of the League and caused its failure. When Japan invaded China, the League took much time to pass a resolution castigating the action of Japan. When the League passed this resolution, Japan withdrew from the League and hence powerless to the League became Could not maintain anything. Italy also withdrew from the peace with a League when she attacked Abyssinia. The strong hand League was silent when Hitler attacked Czechoslovakia, and when Hitler and Mussolini publicly helped General Franco in the Spanish Civil War. This inaction on the part of the League of Nations proved that the League had failed to preserve peace. The institution met a silent demise when the Second World War broke out.

The Russian Revolution

It may be remembered that a revolution had broken out in Russia while the First World War was going on. On account of the disorder and confusion due to the revolution, Russia concluded with Germany It was a great the Treaty of Brest Litovosk and withdrew from the war. This Russian Revolution is known as the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and it has very great importance. It is the greatest social revolution since the great French Revolution. It has ushered in a new order of society and state and its success and failure must be looked upon with profound interest.

Up to the end of the 17th century, Russia—the largest state in Europe was not considered cent per cent European.

Though geographically speaking Russia was very backward was situated in Europe, still she was considered half Asiatic and there was a great difference between the standards of civilization

prevailing in western Europe and Russia. In comparison to western Europe, Russia was very much backward. Russia had not strength proportional to her size and she had no place in the politics of Europe. Russia was considered the citadel of Oriental Despotism and due to this despotic nature of her administration, Russia was not considered fully European.

During the 17th century and the 18th century. Russia showed symptoms of growing consciousness. Russian tulers like Tear Poter The Some changes were introduced the Great or Tsarina Catherine tried very hard to make Russia strong. Russia consequently secured some strength and began to take part in European politics. Internally also, some changes were introduced in social and administrative affairs. In spite of these changes, Russia continued to be in the same semi-feudal state. The changes Russia remained as conservative as conducted in Russia were not in keeping before with the changing atmosphere. That is why she remained backward as before in comparison with the civilization of western Europe. So while new ideas of Nationalism and Democracy had raised storms in the hearts of the people of Europe, Russia remained as and reactionary as before. Russia had conservative important contributions in bringing about the downfall of Napoleon Bonaparte but she remained the very citadel of reaction and absolutism.

Towards the middle of the 19th century, the social condition of Russia had been very similar to that of the Middle Ages and all the defects of the feudal system were prominent. The Russian people were divided into two classes—the Zamindars or the landowning classes and the poor peasantry. The peasantry was legally bound

The feudal state of society

to give forced labour. They were heavily taxed and were subjected to various kinds of oppression. The majority of the peasants were 'Serfs'. They had no liberty of their own. Their condition had been

very miserable due to many oppressive activities of the Zamindar class. Tsar Alexander II (1856-1881) emancipated the Serfs in 1861 with the intention of improving their lot.

Emancipation of the Serfs

Uptil now, these people had no social or political status. The declaration of the Emancipation gave them these status and secured as compensation the land which they tilled while

they were Serfs. The emancipation of the Serfs had definite social, political and economic effects.

The internal condition of Russia was very much defective. The great rulers like Peter the Great or Tsarina Catherine

Administrative weakness

had devised elaborate administrative arrangements but this system of administration had fallen to decay during the time of their

successors. Corruption was rampant in every of the administration. The government posts could be sold and bought. The judiciary had become so much degenerated that just and impartial judgement became a rarity.

Over this medieval society and corrupt regime, reigned the Tsar and he was supreme in all aspects Centralised of the administration. The Tsars had estabdespotism lished a centralised despotism. The Tsars that ascended the Russian throne since the French Revolution were all despotic. Tsar Alexander I (1801-1825) had

been to some extent liberal. But his disposition could not always be understood. The next Tsar Nicholas I (1825-55) was an absolutist out and out. He had exiled all the forces of liberalism. A strong system of espionage, stern repression, severe curtailment of the opinion of the press and public and state control of education—all these made the regime of Tsar Nicholas I a veritable reign

Tsar Nicholas I and his reactionary policy of terror. The next Tsar Alexander II earned the title of 'Tsar Liberator' by emancipating the Serfs and making some other

reforms. He withdrew some of the restrictions from the press, reformed the judiciary and made some important reforms in the sphere of local governments. He created local councils called the Zemstovos and charged them with the responsibilities of local peace and order, primary educa-

Reforms of Alexander III tion and local health etc. But Tsar Alexander II was not a liberal at all—he made some reforms because they were

imperatively necessary. But the forces of reaction and absolutism again triumphed during the regime of the next Tsar Alexander III (1881-94) and Nicholas II (1894-1917) and the condition of things that prevailed during the reign of Nicholas I returned. That spelt troubles.

After the great French Revolution, the principles of nationalism and democracy profoundly animated

The Tsar took care that no liberal ideals permeates into Russia the people and nations of Europe. But Russia had set her face against all changes and she continued her absolute regime as before. The Russian Tsars took care against the infiltration of the liberal ideals of western

Europe into Russia. But some ideals and some principles

got into Russia in spite of the best efforts of the Tsars. Russia was unable to be in keeping with the progress of western Europe, yet internally she was undergoing changes. During the reigns of Tsar Alexander III and Nicholas II, an

Socialism in Russia effort was made to industrialise Russia. As industries grew up, labour problems and other effects of Industrial Revolution were

felt. With the labour problem was imported into Russia the ideals of Socialism. This idea profoundly stirred the minds of the working class people. The state and society before the outbreak of the Revolution was the state and society under a very autocratic regime on one hand and it is the history of a slow process of change on the other.

Karl Marx and his writings—The conditions of the industrial workers when the Industrial Revolution took place became miserable. The cottage industries used to employ greater number of workers which the factories did not. Due

Miserable conditions of the industrial workers to this, there was an unemployment and the factory owners employed people at a lower wages. The poor industrial worker did not get enough wages and consequently he had

to live in a very miserable condition. The industrial workers had to live in unhealthy places and in a huddled up condition. This caused the decline of their morality and health. Their sad living conditions evoked the sympathy of the humanitarians. The thinking of the humanitarians caused the evolution of socialism—an ideal of great strength. The goal of socialism had been mainly two—to save the working class people from being exploited and to improve their conditions.

But though the ideal of socialism was born to do good

to the working class, the thinkers of socialism had not been unanimous in arriving at a proper definition of it. All the socialists believe that improvement of the condition of working class and the state control over all The primary goal the factors of production are the primary aims of the socialists of socialism. If the factors of production remain in the hands of individuals, they would try to profit by exploiting the workers. That is why the socialists advocate state control over the factors of production. There are various types of socialists. The Utopian socialists dream of an ideal state of society in which there would be no exploitation. But the dream of the Utopian socialists had remained unfulfilled. Robert Owen, Saint Robert Owen and Simon, Charles Fourier etc. were the socialist others writers of repute during the early days of the socialism. Due to differences of opinion and visionary idealism, the early socialist writers could not achieve much success. But the socialism was given a new definition and put on a scientific basis by the great intellectual Karl Marx.

Karl Marx was a German and he was born in 1818. He helieved in revolutionary activities and due to this, he had to flee from Prussia to France and from France to Brussels and finally to England. Karl Marx established The Communist the Communist League for the propagation Manifesto and Das Capital— of Communism. While he was in England, "the Communism" he published the 'Communist Manifesto' in In 1867, he published his monumental book named 'Das Capital'. Das Capital is a great book on socialism. The idealism of Karl Marx was different from the writings of the earlier philosophers. Karl Marx had named it 'Communism' and his followers are known as Communists.

Marx gave a new interpretation to history. He expressed the opinion that there had been clashes between different economic interests and this clash has classes due supplied the causes of the evolution of the civilization in different periods of history New interpretation of history-clash and religion, art and culture, philosophy between classes and that all such things gave a cover to this clash. Starting from this conception that the transition of history are economic in their real significance, Karl Marx expressed this opinion that the human society is essentially divided into capitalist and working classes and clash between them on economic ground is inevitable. According to Marx. the total welfare of the working class is possible only by the destruction of the capitalist class. Therefore, he called upon the working class of the world to unite and expressed the hope that the capitalist classes would tremble at a Communistic Revolution.

The overthrow of the capitalist class and the establishment of a state in which working class people are supreme were the basic principles on which Marx based his theory.

Importance of the writings of Karl Marx He stated that there can be no improvement in the conditions of the working class people in a capitalistic set up. But this theory of Marx had been found incorrect. The

conditions of the working class people have improved vastly.

The Bible of Russian Revolution Though Marxian theory has been criticised on several grounds, still it must be said that theory of Marx has put the socialism on a new footing. The establishment of a new

order of state and society have been hinted at in the writings of Karl Marx. And if Rousseau's Contract Sociale had been

the cause of French Revolution, the writings of Karl Marx especially the Das Capital caused the Russian Revolution. Das Capital became, like the Contract Sociale, the 'Bible' of the Russian Revolutionaries.

The Russian Revolution-Its Causes

The Russian Revolution is the greatest social upheaval in the 20th century and it is ranked with the great French Revolution of 1789 in importance. The Similarity between causes and courses of the Russian Revoluthe Russian and tion have a curious similarity with the the French Revolutions French Revolution. The gross discrimination which was one of the major causes of the French Revolution became also the cause of Russian Revolution. After the French Revolution, the social and political structure of Europe had undergone changes in more or less degrees but no change was introduced in Russia. The government and administrative structure still remained the citadel of Oriental Despotism—the social structure had not seen any change. There was a very great difference between the rich and the poor. While the rich people rolled in wealth, the poor people lived in abject poverty. The rich landowning class enjoyed Sharp difference between the all the honour and privileges and they hadrich and the poor practically the monopoly of the high governmental posts. They were the owner of the bulk of the land in the country. The poor class was composed of landless peasant community, the poor artisaniclass and the emancipated Serfs who had no right. The Serfs were highly discontented because they have not gained much by the emancipation. Previously they were oppressed by

the overlord and now they were oppressed by the village Mir. So, the mountain of discontent of the poor people piled up during long centuries caused the revolutionary outburst.

The regime of the Tsars had been against all kinds of reform. Though they set their faces against all reforms and

The Tsars were against all kinds of reform changes, they could not completely resist the entry of the liberal ideals into Russia. Besides, immense changes were being made in the society and government in the rest of

Europe. However the Tsars might try, the Russian people could not be kept aloof of these changes. Like the French philosophers who prepared the ground for revolution

The Russian writers a band of Russian writers brought about a revolution in the minds of the Russian people. Leo Tolstoy Turgeniy,

Maxim Gorkey and such other writers inspired the young generation of Russian people by their writings. The educated and intelligent middle class people demanded reforms on the line of western European countries. So, the seeds of great changes were sown and the absolute regime of the Tsar faced critical situation.

Towards the end of the 19th century, the Tsars adopted the policy to industrialise Russia. A vast amount of capital

Industrialism and labour problem—the socialism of Karl Marx was taken from France and industrial projects were undertaken. With the growth of industries, some associated problems began to be felt. The problem of the working class people, the labour problems

etc. were seen. Closely following the footsteps of the labour problem came the ideal of socialism. The industrial

worker who were easily discontented due to the exploitation of the capitalist class, were easily inspired with the ideal of socialism and especially with the writings of Karl Marx.

The symptoms of awakening

With the industrial workers, the workers engaged in agriculture joined. In 1895, the industrial workers founded a party named the

officials were highly corrupt and oppressive.

Workmen's Social Democratic Party and imitating it the agricultural workers founded a party known as Social Revolutionary Party. So a movement was afoot in Russia to change her social and political structure and this movement gradually gained strength. Within a very short time. these two parties became merged and formed a single party known as the Social Democratic Party.

Like the French Government before the Revolution of 1789, the Government of Russia had been a degenerated institution. The character of the Tsars had become weakand The government had been totally they had no personality. The government degenerated

The lack of personality and power of the Tsars created confusions because all the bad effects arising out of the weak character of the despot soon manifested itself. Again. the Russian people had withstood the autocracy of the

Tsars because they thought that the Tsarism Repeated defeats would bring glory and power for Russia. of Russia But in the 19th century, Russia was severely

defeated in the Crimean War. At the outbreak of the 20th century, Russia was defeated at the hand of Japan. All these defeats, especially the defeat at the hand of Japan highly undermined the prestige of the autrocratic Tsars. absolutism had become a fully decried institution. The value of absolutism rests on the assumption that it would vigorously endeavour to maintain an active administrative machinery.

But this hope had been completely belied because with the degeneration of the administrative machinery, the Tsarism had lost much of its value. The Tsars refused to understand this. They were quite ignorant of the great changes that were taking place in the socio-political atmosphere outside Russia. They were ignorant of the great longing in the minds of the people for a change. The failure of absolutism was prominently seen when Russia was defeated time and again by Germany in the First World War and this fact helped greatly in overthrowing the reactionary regime of the Tsars from Russia.

In the 20th century, Tsar Nicholas II had been the ruler of Russia. He was a completely worthless fellow.

Nicholas II, Queen Alexandra and Rasputin—the great diorder Though he was devoid of any administrative ability and personality, he did not show any desire to discontinue the reactionary policy; rather he enthusiastically upheld

it. Tsar Nicholas II was completely under the influence of the Queen Alexandra and this fact is comparable to the case of Louis XVI and Marie Antionette on the eve of the French Revolution of 1789. Queen Alexandra on the other hand had not much intelligence. She was under the influence of a Siberian Monk named Rasputin. The weakness of the Tsar, the influence of Rasputin and the corrupt regime, etc., created a confusing and insecure atmosphere.

On this background, the Russo-Japanesse War of 1904-5 was fought and in this war Russia was defeated in land and

water. This defeat aroused lively reaction throughout Russia. There were uprisings, strike of Russian Revolution the workers and revolutionary outbursts of 1905 and its throughout the country and the uncle failura of the Tsar died at the hand of the revolutionaries. But time had not been ripe for a successful revolution and the Revolution that took place in 1905

The Russian Duma

was put down. But the Tsar Nicholas II became frightened and convened the session of Duma or the Russian Parliament. But the conservatives became majority in the new Russian

Parliament or Duma. The efforts of the Liberals to bring about reforms and changes proved unavailing due to the oppositions of the conservatives in the Duma and it was possible for Nicholas II to continue autrocratic forms of administration.

But Russia was speedily heading towards a Revolution. We have learnt that the two parties which were formed

The split in the Social Demogratic narty-the Bolsheviks and the Menshevika

became united to form a single party—the Social Democratic Party. In 1903, there was a split in the party on the question of working procedure. A section of the party advocated extreme measures for the over-

throw of the reactionary state of society and government. They were led by Comrade Lenin and they came to be known as the Bolsheviks. The other section believed in moderation and in a slow and constitutional process to bring about a change. This section was led by Comrade Kerenesky and they were known as the Mensheviks.

The Outbreak and the Courses of the Revolution

The revolutionary outbursts after the Russo-Japanese

War could not produce any lasting result because everything was not ready for the Revolution. In 1914, the First World War brokeout in Europe and

Defeat in the First World War

Russia joined this war against Austria and Germany. In this war, she secured limited

success against Austria but every time she faced the German army, she was seriously defeated—the most important of these defeats was the defeat in the battle of Tannenberg at the hands of the German general Hindenberg. These miserable defeats produced widespread reactions throughout Russia. The reactionary regime was made responsible for these defeats. In the month of March

people of the working class struck their works. Help of the army was taken to put down the riot but this army instead of putting down the riot joined them. The Prime

1917, riots broke out in the city of Petrograd and the

Revolution broke out Minister of the Russian Empire was put under arrest and the Tsar was forced by the circumstances to abdicate from the

throne. He was exiled in Siberia and there he was murdered along with his family. During this periods of revolution and unrest, revolutionary committees called the 'Soviet' were formed with the representatives of the army and the workers. The 'Soviet' was formed to lead the revolution to success and to form a popular government.

The Revolution of 1917 and the abdication of the Tsar Nicholas II completed one phase of the Revolution. But

Abdication of the Tear of reaction

though the Tsar was put to exile, the reign of reaction had not been abolised. After the abdication of the Tsar, an interim

government was formed by the members of the Duma and

Professor Milinkov became their leader. He undertook to perform some liberal changes in the government. But he

Milinkov and Kerenesky

could not solve the problem of war in which Russia was still engaged and the terrible economic depression caused by war

and other reasons. There were chaosand disorder throughout the country and everywhere the people rose against the landholders and sacked and burnt their farmhouses. During this confusion. Kerenesky and the Mensheviks captured power.

Kerenesky was in favour of continuing the war. He was able to reorganise the army and the army gained

some success. Kerenesky and his

policy-became unpopular due to the Bolshevik propaganda

He was able to carry on the administration successfully for some time. But very soon. the Russian army was again defeated by He could the Germans. not solve the vexed economic crisies. The popularity of the Kerenesky government was on the wane. Kerenesky also began to lose popularity on account

of the propaganda of the Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks were during all these periods carrying on a propaganda war against the Mensheviks. The ideal of the Bolsheviks was

Dictatorship of the Proletariate to establish a government free from the control and influence of the Bourgeois and the capitalist class. Their ideal was to set up

government based on the "Dictatorship of the Proletariate". When the Mensheviks lost popularity among the people and the army due to their propaganda, the Bolsheviks overthrew the Menshevik government and captured power in the month of November 1917. With the coming of the Bolsheviks to power the second phase of the Russian Revolution was completed.

The Bolshevik Revolution (November 1917)

The most important question before the Bolsheviks after they had captured power was the war. Russia was still engaged in the war and the government of Kerenesky had

The Bolsheviks were in favour of peace—the Treaty of Brest Litovesk continued it. The Bolsheviks were in favour of peace. They wanted to stop the war and were not in favour of diverting their energy for it. Instead of that, they wanted to consolidate all their resources

and energies for the improvement of the internal condition of their country and to consolidate their power. With this view, they concluded with Germany the Treaty of Brest-Litovosk and withdrew from the war. They had to cede to Germany many places in the Baltic region—practically all the areas conquered from the time of Tsar Peter the Great.

The second problem which confronted the Bolsheviks was the question of internal consolidation of Russia. The chaos and disorder that had set in needed To end the state to be put to an end and popular support of disorder must be drawn towards the Bolshevik regime. The idea of the Bolsheviks was to reduce the economic difference between different classes, to set up equality of all classes and to assume control of the state over all the factors of production and to distribute them equally. With this view, private ownership was abolished and the control of the state was placed over them. To earn living by working was made compul Private ownership sory. All the factors of production abolished

were nationalised. In this way, the state was reorganised on the basis of economic equality. When

private property was taken away by the state and private ownership was abolished, a section of the people rose in rebellion. But this rebellion was put down with a very strict hand. Thousands of the rebels were executed. The ex-Tsar Nicholas was murdered about this time.

But the problem of the Bolsheviks had not ended as yet. Many dangers and difficulties still confronted them. When the Bolsheviks established economic equality, they became very popular. So, it was thought that the Bolsheviks

The propagandist activities of the Bolsheviks had created uneasiness in Europe

had been able to consolidate their position. But a new danger threatened them from outside. Like the French Revolutionaries. the Russian revolutionaries were carrying out great propaganda, calling upon the people

to overthrow reactionary rulers and governments and giving assurances that in all such cases, the Russian revolutionaries would help them. The call for the spread of Socialistic Revolution had made the rulers of Europe very uneasy. Again, during the reigns of the Tsar Alexander III and Tsar Nicholas II, a vast amount of loan had been taken from outside. mainly from France, to industrialise Russia. The Bolshevik government forfeited these loans. nationalised the industries set up by the foreigners and refused to pay any compensation for them. The countries who had supplied the capital made up their mind to recover the amount by taking recourse to arms.

Army sent to recover loans Within Russia, some people were still against the revolutionary government. The

foreign governments, e.g., England, France and Japan. sent armies to help these anti-revolutionary elements within Russia. But the people of these countries did not favour

starvation.

the despatch of armies to Russia and consequently they withdrew their army. This helped the Bolsheviks very much because the anti-revolutionary forces became weak thereby. The Bolsheviks easily suppressed them established the Revolutionary Government on a firm footing.

The foreign danger was averted but a new problem revolutionary government had head: The nationalised all factors of production and abolished private ownership. When the capitalism was abolished the difference between the workers and the Problems due to owners was abolished too. The working Nationalisation loss of industrial class was empowered to run the factories. production But the workers had no experience of running industries and they mismanaged everything. Consequently the amount of production fell very heavily and this caused rise of prices and dearth of materials. The internal economy was put to great disorder. Again, there was another question. The Bolshevik government directed the peasants to hand over the excess crop to Reduction in the the state. The peasants had shown great amount of agricultural enthusiasm in plundering the properties of production the nobles. But now they were highly dissatisfied with this order of the government. When the revolutionary government put pressure upon them, the peasants caused the agricultural productions On account of this, a great famine took place in Russia in 1920-21 and a great many people died of

Under this condition, the revolutionary Bolshevik Government was forced to modify its policy. Lenin swa

Lenin's experiment with Pure Communism failed

the leader of the Bolsheviks. He had made experiments with Pure Communism. He had endeavoured to nationalise all factors of production and by so doing create an order of society in which there was to be no exploitation and no

economic difference. But this experiment with Pure Communism failed and Lenin was forced to modify his policy. He inaugurated a new policy in which private ownership was to exist in a limited sense.

The new economic policy The small factories were restored to their owners. The peasants were allowed to

keep excess of the crop after handing over to the state a definite quantity. In trade and commerce, several relaxations were allowed and profit making in a limited scope was permitted. Even foreign capital was invited and they were guaranteed to make profit in a limited way and they were assured that they were not to be nationalised within a specified time. The new policy is famous as the New Economic Policy and it was in vogue from 1921 to 1928.

The New Economic Policy or briefly N. E. P. improved the industrial and agricultural production. But this policy created different economic classes. There were again again the poor, the moderately rich and The effects of the the wealthy peasants. To reduce the New Economic difference between these classes, the poor Policy peasants were exempted from paying taxes

in 1928 and a sliding scale of taxation was introduced in which the wealthy class had to pay more taxes and the middle class had to pay less. By this new system of taxation the equality in the economic conditions of different classes was restored to a great extent.

In 1922, under the guidance and leadership of Lenin, a new constitution for Russia was drafted. All the portions of the Empire of the Tsars were made self-governing units and each unit was to have its own Soviet.

The constitution of the U.S.S.R.

A supreme Soviet over all the units was provided for in the constitution. The new constitution made the Russian Empire a federation and it was named the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic or U.S.S.R.

The constitution so adopted recognised the Communist Party of Russia as the only political party. Only the working class was given the Franchise and Dictatorship of the Proletariate was established.

Comrade Lenin

Lenin was a born revolutionary and he was born in a family renowned for their revolutionary activities. Lenin

A great patriot and admirer of Marx was a great patriot and he was not a visionary idealist. He had a keen insight and practical sense. He was a sincere believer in the ideologies of Karl Marx. His dream was

to establish Communism but he did not hesitate to give up some portion of his ideal of Communism when the conditions of Russia forced him to do so.

Lenin was born in 1870 and his original name was Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov. From his early career, he took part in the anti-Tsarist movements while as a student. His elder

Lenin's career from his early life

Topin did not assassinate the Tsar. But

Lenin did not take the path of an anarchist as his elder brother did. He was deeply inspired by the writings of Karl Marx and engaged himself in consolidating

and unifying the movement of the working class people. He accepted the formula of Marx that clash between classes was inevitable and he organised the political party to establish socialism. This party was known at different times by different names-it finally came to be known as the Communist Party.

He unified the small Marxian groups and formed Union for the liberation of the working class people. In 1895, he was imprisoned for inciting a strike and sentenced

to four years term in jail. After securing his Leader of the release, he left Russia due to the repression of Bolsheviks the Tsar. When the Social Democratic Party underwent a split, Lenin led the Bolshevik wing of the party. Under him, the movement for uniting the working class

people began at a great pace.

Lenin was opposed to any compromise with the wealthy capitalist class and he had to strive hard to organise his

No compromise with the capitalists

party, to keep it outside the influence of the capitalists and to maintain strict discipline in the party. In 1917 he returned to Russia. made possible the Bolshevik Revolution

in November of the same year and assumed leadership of the new state. Lenin is indeed a great figure in the history of mankind and he is indeed one of the greatest figures of modern times. He died in 1924.

Trotosky and Stalin.

After Lenin's death, a fierce rivalry for leadership ensued between two of his followers. They are Stalin and Trotosky. In this struggle for Trotosky left Russia and was leadership ultimately Stalin won and assumed murdered leadership of the party and control over the