

Revolution in Russia

The Russian Revolution of 1917, which established the world's first Communist state, proved to be a defining event of the 20th century. It inspired communist movements across the world, provoked a reaction in the form of fascism and radically shaped international relations during the Cold War

FEBRUARY REVOLUTION

► Jan-Feb: Food riots and protests in capital Petrograd (St Petersburg) demand end of autocracy and of Russian participation in World War I

► Feb 26-27: Soldiers mutiny after Tsar orders use of force to quell riots

Duma (parliament) refuses Tsar's order to disband, setting up Provisional Government led by liberals and moderate socialists

Petrograd Soviet (elected council of workers and soldiers) created

► Mar 2: Tsar forced to abdicate – ending 300-year-old Romanov dynasty

BOLSHEVIK RISE

► Mar-Apr: Revolution gives rise to short-lived national unity across Russia

► Apr: Lenin returns from exile, galvanizing small Bolshevik party into action with demands for bread, land, worker control and end to war

► Jun: New government war offensive against Germany fails – troops desert en masse to join revolution

► Aug: Army chief **General Kornilov** mounts coup to restore order and crush radicals in government

Coup put down after **Red Guards** (Bolshevik militia) come to aid of government led by Prime Minister **Alexander Kerensky** (right)

► Sep: Bolsheviks gain majority in ruling committees of Petrograd and Moscow Soviets – Lenin urges Bolsheviks to seize power

OCTOBER REVOLUTION

► Oct 24-25: Bolshevik forces stage coup engineered by **Leon Trotsky** (right), chairman of Petrograd Soviet

Signalled by blank shot from cruiser Aurora, Bolsheviks assault Winter Palace – seat of government – with little resistance. Kerensky flees

► Oct 26: **Council of People's Commissars** set up with Lenin as chairman, Trotsky as foreign commissar and **Joseph Stalin** (right) as commissar of nationalities

AFTERMATH

► 1918: Russia exits World War I, giving up vast tracts of territory under humiliating **Treaty of Brest-Litovsk**

Treaty unleashes civil war between outraged anti-Bolshevik "White" Russians – backed by Western Allies – and Red Army. Bolsheviks execute Tsar and his family, fearing they will be liberated by insurgents

► 1922: Bolshevik victory brings end to civil war – conflict, disease and starvation claim around 10 million lives. Soviet Union declared

Tsar Nicholas II

Winter Palace

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin

Cruiser Aurora