

CHAPTER  
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## CHAPTERS IN BRIEF

# Revolution and Nationalism, 1900–1939

## Summary

**CHAPTER OVERVIEW** *Old problems in Russia produced a revolution that resulted in the first Communist government. Joseph Stalin took control of the Soviet Union and became a dictator. Nationalists tried to gain control of China, but the country was plunged into decades of fighting. Nationalists pushed for self-government in India and won that right in Turkey, Iran, and Saudi Arabia.*

## 1 Revolutions in Russia

**KEY IDEA** *Unrest in Russia erupted in revolution to produce the first Communist government.*

In 1881, reforms in Russia stopped when the czar was killed by radical students. The new czar, Alexander III, took back control of the Russian government. He cracked down on anyone who seemed to threaten his government. He also oppressed all non-Russian peoples who lived within the Russian empire, especially Jews.

In 1894, his son Nicholas II became czar and continued the strong rule. He launched a program aimed at building up Russia's industry. Russia quickly became a leading producer of steel in the world. However, this rapid industrial growth brought problems. Working conditions were poor, wages were low, and children were forced to work. Workers grew angry and often went on strike. Revolutionary groups wanted to topple the government. Some followed the teachings of Karl Marx. In 1903, they argued about how to carry out their revolution, and they split into two groups. One group—the Bolsheviks—was led by Vladimir Lenin. He fled Russia a few years later to await a better time to push his ideas.

Russia suffered a huge defeat at the hands of Japan in a war that started in 1904. In early 1905, the Russian army killed hundreds of hungry workers who had peacefully gathered to ask for relief. Strikes spread in protest, and Nicholas was forced to allow some reforms to take place.

The suffering caused by World War I was the final blow against the czar's rule. In just the first few months of war, Russia had four million soldiers killed, wounded, or captured. As the war worsened, the czar lost control of Russia. Soldiers refused to fight, prices shot sky high, and people starved. In March 1917, almost 200,000 workers took to the

streets of one city to protest high prices. Soldiers shot into the crowd. Later they fired at their officers and joined the protest. The czar was forced to step down. A year later, he and his family were executed. A government led by Alexander Kerensky was formed.

Kerensky hoped to keep Russia in the war. The decision cost him the support of soldiers who wanted to fight no longer and workers and peasants who wanted an end to food shortages. Across the country these forces formed local councils called soviets. In some cities, the soviets actually had more real power than the government.

In the midst of this unrest, Lenin returned to Russia determined to bring about his revolution. His slogan "Peace, Land, and Bread" was soon taken up by many people. In November 1917, armed workers took control of government offices. The Kerensky reign was ended.

To win the peasants' support, Lenin ordered all farmland be given to them. Workers were given control of the factories. Soon Lenin agreed to a peace treaty with Germany. It gave away large amounts of Russian land, but it ended the war. Then, forces opposed to Lenin's revolution—supported by the Allies who fought Germany—tried to defeat Lenin's army in battle. The civil war lasted three years. The fighting and the famine that followed it killed 15 million Russians. In the end, though, Lenin's Red Army won.

In 1921, Lenin launched a new plan to rebuild the Russian economy. It allowed for some private ownership of property, relaxing Lenin's desire for complete state control. He also changed the government to form a new nation—the Soviet Union. It would be run by the leaders of the Communist Party. By the late 1920s, the Soviet economy had come back. Farms and factories were producing as much as they had before World War I.

## 2 Totalitarianism

### Case Study: Stalinist Russia

**KEY IDEA** After Lenin died, Stalin seized power and transformed the Soviet Union into a totalitarian state.

The term *totalitarian* describes a government that takes complete control over all parts of life in a country. This includes both public and private life. To keep everything under control totalitarian governments use several tactics. These include: police terror, propaganda, and persecution. The case study uses Joseph Stalin and Russia to show how a totalitarian state operates.

Joseph Stalin joined Lenin's revolutionary movement. Over time, he slowly built up his power. When Lenin died in 1924, Stalin took control of the Communist Party. He was less interested than Lenin in promoting revolution around the world. He wanted to increase the power of the Soviet Union. To achieve that, he built a totalitarian state. Government had total control over its people's lives.

Stalin kept tight control by creating a powerful secret police. In the mid-1930s, he turned against enemies—both real and imagined—within the Communist Party. Thousands were arrested and sent to exile or killed. Stalin also used propaganda to keep control. Official literature praised the government and its success. Any writings that expressed a different view were seized and their authors punished. Stalin's government also moved against religion. Churches were destroyed, and church leaders killed or sent into exile.

Stalin built a command economy—one in which the government makes all decisions of economic life. He pushed to complete the work of making the economy fully industrial. All resources were devoted to this effort. As a result, the Soviet people lacked food, housing, and clothing for many years. The plan did not meet Stalin's goals, but the industrial part of the economy did grow.

Stalin also launched a farming revolution. The government took control of the farms that people owned. It put them together in large, government-owned farms called collective farms. When peasants resisted, millions were killed, and millions more were sent to Siberia. With these brutal methods, Stalin got farm output to rise.

Stalin completely changed Soviet society. Women enjoyed equal rights—though rights were few. They filled all kinds of jobs on the farms and in factories.

They studied for careers that had been closed to them before. People in general were more educated.

## 3 Imperial China Collapses

**KEY IDEA** After the fall of the Qing Dynasty, nationalists and communists struggled for power.

Unrest also plagued China. Many Chinese resented the great control that foreign nations had over their economy. Some wanted to modernize China so it could regain power. One of the leaders of this push was Sun Yixian. His group was called the Kuomintang, or Nationalist Party. In 1912, he led a revolt that toppled the Qing Dynasty and was made the president of the new republic.

Sun had three main principles. He wanted political and economic rights for all Chinese people and an end to foreign control of China. Sun turned over his presidency six weeks later to Yuan Shikai, who became a military dictator. After Yuan died in 1916, civil war broke out. The people suffered terribly from famine and brutal attacks. Sun could not reorganize his Kuomintang.

China's leaders hoped to win the support of the Allies during World War I. They declared war on Germany. When the war ended, though, they were disappointed. Instead of giving China freedom from foreign influence, the Treaty of Versailles merely changed masters. The parts of China that had been controlled by Germany were handed over to Japan. Angry Chinese protested.

In the 1920s, rebels began to look to Marxism and the Russian Revolution for a solution to China's problems. The Communist Party in China was organized. One of the leaders was Mao Zedong. The Communists joined with the Kuomintang. Sun died in 1925, and Jiang Jieshi became leader of the Kuomintang. Many in the party were business people. They now feared Communist ideas about government control of economic life. Jiang agreed with them.

Jiang did not move against the Communists at first. In 1927, though, his forces struck against them. Only a few Communists survived, and they were forced into hiding. In 1928, Jiang became president of China. Soon China was torn by a civil war between the remaining Communists and Jiang's forces.

The Communists, under Mao Zedong, moved to south-central China. They built an army of peas-

ants that struck quickly against Jiang's forces. In 1933, Jiang's army completely surrounded them. But the Communists sneaked away on a famous Long March of 6,000 miles to the north. Thousands died, but the Communists survived, hiding in caves.

At the same time, China had other problems. In 1931, Japan invaded the part of China called Manchuria. They took control there and six years later began a new invasion of other areas. They were able to quickly seize large parts of the country. With this new threat, Jiang and the Communists agreed to join together to fight the Japanese.

## 🕒 Nationalism in India and Southwest Asia

**KEY IDEA** Nationalism triggered independence movements to overthrow colonial power.

Many Indians of the upper classes were educated in British schools. They learned the Western ideals of nationalism and democracy. They also grew angry at British domination of Indian life. Some formed into two groups, the Congress Party and the Muslim League.

More than a million Indians served in the British army in World War I. The British promised to make changes to the government of India that would give the Indian people greater control of their own nation. After the war, though, returning Indian soldiers were once again treated as second-class citizens. Reforms were not made. When Indians protested, the British Parliament passed a law that allowed protesters to be jailed without a trial. Indians were further enraged. About 10,000 Indians gathered to protest this act. The British had also banned such public meetings, but the crowd was mostly unaware of that fact. British troops fired on the crowd, killing several hundred. The massacre at Amritsar sparked further protests.

Mohandas K. Gandhi became the leader of India's protest movement. He organized a widespread campaign of noncooperation with the British and passive resistance to unjust laws. He asked Indians to stop buying British goods, attending British schools, paying British taxes, or voting in British-run elections. He also convinced his followers to take these actions without using violence.

British jails filled with thousands of Indians who broke British laws in order to protest them.

Indians resented a British law that forced them to buy salt only from the government. Gandhi organized a huge march to the sea to make salt by evaporating sea water. At a related march, police beat many people protesting the salt tax. In 1935, the British finally gave in. They passed a law that allowed local Indian limited self-government. Though they had met some success, Indians had other problems. Tensions between Hindus and Muslims were high.

Other changes took place in Southwest Asia. Mustafa Kemal, a military commander, became the leader of a new republic in Turkey. He took many steps to modernize society and the economy in Turkey. He loosened Islam's hold on Turkish law. Another commander led a revolt in Persia that won independence from Britain in that land. He also modernized his country, and he changed its name to Iran. In both Turkey and Iran, women gained new rights. A new leader also emerged in Arabia. He united different groups into one kingdom, which he called Saudi Arabia. While he took steps to modernize life in his land, he kept the traditional practices of Islam strong.

Starting in the 1920s, Southwest Asia saw a major new economic change. Western companies discovered large reserves of oil in several countries in this part of the world. Oil brought huge sums of money to these countries. The desire to tap into this wealth also persuaded Western countries to try to gain power in the area.

## Review

1. **Drawing Conclusions** How did the problems of the early 1900s lead to the Russian Revolution?
2. **Comparing and Contrasting** Compare Kerensky's and Lenin's plans.
3. **Summarizing** In what ways was Stalin's government an example of totalitarian rule?
4. **Analyzing Causes and Recognizing Effects** How did the Treaty of Versailles add to China's problems?
5. **Determining Main Ideas** Explain Gandhi's ideas of noncooperation and nonviolent protest.