



SSIC<sub>SIM</sub>

2019

BACKGROUND GUIDE

# THE DEATH OF LENIN



Hello Delegates,

I am so excited to meet you all in November! My name is Jacqueline Ovsenek and I will be your director for the Death of Lenin committee. I cannot wait to see what you all come up with once our committee has started.

This committee will be a fast-paced fight for power of the Soviet Union. Delegates are encouraged to work together to achieve their goals, whether they be singular or communal. In the following background guide, I provide a brief history of Russia from St. Petersburg's foundation until the Revolution. I also included a basic understanding of the Soviet government system and economy, but I encourage you all to do some more research because I know it seems like a convoluted system (which many of you may look at reforming!). That being said, SSICsim is a novice friendly competition, and I do not expect you to come in as political experts. Mainly, I want you to come into the conference with some background knowledge and a positive attitude. I hope you all come in ready to have fun because that is what Model UN is all about.

I am a third-year economics student at UofT. Other than SSICsim, I work at the Economics Study Centre at UofT and take part in UTMUN. I also play on the Trinity College intramural soccer team! Outside of school, I love watching movies, watching tv shows, baking, and reading. My all-time favourite show is Arrested Development, and while I do not have one favourite movie, I do have a tier of favourites (which I am happy to share for whoever is interested, though I doubt very many people will be). I also have a passion for history, which you can probably tell from the subject matter of this committee.

If anyone has any questions, feel free to email me anytime!

See you in November,

*Jacqueline Ovsenek*



## RUSSIA PRE-1900

The dates of the Bolshevik Revolution, otherwise known as the October Revolution, are November 7-8<sup>th</sup>, 1917. This, however, was the second revolution of 1917, and the culmination of decades of unrest in the Russian Empire. To understand the Russia of 1917, one must have some understanding of the Russia leading up to the Revolution.

Russia's "modern" monarchical state was started by Peter the Great with his founding of the city of St. Petersburg in 1703. The major change introduced by Peter to the *common people* of Russia was the feudal system and subsequent introduction of serfdom in its more classical sense<sup>1</sup>. While there were a class of people akin to serfs in Russia pre-1703, and agricultural labour was preeminent even before Peter's reign, his desire for Russia to become a European power led to widespread serfdom within the Empire, with roughly a third of the population tied to the land they toiled<sup>2</sup>. In 1861 serfdom was abolished in Russia, but the economy remained agrarian, and now former serfs found themselves with no land to work.

Urbanization of the Russian peasant became much more rapid post-1861, which coincided with the industrial revolution in Russia. Russian industrialization began in roughly the 1880s, about 150 years after the rest of Europe. Despite the increased urbanization, it is critical to remember that the vast majority of Russia remained rural and illiterate. The democratization of Russian education, at least to a certain extent, did not occur until the mid-1800s onward, and previously only Russian aristocrats reaped the benefits of literacy; even with the increasing availability of education, former serfs and rural populations did not experience the same rapid literacy as those in cities<sup>3</sup>. Discontent among the Russian grew steadily and more rapidly as the 20<sup>th</sup> century started.

## ORIGINS OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The Russo-Japanese War began in 1904 over which great power, Russia or Japan, would control Manchuria. Russia's goal of controlling a warm-water port was a longstanding historical trend, but Japan's growing status as a great Asian power was new. An unpopular war among the people, Russia's inability to succeed over Japan furthered people's dissatisfaction with the Tsar, Nicholas II, and those in charge of Russian government. This came to a fever-pitch on

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Lynch, "The Emancipation of the Russians Serfs, 1861," *The History Review* 47 (2003): 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 4.

<sup>3</sup> Samuel D. Kassow, "Students, Professors, and the State in Tsarist Russia," (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 16.



January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1905, when a group of people stormed the gates of the winter palace demanding government reform, only for Nicholas to order his guards to fire on the crowd. This day would later be known as Bloody Sunday. While Bloody Sunday did not topple the monarchy, it did force Tsar Nicholas to make some concessions. The largest concession was the creation of the Duma, essentially a Russian parliament<sup>4</sup>. The Duma was originally the check and balance system on the Tsar that was promised, however, the Tsar had the power to dismiss the Duma. The first Duma was dismissed shortly after its creation, and by its third iteration the check and balance system became filled with Tsar supporters and aristocrats, who had no intention of making Russia more than the autocratic state it was.

In the late 1880s, there was a cohesive opposition group calling for socialism in Russia: the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP). The RSDLP was grounded in the philosophy of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. In the early 1900s it became clear that the singular RSDLP housed divergent factions. In the majority, the Bolsheviks and in the minority, the Mensheviks. Bolshevik ideology centered around the proletariat as the future of non-tsarist Russia<sup>5</sup>. The proletariat was comprised of working-class factory workers, and Bolsheviks believed the revolution and shaping of Russia lied with them in the form of highly centralized government. Mensheviks, on the other hand, did not see the Revolution as entirely proletarian based. They were willing to work with others on the Left, including the bourgeois Left, in order to establish a social democracy in Russia<sup>6</sup>. The differences between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks would last until the Mensheviks ceased to exist as a threat.

## BEGINNING OF THE REVOLUTION

The February Revolution was the beginning of the end for the Romanov dynasty. As the First World War raged on, the Russian Left became increasingly disillusioned with what they saw as an aristocratic war, and more importantly, the *common people* were starving due to food shortages. On March 8<sup>th</sup>, 1917 strikes and riots erupted in the Russian city of Petrograd, formerly named St. Petersburg but changed due to its German rooted name. What began as little to no threat grew in the ensuing days into a large riot that could not be stopped even with Tsarist troops suppressing it. On March 15<sup>th</sup> Nicholas II abdicated his throne to his brother, who refused to accept it, thus ending centuries of autocratic rule in Russia. The leaders of the Duma then formed a Provisional

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<sup>4</sup> *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. "Duma."

<sup>5</sup> Michael Melancon, "Marching Together!": Left Bloc Activities in the Russian Revolutionary Movement 1900 to February 1917," *The Slavic Review* 49. no.2 (1990): 240-246.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, 247.



government in alliance with the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies<sup>7</sup>. The Petrograd Soviet proved the most powerful force in this alliance, but the Provisional government remained nominally in charge, and Russia remained in the First World War. Alexander Kerensky became the leader of the Provisional government, a title that he held for under a year.

## WHAT IS A SOVIET...

The Russian word for Soviet literally translates to council. In the context of the Russian Revolution, two Soviets stand out: the Petrograd Soviet and the Moscow Soviet. These Soviets were elected bodies that represented the Union industrial workers in their respective urban centres. While the origins of the Petrograd Soviet are a point of contention among Soviet and non-Soviet historians, especially regarding Bolshevik or Menshevik origins, the Petrograd Soviet was the eminent power in Petrograd, just as the Moscow Soviet was in Moscow. While only created during the February Revolution, they quickly became the political force, basically in control of urban Russia in all but name. The Petrograd Soviet was made up of about 3000 members at the height of its power and commanded a Bolshevik majority. Order Number One, issued by the Petrograd Soviet soon after The Tsar's abdication.

### Petrograd Soviet Order No. 1:

- 1. Committees to be elected immediately from the ranks of all military and naval units*
- 2. One delegate from each company to be elected to the Petrograd Soviet*
- 3. Armed forces are subordinate to the Petrograd Soviet in all their political actions*
- 4. Orders of Military Commission of the Duma are to be carried out only if they do not conflict with the orders of the Petrograd Soviet*
- 5. All weapons to remain under the control of company and battalion committees, and in no circumstances to be handed over to officers*
- 6. While on duty soldiers must observe strict military discipline, but off-duty soldiers enjoy the same rights as other citizens; saluting off-duty is abolished*

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<sup>7</sup> Encyclopedia Britannica, s.v. "Duma"



7. *Honorific titles of officers are abolished (Your Excellency)*

8. *All coarse conduct by officers towards soldiers (use of the familiar ty) is abolished, and cases of it must be reported to the committee.*

This obviously proved an issue for the Provisional Government, but although nominally in charge, their hold on power was precarious, and they needed the backing of Petrograd. This powerful force was only one of many issues facing Alexander Kerensky's government.

## **BACK TO THE ACTION**

Kerensky, seeing the Bolshevik threat, ordered the arrests of over 800 Bolsheviks in Russia, including Leon Trotsky, a brilliant orator with bourgeois Russian-Jewish roots.

Germany, capitalizing on the unrest in Russia post-February, facilitated the return of Russian exile Vladimir Lenin to Petrograd. Upon arrival, Lenin published his April Theses. In his Theses, he criticized the new government for their decision to remain in a bourgeois war. Lenin also called on the Proletariat to demand, "peace, bread, land," which became a rallying cry for the people. In July, more rioting broke out in Petrograd, unlike in March, this rioting had Bolshevik leaders taking an important role. This July insurgence almost toppled the Provisional Government, and it did result in the deaths of the royal family. The Provisional Government's woes did not abate in the aftermath of the July Days, instead even before the summer finished, Kerensky's government was faced with the Kornilov Affair. The Kornilov Affair was an attempted coup against the Provisional Government, unsurprisingly led by General Kornilov. Much scholarly debate surrounds this crisis, especially regarding Kornilov's primary intentions, however it did evolve into a rebellion against Kerensky's government<sup>8</sup>. In order to subdue Kornilov's threat, Kerensky released many Bolshevik's from prison. Kornilov, whether one believes that he was a monarchist or not, was definitely not a Bolshevik and Kerensky needed manpower to suppress Kornilov and his followers; basically, Kerensky was faced with "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." While Kornilov failed in his attempt to oust Kerensky, the ordeal led to a resurgence and consolidation of Bolshevik power and the group that saved Kerensky this time would ultimately bring his downfall.

The final revolution included in the conglomerate called the Russian Revolution was the October Revolution (November in our Gregorian Calendar). By November 1917, the Bolsheviks and Left Socialist Revolutionaries had

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<sup>8</sup> Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Revolution: A New History*, (New York: Basic Books, 2017), 35.



numerical superiority over the Mensheviks and their allies. On November 6<sup>th</sup> the coup against the Provisional Government began and on November 7<sup>th</sup> there was a Bolshevik victory. The second All-Russian Congress of Soviets declared a new government, made up of Bolshevik commissars. Vladimir Lenin became Commissar of the People, and Trotsky, after turning down Commissar of the Interior due to his Jewish roots, accepted Commissar of Foreign Affairs<sup>9</sup>.

The elections held in Russia on November 25<sup>th</sup> proved detrimental for the Bolshevik party, who lost only three weeks after their successful coup. Their loss to the Socialist Revolutionaries, a more moderate group, in Russia's first free election could have spelled disaster for Lenin had a democratic Russia been his goal. In response, Lenin dissolved the elected government and declared his Dictatorship of the Proletariat. He suspended all civil liberties, he had already banned the ownership of land, and he created the CHEKA<sup>10</sup>. The CHEKA investigated those suspected of counter-revolutionary activities and served as Lenin's secret police. As Lenin took control internally, Russia remained at war with Germany until the treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Brest-Litovsk was a separate peace for Russia with Germany and its allies, but it granted a large portion of the former Russian Empire. Most of modern Poland and the Ukraine were given to Germany and Austria-Hungary; the breadbasket of Russia was no longer for the Russians<sup>11</sup>. Lenin and the Bolsheviks could now focus on their internal war.

## WAR COMMUNISM

War Communism, as it came to be known, changed Russia's economy and government. The nationalization of industries and banks had left the Russian economy crippled and unemployment at astronomically high rates. Compounding internal economic struggles was the allied blockade of Russia<sup>12</sup>. This forced autarky necessitated economic action and resulted in the creation of the Supreme Council of the National Economy (VSNKh). This government body was the Russian economy, and despite the centralization, output fell. As massive inflation basically made the Russian currency worthless. In order to keep Russia fighting and producing, compulsory labour was introduced, and the abolishment of private labour unions ultimately removed the threat of strikes. Now Russians had two courses of action, compulsory labour or compulsory military service.

## THE RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR

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<sup>9</sup> Meekin, 40.

<sup>10</sup> *New World Encyclopedia*, s.v. "The Cheka"

<sup>11</sup> Meekin, 37.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, 38.





The Red Army, the Bolshevik forces, began as a proletarian volunteer force from Russia's Bolshevik strongholds. Opposed to them were the Whites, those against the Bolshevik regime. It is often stated that the Whites were a monarchist army, and while it is true most of their fighters were former members of the imperial army, it was not entirely true that they were monarchists<sup>13</sup>. In the most basic sense, the Reds had control over the cities, while the Whites held power in the countryside. In January, Lenin named Trotsky the People's Commissar for Military and Naval Affairs, thus putting him in charge of the military force that he later turned into the Red Army. Post-Trotsky's appointment to military leader, the Red Army ceased to be a volunteer organization. Instead, mandatory conscription was introduced. While some Russians in rural areas resisted conscription, Trotsky's rather extreme tactics of coercion built the Red Army into an enormous force. Initially, the loosely affiliated anti-Bolshevik forces were quite successful in their campaigns. However, the Whites were never a unified group in the same way as the Reds, and supply shortages affected both groups greatly. Foreign intervention supporting the Whites furthered the Bolshevik narrative of an invasion as opposed to a domestic struggle. American, Canadian, British, French, and Japanese fighters served in Russia's Civil War, all who had just finished fighting the Germans. The economic drain of maintaining troops on the ground proved too expensive and too unpopular for the aforementioned foreign governments, and beginning with Lloyd-George's United Kingdom, troops were recalled, and the blockade removed in 1919<sup>14</sup>. Fighting did not officially end until 1922, but the end of the blockade gave Lenin's government the breathing room it needed. Roughly 10 million people died between 1918 and 1922, many from starvation, but it was a Bolshevik victory; in 1922 the area under Bolshevik control became the Soviet Union.

Once the Civil War had been won, the Bolshevik leaders could focus on their ultimate goal, the international workers' revolution. The organization set up to initiate this was The Communist International (Comintern). Grigory Zinoviev became its leader and expanded Comintern as an umbrella organization that included a youth wing and various labour groups. Comintern advocated a "struggle by all available means, including armed force, for the overthrow of the international bourgeoisie and the creation of an international Soviet republic as a transition stage to the complete abolition of the state," as stated in the minutes of the Second Congress of the Communist International. Needless to say, Comintern's extreme calls for revolution made them many international enemies.

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<sup>13</sup> Meekin, 46.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 50.





## A BRIEF INTERLUDE: RUSSIA ABROAD

Even before the Revolution in Russia, Russian migration to western Europe had already been occurring. Russia Abroad, the name given to the large population of Russian emigres, many Russian Jews, had its capital first in Berlin and then in Paris. Women and Russian Jews left mainly to become writers and artists, studying in Paris' schools and living in its artist neighbourhood of Montparnasse<sup>15</sup>. They established a large, closely knit community, with their own newspapers, both conservative and communist, and businesses. Under the Tsarist regime, Lenin, Trotsky, and Lunacharsky, among others, visited France and discussed socialist ideals among the intellectuals of France. During the Russian Civil War, many whites fled Russia for France, settling amongst the Russian artists. French intellectual identity became increasingly socialist, especially after the election of Mussolini in 1922. Anti-fascism became synonymous with communism, making those emigres escaping the Soviet Union unpopular<sup>16</sup>. Beginning in the mid-1920s, the practice of French artists and writers visiting the Soviet Union and writing about their experiences became exceedingly popular. Among the most famous Russians living in Paris in the 1920s were Chaim Soutine, Marc Chagall, Henri Troyat, and Irene Nemirovsky, among many others.

## THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY

Lenin's ideological economic policy as exemplified in War Communism proved unpopular and ineffective in Russia. The Kronstadt Rebellion forced Lenin to make economic changes in order to keep power. The sailors in Kronstadt, once ardent Bolsheviks, believed the government's policies to be antithetical to the revolution that they had supported; they began mass riots and striking, resulting in the declaration of martial law. In order to maintain power, Lenin introduced his New Economic Policy (NEP). The NEP denationalized some smaller industries. Instead of all agricultural products being appropriated by the state for redistribution, a small percentage of crop yields could be sold<sup>17</sup>. The Kulaks, a class of independent Russian farmers, were one group that benefited greatly from Lenin's policy change. Lenin's plan was to strengthen the economy in order to achieve his socialist ideal later; War Communism taught Lenin that communism was not possible to initiate in a weak economy. In the NEP, capitalism and socialism were fused to prevent capitalist

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<sup>15</sup> Stanley Meisler, *Shocking Paris: Soutine, Chagall and the Outsiders of Montparnasse*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

<sup>16</sup> Robert H. Johnston, *New Mecca, New Babylon*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), 16-20.

<sup>17</sup> Helene M. Glaza. "Lenin's New Economic Policy: what is was and how it changed the Soviet Union" *Inquires Journal*, 1 no. 11 (2009).



imperialism, however, some more extreme Marxists saw the NEP as the steps away from the Revolution towards a recreation of the old bourgeois system.

## **LENIN'S DEATH**

Lenin experienced a series of strokes between 1922 and his death in 1924. He had already survived an assassination attempt in 1918 when he was shot twice. According to his attending physicians, he also experienced seizures in the days leading up to his death and he had never had them before<sup>18</sup>. Officially, Lenin died of a hemorrhagic stroke in Gorki on January 21<sup>st</sup>, 1924.

## **THE SOVIET ECONOMY**

The Soviet economy functioned as a command economy. A command economy operates as the opposite of the free market economy. Governments, in this case the Soviet government, designate production quotas, which factories can produce, and allocate the resources needed for production and the produced goods. The government also determines prices of goods. In short, private markets do not exist; the government regulates and produces what it determines is necessary, not based on the traditional supply and demand of the markets. Generally, command economies have issues with illegal markets that spring up to meet supply needs. Lenin's NEP returned some elements of the capitalist system to the Soviet Union, but the general command economy foundation remained for the production and sale of most goods.

## **THE POLITBURO AND WORKINGS OF SOVIET GOVERNMENT**

The Soviet Government in 1923 was highly bureaucratic and extremely structured. For our purposes, the Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was an elected body that was technically in charge of governing the Soviet Union. These elected officials were elected from their regional Soviets; this process heavily favoured city representation and left rural populations with very little say. The country, when the Congress not in session, was managed by the Central Committee, also known as the Sovnarkom. The Central Committee was the highest legislative branch of the government, however, in 1919, the Politburo was established to streamline governance at the highest level. While technically the Politburo reported to the Central Committee, the CHEKA (later the OGPU), the Red Army, and the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs all reported directly to the Politburo.

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<sup>18</sup> Gina Kolata, "Lenin's Stroke: Doctor has a theory and a suspect," *nytimes.com*. New York Times, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012. (accessed May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019)



The Politburo is what most people think of when they imagine the Soviet Government system. It was an oligarchy of the Party's now most famous members. That being said, at its inception, many in the Congress opposed the creation of the Politburo due to its small size and immense power. In order to placate opponents, it was decided that the Politburo would answer to the Central Committee, and thus, the Congress. What happened, of course, is that all the critical decisions of the Soviet Union were made by the Politburo, and its members had their own agendas.

Another governmental office to take note of was the Secretariat of the Soviet Union. The Secretariat, originally in charge of secretarial and administrative work for the Central Committee, grew in power under its first General Secretary, Joseph Stalin<sup>19</sup>.

## **POLITBURO POLITICS**

The Politburo's members in 1923 were both longstanding Bolshevik supporters from before the Revolutions and new members on the rise. The 10<sup>th</sup> Congress had decreed a ban on factions in "On Party Unity," with the official statement including,

*"The Congress, therefore, hereby declares dissolved and orders the immediate dissolution of all groups without exception formed on the basis of one platform or another (such as the Workers' Opposition group, the Democratic Centralism group, etc.). Non-observance of this decision of the Congress shall entail unconditional and instant expulsion from the Party."*

Lenin's choice to ban factionalism and promote party unity, including the encouragement of propaganda for this purpose, did not ban the rise of party factions within his highest governing group. The two main factions that arose in the Politburo were the Left and the Right<sup>20</sup>; the Left was led by Trotsky, and the Right was led by Bukharin. The Left opposed the NEP because it weakened the original Marxist goals of the Revolution, while the Right supported the NEP because they believed it saved their system. The factions then, can be understood as staunch Marxists versus those willing to compromise some Marxist goals for governing the Union. There was also a moderate faction within the

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<sup>19</sup> "USSR Communist Party Leadership." *Archantology.com*. Jun. 26, 2009.

<sup>20</sup>Michael David-Fox, and David Hoffmann. "The Politburo Protocols, 1919-40." *The Russian Review* 55, no. 1 (1996): 99-103.



Politburo, but their main concern was opposition to Trotsky's Left. Whether affiliated Right or Left, each individual also had personal goals.

Due to Lenin's stroke in 1923, the troika of Stalin, Kamenev, and Zinoviev became the de facto leaders of the Soviet Union, with no one person holding complete control. Lenin was still the nominal head of the Soviet Union and party leader.

As our committee opens, the Deputy Premier, Lev Kamenev, oversees the USSR officially, but remains as part of the troika. A document, Lenin's Testament, has just been given to the Politburo, and it outlines Lenin's party wishes. It is your decision as a committee how or whether to release the information. Leadership of the USSR is up in the air, and all while you have a funeral to plan.

## **LENIN'S TESTAMENT<sup>21</sup>**

*By the stability of the Central Committee, of which I spoke above, I mean measures against a split, as far as such measures can at all be taken. For, of course, the whiteguard in Russkaya Mys (it seems to have been S. S. Oldenburg) was right when, first, in the whiteguards' game against Soviet Russia he banked on a split in our Party, and when, secondly, he banked on grave differences in our Party to cause that split.*

*Our Party relies on two classes and therefore its instability would be possible and its downfall inevitable if there were no agreement between those two classes. In that event, this or that measure, and generally all talk about the stability of our C.C., would be futile. No measures of any kind could prevent a split in such a case. But I hope that this is too remote a future and too improbable an event to talk about.*

*I have in mind stability as a guarantee against a split in the immediate future, and I intend to deal here with a few ideas concerning personal qualities.*

*I think that from this standpoint, the prime factors in the question of stability are such members of the C.C. as Stalin and Trotsky. I think relations between them make up the greater part of the danger of a split, which could be avoided, and this purpose, in my opinion, would be served, among other things, by increasing the number of C.C. members to 50 or 100.*

*Comrade Stalin, having become Secretary-General, has unlimited authority concentrated in his hands, and I am not sure whether he will always be capable of using that authority with sufficient caution. Comrade Trotsky\*, on the other hand, as his struggles against the C.C. on the question of the People's Commissariat for Communications has already proved, is distinguished not only by outstanding ability. He is personally perhaps the most capable man in the present C.C., but he has displayed*

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<sup>21</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 36 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1966), pp. 594-596



*excessive self-assurance and shown excessive preoccupation with the purely administrative side of the work.*

*These two qualities of the two outstanding leaders of the present C.C. can inadvertently lead to a split, and if our Party does not take steps to avert this, the split may come unexpectedly.*

*I shall not give any further appraisals of the personal qualities of other members of the C.C. I shall just recall that the October episode with Zinoviev and Kamenev was, of course, no accident, but neither can the blame for it be laid upon them personally, any more than non-Bolshevism can upon Trotsky.*

*Speaking of the young C.C. members, I wish to say a few words about Bukharin and Pyatakov. They are, in my opinion, the most outstanding figures (among the younger ones), and the following must be borne in mind about them: Bukharin is not only a most valuable and major theorist of the Party; he is also rightly considered the favorite of the whole Party, but his theoretical views can be classified as fully Marxist only with the great reserve, for there is something scholastic about him (he has never made a study of dialectics, and, I think, never fully appreciated it).*

*December 25. As for Pyatakov, he is unquestionably a man of outstanding will and outstanding ability, but shows far too much zeal for administrating and the administrative side of the work to be relied upon in a serious political matter.*

*Both of these remarks, of course, are made only for the present, on the assumption that both these outstanding and devoted Party workers fail to find an occasion to enhance their knowledge and amend their one-sidedness.*

— **Lenin, 24 December 1922**

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*Stalin is too rude and this defect, although quite tolerable in our midst and in dealing among us Communists, becomes intolerable in a Secretary-General. That is why I suggest the comrades think about a way of removing Staling from that post and appointing another man in his stead who in all other respects differs from Comrade Stalin in having only one advantage, namely, that of being more tolerant, more loyal, more polite, and more considerate to the comrades, less capricious, etc. This circumstance may appear to be a negligible detail. But I think that from the standpoint of safeguards against a split, and from the standpoint of what I wrote above about the relationship between Stalin and Trotsky, it is not a detail, or it is a detail which can assume decisive importance.*

— **Lenin, 25 December 1922**



## MECHANICS

This committee will operate very similarly to most Crisis committees with a few exceptions:

1. *Quorum on public directives regarding policy making will be 100%, in order to promote party unity.*
2. *Due to the governmental roles of each delegate, if the committee wishes to make changes that involve the offices of any Politburo members, they will need approval from that member. For example, if the committee wishes to deliver a press-release, they will need to get approval from Bukharin, the head of Pravda. Individual abilities are outlined in the character guides.*
3. *All delegates will be referred to as Comrade.*
4. *Delegates may assume roles in other branches of Soviet Government so long as they received the appointment of Joseph Stalin*



## **APPENDIX: CHARACTERS**

### Full Members

#### **Lev Kamenev**

Lev Kamenev was born in 1883 to an ethnically Jewish family. A radical from youth, like his parents and their circle of acquaintances, Kamenev studied law at Moscow University, but was expelled after supporting anti-czarist organisations. Married to Leon Trotsky's sister, Kamenev became politically aligned with both Trotsky and Lenin, moving with them to Switzerland when the First World War broke out. When Lenin created the Bolshevik party in opposition to the Mensheviks, Kamenev joined with Lenin. After the February Revolution and the death of the Czar, Lenin increasingly called for the Bolshevik Revolution, and Kamenev was one of the Bolsheviks who opposed this. He felt that it was too early for another Revolution, and if they followed through with Lenin's plan, they would lose power. Kamenev and Zinoviev even published articles opposing Lenin's Revolution. As we know from history, the October Revolution did occur according to Lenin's plan, and while Lenin never forgot Kamenev's opposition, Kamenev retained a leading role in the Party and was leader of the Moscow Soviet. As the Acting-Premier of the USSR, all official verbal announcements to the people, and the delegation of funeral planning roles will be made and approved by Kalinin. Kamenev is also one third of the troika, the de facto leaders of the USSR, along with long-time associate Zinoviev and Stalin.

#### **Grigory Zinoviev**

Grigory Zinoviev was born in 1883 to Jewish parents. Despite having no formal education, as Jewish people in the Russian Empire needed to receive permission to study in state schools, Zinoviev was able to attend some lectures in Berlin in his young adulthood. An ardent Bolshevik from its earliest roots, Zinoviev had strong roots in St. Petersburg among the workers and abroad. Zinoviev, along with Kamenev, was against Lenin's October Revolution because he believed that it was too rapid a movement to gain lasting power. Like Kamenev, Lenin never forgot this opposition, but Zinoviev remained an important Bolshevik leader. As a gifted orator, Zinoviev became the leader of the Petrograd Soviet. As a supporter of the international Revolution, Zinoviev became the Chairman of the Communist International, otherwise known as Comintern. As head of Comintern, any committee activity regarding the international revolution, an international communist message, and foreign state visits must be approved by





Zinoviev. Along with Kamenev and Stalin, Zinoviev is one third of the troika that has been the de facto leaders of the USSR since Lenin's 1923 stroke.

### **Leon Trotsky**

Leon Trotsky was born to a Jewish family in today's Ukraine. He was an ardent revolutionary from his teenage years onwards and met Lenin during his exile. Despite being loyal to Socialism and the Marxist system, Trotsky was not an ardent Bolshevik or Menshevik. Trotsky was opposed to the bourgeoisie and did not wish for any union between social reformers and the social and political elites but did support an international union of workers to create a new European communist system. Returning to Russia in 1917, Trotsky aligned himself more with the Bolshevik cause and was subsequently imprisoned in the July days by Kerensky. Freed during the Kornilov Affair, Trotsky became leader of the Petrograd Soviet and organized the armed insurrection against the Provisional Government. Once the October Revolution had occurred, Trotsky became Commissar for Foreign Affairs which necessitated his negotiation of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Once Russia had exited the First World War, Trotsky was appointed to lead and reform the Red Army. The leader of the Left in the Politburo, Trotsky was opposed to the movement of the USSR away from Marxism and Marxist values. As the leader of the Red Army, Politburo decisions regarding military intervention domestically and internationally must be approved by Trotsky.

### **Joseph Stalin**

Joseph Stalin was born in Georgia, then part of the Russian Empire, in 1879. His earliest Revolutionary activities were of a violent nature, including the Tiflis Bank Robbery. Stalin was known for his organisational and administrative abilities. Stalin impressed Lenin with his ability to rally the people of Georgia and the Caucasus and his organization in leading strikes outside Russia proper. Like Zinoviev and Kamenev, Stalin did not believe that Russia was ready for a Socialist Revolution in 1917, however he did eventually condemn the Provisional Government in Pravda, officially declaring himself to be on Lenin's side. In 1922, Stalin was made the first General Secretary of the Central Committee. What appeared to be a relatively benign administrative job, one that many of the other party leaders scoffed at, became Stalin's open door to the inner workings of the Party. Stalin built up some support when he helped Lenin escape to Finland in 1913. Stalin, Kamenev, and Zinoviev made up the troika that took power after Lenin's 1923 stroke. As the General Secretary, Stalin is in charge of appointing members of the Central Committee and the administrative duties of the Central Committee. If delegates wish for any issues to be brought to the Central Committee's agenda, Stalin must approve of them.



## **Alexei Rykov**

Born in 1880 to a peasant family, Alexei Rykov joined the Bolsheviks as a young adult. He broke with Lenin in 1910 due to what he saw as dictatorial ambitions for the country but joined again when he became a part of the Petrograd Soviet. Like Kamenev and Zinoviev, Rykov was against insurrection in 1917; Lenin sided with Trotsky and the October Revolution succeeded. Even though he was against the Bolshevik coup, Lenin gave Rykov fairly important governmental roles, including the Minister of the Interior and the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars. As a member of the Politburo, Rykov proved himself to be one of the leaders of the Right, alongside Bukharin, and favoured Lenin's New Economic Policy. Rykov's main concern was the transition of Russia Socialism, not the global revolution or Trotsky's idealistic Marxism. While many of the other leading Bolsheviks spent much of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in exile or abroad, Rykov remained in Russia, giving him a good understanding of the specifically Russian plight. As the Chairman of the Council of the People's Commissars, any and all inquiries for the Commissariats, such as the People's Commissariat of Education or Health, must be approved by Rykov and acted on by him.

## **Mikhail Tomsky**

Mikhail Tomsky was born in 1880 to a factory worker father and began working in factories from a young age. Tomsky, due to his working-class upbringing, did not receive the formal education of many of his Party colleagues. His attempts to organize a Union at his factory job led both to him getting fired from his job and to him joining the Social Democratic Labour Party. After being unable to find employment in Petersburg, Tomsky moved to Revel and continued to encourage and start unions. Once back in St. Petersburg, Tomsky joined the Bolsheviks and participated in the October Revolution. Due to his factory experience, Tomsky's role in government always revolved around the trade unions and he ascended to head of the All-Russian Conference of Trade Unions and People's Commissariat for Labour. Aligned with Rykov and Bukharin on the Right, and close with Stalin, Tomsky opposed Trotsky. As a former factory worker and staunch unionist, Tomsky's relationship to the working class is critical; as the Commissariat for Labour, all labour demands and committee actions towards the recognized labour unions in Russia proper must be approved by Tomsky.

## Candidate Members

### **Nikolai Bukharin**

Nikolai Bukharin was born in 1888 to two elementary school teacher parents who gave him a progressive education. Bukharin joined the Russian Social



Democratic Workers Party in 1906 and took an active role in the Moscow socialist scene. Also, as he was joining the socialist movement, Bukharin was studying economics. Bukharin travelled throughout the world and met many of his future Bolshevik peers, including Trotsky in New York. During this time, he wrote for many Socialist Newspapers, including the Bolshevik Pravda. Upon the success of the February Revolution, Bukharin became the editor of Pravda. In 1917, Bukharin's leaning was extremely Left, with a major focus on the international revolution. However, by Lenin's death, Bukharin was the leader of the right within the Politburo; he was the NEP's biggest supporter within the Politburo and continued to advocate for the gradual transition of Socialism within Russia. His focus on the international revolution also left him as he saw that massive changes that still needed to occur within the Soviet Union. As editor of Pravda, all press releases and official statements released through the paper must be approved by Bukharin.

### **Mikhail Kalinin**

Born in 1875 to peasant parents, Mikhail Kalinin worked as both a footman and in an iron factory by the age of sixteen. Throughout the 1880s and 1890s, Kalinin joined many socialist groups and labour unions, resulting in his imprisonment. In 1905, after a period of time in prison, Kalinin joined the Bolsheviks, started the Central Union of Metal Workers, and began writing for socialist newspapers. Lenin and Kalinin co-founded Pravda in 1912. While Kalinin favoured the right within the Politburo regarding agricultural and industrial matters, he was more moderate than a hardline supporter of either side; although, he tended to side with Stalin on critical decisions. Kalinin served as the Mayor of Petrograd in 1919 and became leader of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, which made him the nominal Head of State in Russia and later in the Soviet Union when it was created. As the Soviet Head of State, all changes to the congressional system and the Central Committee must be approved by Kalinin and all proposed bills signed into law by him.

### **Vyacheslav Molotov**

Vyacheslav Molotov was born in 1890 to middle-class parents. During his studies he was exposed to Marxist ideology and by 1906 he was a member of the Bolsheviks. Molotov met Lenin in exile abroad and became an ardent supporter of his. Molotov also worked for Pravda, meeting Stalin there in 1911. Molotov was later exiled to Siberia for his Bolshevism, but returned to Petrograd in 1916 after escaping from exile. Molotov served as a key figure in inciting the February Revolution among the workers in Petrograd and was on the committee that planned the Bolshevik Revolution the following October; unlike the Bolsheviks



who held some support for the Provisional Government, who Lenin attacked in his April Theses, Molotov used his time at Pravda to attack the Provisional Government. Molotov rose in ranks to become a member of the Central Committee Secretariat, an underling to Stalin. Known for his bureaucratic tendencies, and disliked for them by Trotsky, Molotov was loyal to Stalin. As a member of the secretariat of the Central Committee, Molotov is responsible for helping Stalin in his administrative and appointive role.

### **Janis Rudzutaks**

Janis Rudzutaks was born in 1887 to a Farmhand in modern day Latvia. Instead of following in his father's agrarian footsteps, Rudzutaks ran to Riga and began working in a factory. In Riga, he became a member of the Latvian Social Democratic Labour Party and was arrested in 1907. After the February Revolution, Rudzutaks was released from the Moscow Prison he was in. Rudzutaks served as Chairman of the Central Asian Bureau until 1923. In late 1923, he was appointed to the secretariat of the Central Committee, working in a position similar to Molotov under Stalin. There was rumours that Lenin wished for Rudzutaks to replace Stalin as General Secretary. Rudzutaks, while not necessarily Right, opposed Trotsky in the aftermath of Lenin's death. As a member of the secretariat, Rudzutaks is informed of any of Stalin's changes to the Congressional system.

### **Nikolay Alexandrovich Milyutin**

Nikolay Milyutin was born in 1889 in St. Petersburg. He attended school rather than immediately working, and at school became a Social Democrat. Despite studying architecture at school, and continuing to design after school, Milyutin became the People's Commissar for Finance. As the Finance Minister, Milyutin must keep track of economic production, supply and demand for goods, as well as approve major Party expenditures. Most importantly, Milyutin is responsible for printing money and .

### **Gregory Kaminsky**

Gregory Kaminsky was born in 1895 in the Ukraine to a Jewish family. While attending medical school in Moscow, as part of the Jewish student quota, he joined political student groups. After the October Revolution, Kaminsky rose to be the First Secretary of the Azerbaijan Communist Party, and later became Minister for Health. Kaminsky is responsible for running the hospital system, sanitation inspections, and for the development and enactment of public health related policies.



### **Andrey Andreyevich Andreyev**

Andrey Andreyev was born in 1895 in Smolensk to a peasant family. As a teenager, Andreyev moved to Moscow and became involved in Marxist groups. As the Minister of Transport, Andreyev is responsible for the building of roads, railways, and other transportation needs. In order to acquire funding for these ventures, Andreyev must work closely with Milyutin, the Minister of Finance. Keeping the Soviet Union united is a key issue for the committee and will require planning and development from Andreyev and the rest of the group.

### **Gregory Oppokov**

Gregory Oppokov was born in 1888 in the Russian city of Saratov. Oppokov's main role is as the leader of the People's Commissariat for Justice, the main judicial body of the Soviet Union. It was responsible for the codification of Soviet Laws and oversaw the legal proceedings of the Soviet Union. It is subordinate to the Central Committee, and, thus, is also subordinate to the Politburo. Oppokov will be responsible for drafting laws and legislation on behalf of the Politburo, and for enforcing these laws as the committee sees fit. He is a member of the Left and a supporter of Trotsky.

### **Maria Tatyana**

Maria Tatyana was born into a Russian family in Luhansk in 1874 and served as the leader of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD) from 1920-1934 in the Soviet Union. Tatyana was known for her role in political oppression through collaborations with the Soviet military and the secret police in ensuring unions and political uprisings are squandered. Tatyana was a large supporter of Stalin, supported heavily taxing peasants and farmers, and often utilized lethal means to destroy opposition parties. As leader of the NKVD, Tatyana is in charge of overseeing the regular police (otherwise known as the *Militsiya*) in addition to the Soviet Union's prisons and labour camps.

### **Felix Edmundovich Dzerzhinsky**

Felix Edmundovich Dzerzhinsky (nicknamed "Iron Felix"), was born into a Polish noble family in modern day Belarus and led the first two Soviet state-security (secret police) organizations, the Cheka and OGPU. He established the Cheka for the post-October Revolution Soviet government under the supervision of Lenin. Following Lenin's death, the Cheka would be dissolved and reorganized as the Joint State Political Directorate (OGPU), with Dzerzhinsky still firmly in charge. As the head of the OGPU and the *de facto* spymaster of the Bolsheviks, Dzerzhinsky is given substantial leeway in his extra-judicial pursuit of any enemies



of the October Revolution and the Bolshevik Party, whether they be foreign or domestic.

### **Konstantin Tsiolkovsky**

Konstantin Tsiolkovsky was considered to be a legendary figure of the Russian and later Soviet scientific communities (especially when it came to the study of rocketry). Both science and technology were closely linked to the ideology and practical functioning of the Soviet state, especially as the formerly agrarian state embraced mass industrialization during the 1920s and 30s, with technology being a key indicator of success in the pursuit of societal advancement. For the purposes of this committee, Tsiolkovsky has been given the role of Minister of Innovation. His primary role is to serve as an advisor to the rest of the Bolshevik government about how new technologies from both the Soviet Union and even the West can be implemented within Soviet borders to achieve an edge in economic, martial, and ideological matters, thus ensuring the proliferation and flourishing of Marxism-Leninism throughout Russia and rest of the world.

### **Albert Stanislavsky**

Born in Russia, Stanislavsky greatly enjoyed the passion of art and the emotion this level of creativity communicates. He is in charge of Proletkult, the main institution responsible for the production of art, literature, and film within the Soviet Union. Technically subordinate to the People's Commissariat of Education, Proletkult is more-or-less independent in practice. Stanislavsky enjoys a large degree of control over what Soviet artists, writers, and directors produce (and how much funding they receive), thus giving him considerable influence over the opinions of both the proletariat and the non-party elites. However, he must be careful in what he allows to get published lest he incur the wrath of the higher ranked members of the Bolshevik Party.



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