Russia 1904-1906

Russo-Japanese War

- Cause
  - China weakened → Both Russia and Japan wanted to expand
    - Manchuria, eastern China, Korea
    - Port Arthur — Ice-free harbour (very useful for Russia)
      - Manchuria
- Initial offer
  - Japan → Take Korea
  - Russia → Take Manchuria
  - But negotiations broke down
    - **Japan attacked Port Arthur in 1904**
      - jan/feb
- Reasons for Russian failure
  - Poor navy
    - Ships had to be sent from Baltic in the west
    - Slow - **took 8 months to arrive**
  - Arrogance
    - Mistakenly saw Japan as weak because it was an Asian country
    - Russia had a bigger army, but less modern + worse quality
  - Trans-Siberian railway not complete — Difficult to transport troops and equipment
  - Battle of Tsushima May 1905
    - Devastating defeat for Russia
    - **2/3 of Russian fleet destroyed**
    - Japan captured Mukden, capital of Manchuria
- Consequences
  - **Treaty of Portsmouth 1905**
    - sept
    - Humiliating for Russia
    - Japan dominant power in Korea and Manchuria
  - Japan regarded as more modern and efficient — First state in Asia to defeat a European country
  - Russia's weaknesses revealed! → Turned its international interests to the Balkans → Factor for WW1
  - **Blow to reputation of Tsarist regime**

Bloody Sunday

- Causes
  - Russo-Japanese war — Impression that Tsarist gov was incompetent — Vulnerable to foreign powers
    - Criticism by liberals
      - Wanted a reformed, more efficient gov
  - Economic
    - Poor condition of peasantry
      - Little improvement following emancipation
      - Redemption payment struggles
      - Tax increases — Witte's reforms
      - Compulsory military service
    - Poor condition of urban class
      - High rates of unemployment due to recession
      - Low wages — Real wages declined estimated 20% in this period
      - No employment rights
        - Trade unions banned
        - Police repressed protests
      - Conditions in St Petersburg and Moscow
        - Overcrowding
          - Squalid housing
          - Unhealthy environments
        - Very little medical care
        - Low standard of education
  - Liberalism
    - Some people wanted more democracy
      - Some demanded socialism
      - Middle classes
      - No legal parties allowed
    - Tsarist regime was very autocratic
      - Distanced him from population
      - Repressive police state
  - Nationalist unrest among racial groups — Resented Russification policy
    - Finns, Baltic peoples, Armenians, Georgians
  - Many different groups!
    - Peasants (want better conditions)
    - Working class/ proletariat (socialist)
    - Middle classes (liberals)
- The event
  - **January 1905**
    - Led by **Father Gapon**
    - **Non-violent** march on Winter Palace
      - St Petersburg
    - Calling out to Tsar as a saviour
      - loyalty
      - Holding up pictures of the Tsar
      - Singing "God save the Tsar!"
      - Called him "little father"
  - Demands
    - Assembly elected by universal suffrage
    - Basic civil liberties
    - Land reform
    - Fairer taxes
    - Voice for workers in how factories are run
  - Government reaction
    - Dispersed violently by Cossack soldiers
    - Estimated **130 killed** and hundreds injured
  - Public reaction
    - Blamed Tsar for repression — Before, people saw him as seperate to the bureaucratic gov officials they despised — Believed he was simply not aware of their conditions
    - More outbreaks
      - **Peasants**
        - Refused to pay rent
        - Attacked aristocrat's property — **Burned 3000 manors summer 1905**
      - Socialist
        - **Strikes**
          - Began in Moscow, rapidly spread
          - Workers organised in trade unions
          - Estimated 800,000 strikers
        - **Formation of soviets**
          - St Petersburg and Moscow
          - Demanded improved conditions for workers
          - Wider political agitation
        - **Sailors on the battleship Potemkin mutinied**
          - Inspired 1925 Sergei Eisenstein film
          - Government feared more soldiers and sailors agitation
      - Liberal
        - **Kadets**
          - Middle class
          - Wanted elected assembly — Limit tsar's powers
      - Attempted "Union of Unions" — Linking workers, peasants and liberals!
    - Disorganised
      - No central coordination
      - Geographically scattered
      - Army still loyal to the Tsar!

October Manifesto

October 1905

- Cause
  - Unrest → Nicholas II was (reluctantly) persuaded to make concessions — Witte's advice (recalled temporarily to be PM)
- The Manifesto
  - Free speech
  - Voting rights — Universal manhood suffrage
  - **Duma** (assembly)
    - dumat = to think
    - Would need to approve any laws
    - But
      - Duma could not elect gov ministers
      - Nicholas II had the right to discharge the Duma
  - Freedom of conscience — End of Russification
- Public reaction
  - Moderate liberals **"Octobrists"** 😄
    - Most liberals pacified
    - Landowning and business classes
  - Peasants 😐 — Unrest calmed by an announcement that redemption payments would be phased out 🙂
    - november
  - Workers, socialists and extreme revolutionaries eg Bolsheviks 😡
    - Felt that the manifesto was not enough
    - Some armed resistance — Suppressed by tsar's soldiers — **End of soviets!** 😞
    - Betrayed — They had played a big part in the revolution and had gained close to nothing
  - Stability seemed to return

just 6 months after

Fundamental Laws

April 1905

- What was it?
  - Terms
    - "Supreme autocratic power belongs to the tsar" - first statement
      - Ministers still apointed by the tsar
      - Tsar controlled military and foreign affairs
    - Tsar could pass laws without duma + veto their laws
    - Elected Duma was balanced by the **State Council** — Members mostly appointed by the tsar
    - No power to Duma
    - Reassertion of tsarist authority
      - Duma had no way of enforcing its decisions!
      - Police and army harassed critics — Estimate: **15,000 killed + 70,000 arrested** within a year
- What does this mean?
  - How sincere was the tsar when passing the October Manifesto?
  - Missed opportunity for modern reform
  - Factors causing 1905 revolution remained unresolved

Presented with xmind