

Chapter 2 SOCIALISM IN EUROPE AND THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Q1) What were the view points of the liberals?

- i) Liberals wanted a nation which tolerated all religions. Liberals also opposed the uncontrolled power of dynastic rulers. They wanted to safeguard the rights of individuals against governments.
- ii) They argued for a representative, elected parliamentary government, subject to laws interpreted by a well-trained judiciary that was independent of rulers and officials.
- iii) However, they were not 'democrats'. They did not believe in universal adult franchise, that is, the right of every citizen to vote. They felt men of property mainly should have the vote. They also did not want the vote for women.

Q2) What were the view points of the radicals?

Radicals wanted a nation in which government was based on the majority of a country's population. Many supported women's **suffragette** movements. Unlike liberals, they opposed the privileges of great landowners and wealthy factory owners. They were not against the existence of private property but disliked concentration of property in the hands of a few.

Q3) What were the view points of the conservatives?

Earlier, in the eighteenth century, conservatives had been generally opposed to the idea of change. They did not want any change in the existing system. By the nineteenth century, they accepted that some change was inevitable but believed that the past had to be respected and change had to be brought about through a slow process.

Q4) What changes did the industrialization bring to the then society?

- i) It was a time of profound social and economic changes. It was a time when new cities came up and new industrialized regions developed, railways expanded and the Industrial Revolution occurred.
- ii) Industrialization brought men, women and children to factories. Work hours were often long and wages were very low.
- iii) Unemployment was common, particularly during times of low demand for industrial goods. Housing and sanitation were problems since towns were growing rapidly.

Q5) What solutions did radicals and liberals find to the problem of the industrial society?

- i) Almost all industries were the property of individuals. Liberals and radicals themselves were often property owners and employers. Having made their wealth through trade or industrial ventures, they felt that such effort should be encouraged – that its benefits would be achieved if the workforce in the economy was healthy and citizens were educated.
- ii) Opposed to the privileges the old aristocracy had by birth, they firmly believed in the value of individual effort, labour and enterprise.
- iii) If freedom of individuals was ensured, if the poor could labour, and those with capital could operate without restraint, they believed that societies would develop.

Q6) To what changes did the socialists campaigned for? (Explain the views of Socialist on private property)

Socialists were against private property, and saw it as the root cause of all social ills of the time. Individuals owned the property that gave employment but the proprietors were concerned only with personal gain and not with the welfare of those who made the property productive. So if society as a whole rather than single individuals controlled property, more attention would be paid to collective social interests. Socialists wanted this change and campaigned for it.

Q7) What were the different visions of socialism?

- i) Some believed in the idea of cooperatives. Robert Owen (1771-1858), a leading English manufacturer, sought to build a cooperative community called New Harmony in Indiana (USA).
- ii) Other socialists felt that cooperatives could not be built on a wide scale only through individual initiative: they demanded that *governments* encourage cooperatives. In France, for instance, Louis Blanc (1813-1882) wanted the government to encourage cooperatives and replace capitalist enterprises. Large number of people voluntarily contribute to start a business for welfare of people.
- iii) Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820-1895) added other ideas to this body of arguments. Marx argued that industrial society was 'capitalist'. Capitalists owned the capital invested

in factories, and the profit of capitalists was produced by workers. The conditions of workers could not improve as long as this profit was accumulated by private capitalists. Workers had to overthrow capitalism and the rule of private property. Marx believed that to free themselves from capitalist exploitation, workers had to construct a radically socialist society where all property was socially controlled.

Q7 a) What was the second international?

By the 1870s, socialist ideas spread through Europe. To coordinate their efforts, socialists formed an international body – namely, the Second International.

Q8) What were the efforts made to support the ideas of socialism in Europe by 1870's?

- i) Workers in England and Germany began forming associations to fight for better living and working conditions. They set up funds to help members in times of distress and demanded a reduction of working hours and the right to vote.
- ii) In Germany, these associations worked closely with the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and helped it win parliamentary seats.
- iii) By 1905, socialists and trade unionists formed a Labour Party in Britain and a Socialist Party in France. However, till 1914, socialists never succeeded in forming a government in Europe.
- iv) Represented by strong figures in parliamentary politics, their ideas did shape legislation, but governments continued to be run by conservatives, liberals and radicals.

Q9) What were the political , economic and social condition in Russia by year 1914?

- i) **Political Conditions:** In 1914, Tsar Nicholas II ruled Russia and its empire. Besides the territory around Moscow, the Russian empire stretched large part of Europe and Asia. The Tsar believed in divine rights of kings. As a ruler, he did not solve the problem of the people.
- ii) **Social Conditions:** The majority religion was Russian Orthodox Christianity –but the empire also included Catholics, Protestants, Muslims and Buddhists. The non- Russian nationalities were not treated equal to that of Russian nationalities. They were not given freedom to follow their culture and language.
- iii) **Economic conditions:** Industry was found in pockets. Prominent industrial areas were St Petersburg and Moscow. Craftsmen undertook much of the production, but large factories existed alongside craft workshops. Many factories were set up in the 1890s. Coal production doubled and iron and steel output quadrupled. The workers were exploited by capitalists which made their life miserable.

Q10) How were the peasants in Russia different from that of other European Countries?

- i) About 85 per cent of the Russian empire's population earned their living from agriculture. This proportion was higher than in most European countries. For instance, in France and Germany the proportion was between 40 per cent and 50%.
- ii) Like workers, peasants too were divided. They were also deeply religious. But except in a few cases they had no respect for the nobility. Nobles got their power and position through their services to the Tsar, not through local popularity. This was unlike France where, during the French Revolution in Brittany, peasants respected nobles and fought for them.
- iii) Russian peasants were different from other European peasants in another way. They pooled their land together periodically and their commune (*mir*) divided it according to the needs of individual families. Thus they became natural socialists.

Q11) How were the workers in Russia different from that of other European Countries?

- i) Workers were a divided social group. Unlike in other European countries. Workers were divided by skill. Metalworkers considered themselves aristocrats among other workers. Their occupations demanded more training and skill.
- ii) Women made up 31 per cent of the factory labour force by 1914, but they were paid less than men.

iii) Divisions among workers showed themselves in dress and manners too. Some workers formed associations to help members in times of unemployment or financial hardship but such associations were few.

Q12) How did Russian peasants become natural socialists?

Some Russian socialists felt that the Russian peasant custom of dividing land periodically made them natural socialists. So peasants, not workers, would be the main force of the revolution, and Russia could become socialist more quickly than other countries.

Q13) In what ways were social democrats and social revolutionaries different in their approach?

- i) The Socialist Revolutionary Party struggled for peasants' rights and demanded that land belonging to nobles be transferred to peasants.
- ii) Social Democrats disagreed with Socialist Revolutionaries about peasants. Lenin felt that peasants were not one united group. Some were poor and others rich, some worked as labourers while others were capitalists who employed workers. Given this 'differentiation' within them, they could not all be part of a socialist movement.

Q14) What were the events preceding the 1905 Revolution?

- i) The year 1904 was a particularly bad one for Russian workers. Prices of essential goods rose so quickly that **real wages** declined by 20 per cent.
- ii) The membership of workers associations rose dramatically. When four members of the Assembly of Russian Workers, which had been formed in 1904, were dismissed at the Putilov Iron Works, there was a call for industrial action.
- iii) Over the next few days over 110,000 workers in St Petersburg went on strike demanding a reduction in the working day to eight hours, an increase in wages and improvement in working conditions.
- iv) When the procession of workers led by Father Gapon reached the Winter Palace it was attacked by the police and the Cossacks. Over 100 workers were killed and about 300 wounded. The incident, known as Bloody Sunday, started a series of events that became known as the 1905 Revolution.
- v) Strikes took place all over the country and universities closed down when student bodies staged walkouts, complaining about the lack of civil liberties. Lawyers, doctors, engineers and other middle-class workers established the Union of Unions and demanded a constituent assembly.

Q15) What was the Bloody Sunday?

When the procession of workers led by Father Gapon, demanding a reduction in the working day to eight hours, an increase in wages and improvement in working conditions, reached the Winter Palace it was attacked by the police and the Cossacks. Over 100 workers were killed and about 300 wounded. This incident is known as Bloody Sunday, which marked the 1905 revolution.

Q16) Explain the results of the 1905 Revolution. Or Describe any two reforms introduced by Czar Nicholas II after the 1905 Revolution.

- i) During the 1905 Revolution, the Tsar allowed the creation of an elected consultative Parliament or Duma. For a brief while during the revolution, there existed a large number of trade unions and factory committees made up of factory workers.
- ii) The Tsar dismissed the first Duma within 75 days and the re-elected second Duma within three months. He did not want any questioning of his authority or any reduction in his power.
- iii) He changed the voting laws and packed the third Duma with conservative politicians. Liberals and revolutionaries were kept out.

Q17) What were the conditions in Russia during the First World War?

- i) In Russia, the war was initially popular and people rallied around Tsar Nicholas II. As the war continued, though, the Tsar refused to consult the main parties in the Duma. Support wore thin. Anti-German sentiments ran high, as can be seen in the renaming of St Petersburg – a German name – as Petrograd.
- ii) Russia's armies lost badly in Germany and Austria between 1914 and 1916.

iii) As they retreated, the Russian army destroyed crops and buildings to prevent the enemy from being able to live off the land. The destruction of crops and buildings led to over 3 million refugees in Russia.

v) The war also had a severe impact on industry. Russia's own industries were few in number and the country was cut off from other suppliers of industrial goods by German control of the Baltic Sea.

vi) Industrial equipment disintegrated more rapidly in Russia than elsewhere in Europe. By 1916, railway lines began to break down. Able-bodied men were called up to the war. As a result, there were labour shortages and small workshops producing essentials were shut down.

vii) Large supplies of grain were sent to feed the army. For the people in the cities, bread and flour became scarce. By the winter of 1916, riots at bread shops were common.

What was the impact of First World War on Russian industries?

(Answer points v, vi, and vii above.)

Q18) What are the events that led to the collapse of Tsarist autocracy in 1917?

i) In the winter of 1917, conditions in the capital, Petrograd, were grim. In February 1917, food shortages were deeply felt in the workers' quarters.

ii) On 22 February, a lockout took place at a factory. The next day, workers in fifty factories called a strike in sympathy. In many factories, women led the way to strikes. This came to be called the International Women's Day.

iii) As the fashionable quarters and official buildings were surrounded by workers, the government imposed a curfew. Demonstrations dispersed by the evening, but they came back on the 24th and 25th. The government called out the cavalry and police to keep an eye on them.

iv) On Sunday, 25 February, the government suspended the Duma. Politicians spoke out against the measure. Demonstrators returned in force to the streets of the left bank on the 26th.

v) On the 27th, the Police Headquarters were ransacked. The streets thronged with people raising slogans about bread, wages, better hours and democracy. The government tried to control the situation and called out the cavalry once again. However, the cavalry refused to fire on the demonstrators.

vi) By the evening the soldiers and the striking workers had gathered to form a 'soviet' or 'council' in the same building as the Duma met. This was the Petrograd Soviet.

vii) The very next day, a delegation went to see the Tsar. Military commanders advised him to abdicate. He followed their advice and abdicated on 2 March. Soviet leaders and Duma leaders formed a Provisional Government to run the country. Petrograd had led the February Revolution that brought down the monarchy in February 1917.

Q19) What were the effects of the February revolution?

Soviet leaders and Duma leaders formed a Provisional Government to run the country. Russia's future would be decided by a constituent assembly, elected on the basis of universal adult suffrage. Petrograd had led the February Revolution that brought down the monarchy in February 1917.

Q20) Who were the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks?

The Bolsheviks were the majority group led by Vladimir Lenin who thought that in a repressive society like Tsarist Russia the party should be disciplined and should control the number and quality of its members. They were the group who conducted the Russian revolution. Mensheviks were the minority group who thought that the party should be open to all (as in Germany). They did not believe in Revolution but wanted to bring changes through democratic means.

Q21) Trace the development in Russia after the February revolution.

i) Army officials, landowners and industrialists were influential in the Provisional Government. But the liberals as well as socialists among them worked towards an elected government.

ii) Restrictions on public meetings and associations were removed. 'Soviets', like the Petrograd Soviet, were set up everywhere, though no common system of election was followed.

iii) Through the summer the workers' movement spread. In industrial areas, factory committees were formed which began questioning the way industrialists ran their factories. Trade unions grew in number. Soldiers' committees were formed in the army.

iv) In June, about 500 Soviets sent representatives to an All Russian Congress of Soviets. Popular demonstrations staged by the Bolsheviks in July 1917 were sternly repressed. Many Bolshevik leaders had to go into hiding or flee.

v) Meanwhile in the countryside, peasants and their Socialist Revolutionary leaders pressed for a redistribution of land. Land committees were formed to handle this. Encouraged by the Socialist Revolutionaries, peasants seized land between July and September 1917.

Q22) What were the 'April Theses'?

Lenin the Bolshevik leader declared that the war be brought to a close, land be transferred to the peasants, and banks be nationalized. These three demands were Lenin's "April Theses".

Q23) How did the Bolsheviks organize the October revolution? Or What were the events preceding the October Revolution?

i) On 16 October 1917, Lenin persuaded the Petrograd Soviet and the Bolshevik Party to agree to a socialist seizure of power. A Military Revolutionary Committee was appointed by the Soviet under Leon Trotsky to organize the seizure. The date of the event was kept a secret.

ii) The uprising began on 24 October. Sensing trouble, Prime Minister Kerensky had left the city to summon troops. At dawn, military men loyal to the government seized the buildings of two Bolshevik newspapers.

iii) Pro-government troops were sent to take over telephone and telegraph offices and protect the Winter Palace. In a swift response, the Military Revolutionary Committee ordered its supporters to seize government offices and arrest ministers.

iv) Late in the day, the ship *Aurora* shelled the Winter Palace. Other vessels sailed down the Neva river and took over various military points. By nightfall, the city was under the committee's control and the ministers had surrendered.

Q24) What were the main changes brought about by the Bolsheviks immediately after the October Revolution? OR What were the effects of the October Revolution?

i) Most industry and banks were nationalized in November 1917. This meant that the government took over ownership and management.

ii) Land was declared social property and peasants were allowed to seize the land of the nobility. In cities, Bolsheviks enforced the partition of large houses according to family requirements.

iii) They banned the use of the old titles of aristocracy. To assert the change, new uniforms were designed for the army and officials, following a clothing competition organised in 1918 – when the Soviet hat (*budenovka*) was chosen.

iv) The Bolshevik Party was renamed as the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik).

v) In March 1918, despite opposition by their political allies, the Bolsheviks made peace with Germany and withdrew from the 1st World War.

vi) In the years that followed, the Bolsheviks became the only party to participate in the elections to the All Russian Congress of Soviets, which became the Parliament of the country.

vii) A process of centralised planning was introduced. Officials assessed how the economy could work and set targets for a five-year period. On this basis they made the Five Year Plans. The government fixed all prices to promote industrial growth during the first two 'Plans'. Thus they established a socialist society.

Q25) Examine the circumstances that led to the Civil War in Russia after the October Revolution.

i) Non-Bolshevik socialists, liberals and supporters of autocracy condemned the Bolshevik uprising. Their leaders moved to south Russia and organized troops to fight the Bolsheviks (the 'reds') to destroy socialism.

ii) During 1918 and 1919, the 'greens' (Socialist Revolutionaries) and 'whites' (pro- Tsarists) controlled most of the Russian empire. They were backed by French, American, British and Japanese troops – all those forces who were worried at the growth of socialism in Russia. As these troops and the Bolsheviks fought a civil war, looting, banditry and famine became common.

Q26) What were the effects of establishing a socialist society in Russia?

Centralized planning led to economic growth. Industrial production increased (between 1929 and 1933 by 100 per cent in the case of oil, coal and steel). New factory cities came into being. An extended schooling system developed, and arrangements were made for factory workers and peasants to enter universities. Crèches were established in factories for the children of women. Cheap public health care was provided. Model living quarters were set up for workers. The effect of all this was uneven, though, since government resources were limited.

Q27) What were the emergency measures adopted by Stalin?

- i) He believed that rich peasants and traders in the countryside were holding stocks in the hope of higher prices. Speculation had to be stopped and supplies confiscated.
- ii) In 1928, Party members toured the grain-producing areas, supervising enforced grain collections, and raiding 'kulaks' – the name for well-to-do peasants. As shortages continued, the decision was taken to collectivize farms.
- iii) It was argued that grain shortages were partly due to the small size of holdings. After 1917, land had been given over to peasants. These small-sized peasant farms could not be modernised.
- iv) To develop modern farms, and run them along industrial lines with machinery, it was necessary to 'eliminate kulaks', take away land from peasants, and establish statecontrolled large farms. As a result collectivization programme started.

Q28) Write a short note on Collectivisation programme of Stalin.

- i) From 1929, the Party forced all peasants to cultivate in collective farms (*kolkhoz*). The bulk of land and implements were transferred to the ownership of collective farms.
- ii) Peasants worked on the land, and the *kolkhoz* profit was shared. Enraged peasants resisted the authorities and destroyed their livestock.
- iii) Between 1929 and 1931, the number of cattle fell by one-third. Those who resisted collectivization were severely punished. Many were deported and exiled.
- iv) As they resisted collectivisation, peasants argued that they were not rich and they were not against socialism. They merely did not want to work in collective farms for a variety of reasons. Stalin's government allowed some independent cultivation, but treated such cultivators unsympathetically.

Q29) Explain the Global influence of the Russian Revolution and the USSR.

- i) In many countries, communist parties were formed like the Communist Party of Great Britain. It gave the world a new economic system known as socialism.
- ii) The Bolsheviks encouraged colonial peoples to follow their experiment. Thus it inspired a number of freedom movements in other countries.
- iii) Many non-Russians from outside the USSR participated in the Conference of the Peoples of the East (1920) and the Bolshevik-founded Comintern (an international union of pro-Bolshevik socialist parties). Some received education in the USSR's Communist University of the Workers of the East.
- iv) By the time of the outbreak of the Second World War, the USSR had given socialism a global face.

Q30) Name the person responsible for the Italian Unification.

Giuseppe Mazzini, an Italian nationalist, was responsible for Italian unification.

Q 31 Why was the Kerensky government unpopular in Russia?

(He did not implement the demands (April Theses) of Russian Revolutionaries- Explain the points.)