called the Military Revolutionary Committee (MRC) was tasked with preserving the security and authority of the Soviet. Even though Kerensky succeed in redeploying the sympathetic garrison, the Bolshevik that led by MRC was commanded to resist any effort to disband the Soviet and any attempt at a counterrevolution. Kerensky had unwittingly united his enemies and vastly increased Lenin's influence in the streets.

Lenin and the Bolsheviks are gaining more support from the Soviet, and the Kerensky regime's power was eroding with each passing minute. The prime minister's plea for troops resulted in the mustering of a token force consisting of 2,000 young military cadets and 200 women of the First Petrograd Women's Shock Battalion. The rest of the soldiers either refused to march or had openly defected to the Bolsheviks and the MRC. Increasingly isolated, Kerensky addressed his government and the Russian people in a rambling speech late on October 24. Lenin dismissed Kerensky's speech as the last gasp of a dying political order. He pushed the insurrection into its next phase. The Bolsheviks had no time to waste, they had to complete their takeover of the government before the Congress of Soviets met that day. If Lenin could proclaim his party to be the rulers of Russia at the very beginning of the session, the Congress would have little choice but to validate the Bolsheviks' actions (78).

At this time, the Bolsheviks almost got their victory. The Bolshevik commanded soldiers and Red Guards to seized Petrograd's rail stations and main post office. Moments later, Bolsheviks took over the capital's power transfer

station and cut electricity to all government offices and the Winter Palace. Kerensky and his administration were sealed off. Government ministers desperately sought some way to escape from Petrograd. Kerensky already had arranged to leave Petrograd, with the help of the American ambassador (79). And by the late afternoon of October 25, finally Trotsky was able to announce that the Provisional Government was no longer exist (82). Lenin now could proclaim to the world that a new Bolshevik Russia had been born.

3.4. The Bolsheviks' Somersault In Gaining Power

The Bolshevik seizure of power was followed by some events. It is started by a *New York Times* editorial comment that captured the Russian hope for change. Commenting on the political quality of Kerensky and other new leaders of post-tsarist Russia, the newspaper claimed:

“Nowhere in their country could the Russian people have found better men to lead them out of the darkness of tyranny”.

The Bolshevik have such influence in the government since 1904, and knows that their leader, Vladimir Lenin has potential, the Bolsheviks ask him which remained in Switzerland to back to Russia soon. At that time, the condition in Russia is still the same before the February revolution. Shortages of food, fuel, and clothing persisted throughout Russia, while the continuing war generated resentment among workers and soldiers. The 300,000 soldiers of the Petrograd garrison and the 30,000 sailors at Kronstadt feared that the Kerensky regime meant to prolong the fighting at the front (Davenport 48).

On July, Lenin and the Bolsheviks had long signaled their intention to replace the current leadership of the Petrograd Soviet with Bolsheviks. The Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionary, and others who opposed the Bolsheviks found this notion ludicrous. The Mensheviks, in particular, bristled at the idea. Their party had brought down the Romanovs and had successfully constructed a coalition government that included socialists, moderate reformers, and create Kadets, members of the centrist Constitutional Democratic Party (54), and the Bolsheviks had done nothing.

At the time when the Mensheviks and other Socialist Revolutionary take down the Romanov Dynasty on March, Petrograd's Bolshevik Committee did nothing but watch as the Provisional Government took control of Russia, because Lenin's strict orders. That is why the other revolutionaries oppose the Bolsheviks' idea. But, even though there are many sides that oppose the idea, the Bolsheviks still make a move that called as "July Rising".

The condition become worse and the Provisional Government used the July Rising as an excuse to paint the Bolsheviks as dangerous provocateurs and traitors, and that the Bolsheviks will do revolutionary democracy. Targeted by the press and Kerensky, the Bolsheviks soon were being attacked on the streets by people who enflamed by the hysterical rhetoric of their leaders. As prime minister, Kerensky moved with astonishing speed to eliminate the Bolsheviks while they were at their weakest. He ordered the confiscation of privately owned firearms and the disbanding of armed factions such as the Bolshevik Military Organization. Bolshevik newspapers were closed, and the party's headquarters were ransacked.

Soldiers and sailors committees were broken up, and harsh forms of military discipline were reinstated (58). The Provisional Government ordered the arrests of Bolshevik leaders Lenin, Lev Kamenev, Grigorii Zinoviev, and Leon Trotsky. Lenin and Zinoviev went into hiding to avoid capture, first at Lenin's sister's house and then once more in Finland.

By August 1917, the state authorities were dismantling the Bolshevik Party. The members were frightened, and its leadership was in disarray. The leaders that remaining in Petrograd are Joseph Stalin, Nikolai Bukharin, and Felix Dzerzhinsky. These remaining leaders presided over a political movement teetering on the edge of extinction (59).

While the Bolshevik' leader, Lenin struggled to endure his exile, the mood in Russia was rapidly shifting. Kerensky's arbitrary arrests and open persecution of the Bolsheviks came against a backdrop of continued military setbacks, economic ruin, critical shortages of basic necessities in the cities, and broken promises of land reform in the countryside. Because the government failed to redistribute land to the people who worked it, 481 peasant uprisings occurred in 1917. Deteriorating factory conditions provoked a new wave of strikes, while the imposition of harsh discipline within the ranks prompted discontent and renewed radicalism among soldiers and sailors. In short, by early August 1917, average Russians were willing to listen to the Bolsheviks again (61). The Russian think that the government should lead by the workers and people who supporting the worker, and start to give the Bolsheviks their support.

Then, the Bolsheviks decided to push forward independently until they were in a position to exercise more power in the Petrograd Soviet and in regional soviets. They still have the will to bring down the government while simultaneously maneuvering to gain a commanding role in the soviets. The first step in both directions was participation in the August Petrograd city duma elections. The Bolshevik shows in the balloting, and their candidates won 67 seats in the Duma. They are being in the second position under the radical faction of the Socialist Revolutionary, which took 75 seats. The conservative Kadets get 42 seats, and the Mensheviks came in at an embarrassing 8 seats total. This positive result encouraged Lenin to keep up the political pressure and to work more closely with Stalin, the manager of the party in its leader's absence (63). They decided that the Duma elections had given the party a new respectability and that there would be no better time to win over the Petrograd Soviet.

After experience many upside down, the Bolsheviks starting to gain its power again when General Lavr Kornilov, one of leaders in army, on August 19 quietly rearranged his troops around Petrograd and made the final decision to move against the Provisional Government. The country panicked again, and the ministers turned to the Petrograd Soviet and pleaded for an alliance. The Soviet, having been identified as a Bolshevik appendage and targeted for destruction by Kornilov, readily agreed. Together, the Soviet and the government formed the Committee for the Struggle Against the Counterrevolution. Kerensky was relieved until he learned that the Soviet's only condition in establishing the committee is armed Bolshevik participation (66).

As Petrograd's defense grew more formidable, Kornilov's revolt began to unravel. His units started to defect to the Red Guards en masse, with officers increasingly following their men in doing so. Sensing that Kornilov was becoming a liability, many of his fellow generals distanced themselves from the reactionary figure whose star was now quite obviously falling. Kornilov, by August 30, was a commander without an army and a conspirator without a plot. He soon was arrested and replaced as commander in chief by General Alekseyev. The Provisional Government had been saved, but only through the efforts of the Bolshevik Party (67). Kerensky acknowledged the Bolsheviks and ordered the release of all Bolshevik prisoners that still being held since the July arrests, including Trotsky. Kornilov's revolt elevated the Bolsheviks into the ranks of national saviors. From this time, the Bolsheviks start to get their power in Russia.

3.5. Russia After the Revolution

From the party's earliest days, Lenin and the Bolsheviks had promised Russians that a new day was coming within their lifetimes. After the February revolution and the October revolution which done by the Bolsheviks, the condition in Russia is not getting better. After Lenin's government had to beg for help from one of the world's preeminent capitalist powers, United States, Bolshevik economic promises faded completely into a dull haze of shared hardship. Russians were supposed to partake equally in the benefits of socialist modernization, and everyone would live a life of comfort and abundance. Instead, Russians suffered together through repeated crop failures, bungled food distribution schemes, and industrial mismanagement.

At that time, the Bolsheviks neither produced the material benefits they had trumpeted, nor did they bring the liberty Russians had been traditionally denied. The freedom Lenin had spoken of became meaningless before it even had been realized. Lenin's socialist state became characterized by constant surveillance and arbitrary arrests. Political critics were rounded up, given show trials, and imprisoned in one of the 315 special camps that eventually were established to hold opponents of the regime. Workers and soldiers who complained of Bolshevik excesses were ordered to be silent. An uprising of disillusioned Kronstadt sailors in 1921 was put down through the use of raw armed force.

After all of support that they gain in the revolution, it is revealed that the Bolsheviks' government does not have any different with Kerensky regime. The freedom that the Bolsheviks offer was transformed into tyranny (99). It is meant that even after all of chaos and revolutions and the changing of the leader at that time, Russian still cannot achieve the life and peace that they want.

3.6. The Main Characters in 1917 Revolution

There are some important characters that involve in the Russian revolution 1917 which made this revolution become one of the biggest revolutions. And among them, there are some famous names that become the main character which influence the revolution. Whether they are famous because of their leadership, ideology, or even tyrant government, these names do has strong bond with the 1917 Russian revolution.

3.6.2. Joseph Stalin

Joseph Stalin was born in December 18, 1879, in Gori, Georgia. His born name is Iosif Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili. He is the son of Besarion Jughashvili, a cobbler, and Ketevan Geladze, a washerwoman. At age 7, he contracted smallpox, leaving his face scarred. A few years later he was injured in a carriage accident which left arm slightly deformed. The other village children treated him cruelly, instilling in him a sense of inferiority. Because of this, Joseph began a quest for greatness and respect. He also developed a cruel streak for those who crossed him (<http://www.biography.com>).

Joseph's mother, a devout Russian Orthodox Christian, wanted him to become a priest. In 1888, she managed to enroll him in church school in Gori. Joseph did well in school, and his efforts gained him a scholarship to Tiflis Theological Seminary in 1894. A year later, Joseph came in contact with Messame Dassy, a secret organization that supported Georgian independence from Russia. Some of the members were socialists who introduced him to the writings of Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin. Joseph joined the group in 1898.

Though he excelled in seminary school, Joseph left in 1899. Joseph chose not to return home, but stayed in Tiflis, devoting his time to the revolutionary movement. For a time, he found work as a tutor and later as a clerk at the Tiflis Observatory. In 1901, he joined the Social Democratic Labor Party and worked full-time for the revolutionary movement. In 1902, he was arrested for coordinating a labor strike and exiled to Siberia, the first of his many arrests and

exiles in the fledgling years of the Russian Revolution. It was during this time that Joseph adopted the name "Stalin," that have meaning steel in Russian.

Even though the Bolsheviks have strong orator like Vladimir Lenin or an intellectual like Leon Trotsky, but Joseph Stalin excelled in the mundane operations of the revolution, calling meetings, publishing leaflets and organizing strikes and demonstrations. Besides that, Stalin had done betrayal that alters the Bolsheviks' government and Russia in 1924.

Actually Lenin, the Bolsheviks leader had warned the party to beware of one man, Joseph Stalin. It was happen when Lenin preparing Russia for the day ahead without him. Already suffering in 1922 from impaired judgment, Lenin passed over Trotsky for the role of party general secretary (Davenport 100). It was a decision that he and Russian would soon regret. The person Lenin supported at the time as party leader was Stalin. But in 1923, almost totally incapacitated and obviously dying, Lenin feared if Stalin becomes General Secretary, he has concentrated limitless power in his hands. And Lenin not certain that he will always be careful enough in use the power.

Lenin went to warn the party to against Stalin to get any more power. Lenin's old friend Bukharin sensed even better the danger posed by Stalin. He said that "Stalin will strangle us," and he warned his comrades, "He is an unprincipled intriguer who subordinates everything to his lust for power". Trotsky similarly sounded as alarm bells for Stalin's ascension to party control. Stalin's response to all this was to wait out Lenin's death. After having Lenin's body

embalmed and entombed in a manner that recalled the treatment of saints in the Orthodox Church, Stalin moved against anyone who stood between him and ultimate rule. Opponents were all purged from the party and executed. Trotsky, living in exile in Mexico since being expelled from the Communist Party after Lenin died, was assassinated in 1940 on Stalin's orders.

After that, Stalin proceeded to create his own personal empire out of the remnants of the Bolshevik Revolution. Between 1924 and 1937, he assembled a totalitarian machine operated exclusively by himself. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union became an extension of his will, his megalomania, and his paranoia. Stalin scoffed at the worldwide socialist revolution that Bolshevism had proposed, and he replaced it with the dubious notion of Socialism in One Country, as he labeled it. Stalin's Russia would isolate itself and move into the future in the direction and at the pace that Stalin chose.

In order to make sure that the transformation from the Bolshevik Revolution to a Stalinist dictatorship was completed and secured, Stalin turned to Felix Dzerzhinsky's, and later Lavrenty Beria's, secret police. Using a ruthless state organization that became the NKVD and later evolved into the Cold War KGB, Stalin swept millions of Russians into prisons and labor camps. Only the German dictator Adolf Hitler established a camp system to rival the Soviet *gulags* in their inhumane cruelty and total disregard for human dignity and justice (101). In the early 1930s, Stalin compounded the political terror he was creating with a

program of forced industrialization and farm collectivization that cost an estimated 10 million Russians their lives.

Later in the decade, in a further attempt to remake Russia in his own image, Stalin cleared the Red Army of officers who even hinted at having their own political or military views, thus substantially weakening the Russian defenses at a time when Nazi Germany was growing vastly stronger (102) . When the German armies invaded Russia in June 1941, untold numbers of Soviet soldiers paid in blood for Stalin's vanity and paranoid delusions. The courage and devotion of those who remained was enough to win the Second World War and allow Stalin to claim the credit.

Stalin died from suffering massive heart attack on March 5, 1953. He is remembered to this day as the man who helped save his nation from Nazi domination and as the mass murderer of the century, having overseen the deaths of between 8 million and 10 million of his own people.

3.6.3. Leon Trotsky

Leon Trotsky was born on November 7, 1879, in Yanovka, Ukraine. His born name is Lev Davidovich Bronstein. His parents, David and Anna Bronstein, were prosperous Jewish farmers. When he was 8 years old, Trotsky went to school in Odessa, and then moved in 1896 to Nikolayev, Ukraine, for his final year in school. While there, he became enthralled with Marxism.

In 1897, Trotsky helped found the South Russian Workers' Union. He was arrested within a year and spent two years in prison before being tried, convicted

and sent to Siberia for a four year sentence. While in prison, he met and married Alexandra Lvovna, a co- revolutionary who had also been sentenced to Siberia. While there, they had two daughters.

In 1902, after serving only two years of his sentence, Leon Trotsky escaped exile, abandoning his wife and daughters. On forged papers, he changed his name to Leon Trotsky, a name that he would use the rest of his life. He managed to make his way to London, England, where he joined the Socialist Democratic Party and met Vladimir Lenin. In 1903, Leon Trotsky married his second wife, Natalia Ivanovna. This couple had two sons.

In the Bolsheviks' party, Trotsky is the orator and one of the influence leaders in the 1917 revolution. When Lenin in his exile in Switzerland on February, Trotsky did an important role in lead the party, which made the Bolsheviks got back their power. In 1922, Lenin passed the role of the Party General Secretary over Trotsky (Davenport 100), that betrayed by Joseph Stalin right after Lenin's funeral.

When Joseph Stalin won the power struggle for Soviet leadership, Trotsky was exiled from the Soviet Union. Exile wasn't enough for Stalin, however, and he sent assassins to kill Trotsky. Trotsky was attacked on August 20, 1940 by an ice pick (<http://www.history.com>). Trotsky was taken to hospital in a coma. The doctors tried to save him by operating his brain twice, but it was failed. He died there at 7.25 p.m. the next day, in aged 60. After a funeral procession attended by huge crowds, he was buried in the garden at the house on the Avenida Viena.

