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**Class 9**

**SOCIAL STUDIES**

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**Socialism in Europe and  
the Russian Revolution  
NCERT Solutions**

**Question 1.**

What were the social, economic and political conditions in Russia before 1905?

**Answer:**

We can understand the social, economic and political conditions in Russia before 1905 through the information given below:

Social Condition:

- The vast majority of Russia's people were agriculturists.
- Workers were divided by skill.
- Women were paid less than men (between half and three-quarters of a man's wage).
- Russian peasants pooled their land together periodically and their commune(Mir) divided it according to the needs of individual families.

Economic Condition:

- About 85% of the Russian empire's population earned their living from agriculture.
- Many factories were set up in the 1890s, when Russia's railway network was extended and investment in industry increased.
- Government supervised large factories to ensure minimum wages and limited working hours.
- In the countryside, peasants cultivated most of the land but the Nobility, the Crown and the Orthodox Church owned large properties.

Political Condition:

- The Russian Social Democratic Workers Party was founded in 1898 by socialists who respected Marx's ideas.

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- The peasants would be the main force of the revolution and Russia became socialist more quickly than other countries.
- Socialists formed the Socialist Revolutionary Party in 1900 and this party struggled for peasant's rights.
- The Socialist Revolutionary Party further divided into two sections- the Bolshevik group and the Menshevik group.
- Vladimir Lenin, who led the Bolshevik group, thought that in a repressive society like Tsarist Russia, the party should be disciplined and should control the number and quality of its members.
- Mensheviks thought that the party should be open to all like in Germany.

### Question 2.

In what ways was the working population in Russia different from other countries in Europe, before 1917?

### Answer:

- At the beginning of the twentieth century, the vast majority of Russia's people (about 85% of Russia's population) were agriculturists. This proportion was higher than in most European countries. As; in France and Germany the proportion was between 40% and 50%.
- Workers were a divided social group. Some had strong links with the villages from where they came and others had settled in cities permanently.
- Women made up 31% of the factory labour force by 1914 but they were paid less than men.
- In the countryside, peasants cultivated most of the land but the nobility, the crown and the Orthodox Church owned large properties.
- Unlike France, the Nobles got their power and position through their services to the Tsar, not through local popularity.

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- Russian peasants were different from other European peasants in another way. As; they pooled their land together periodically and their commune (Mir) divided it according to the needs of individual families.

### **Question 3.**

Why did the Tsarist autocracy collapse in 1917?

#### **Answer:**

The Tsarist autocracy collapse in 1917 because of the following major reasons:

- During the time of the First World War, the Tsar refused to consult the main parties in the Duma.
- Russia's armies lost badly in Germany and Austria between 1914 and 1916 and there were over 7 million casualties by 1917.
- The Russian army destroyed crops and buildings to prevent the enemy from being able to live off the land and this type of destruction of crops and buildings led to over 3 million refugees in Russia. This situation discredited the government and the Tsar.
- Industrial equipment disintegrated more rapidly in Russia than elsewhere in Europe. By 1916, railway lines began to break down, labour and food shortages happened for common people at that time.

### **Question 4.**

Make two lists: one with the main events and the effects of the February Revolution and the other with the main events and effects of the October Revolution. Write a paragraph on who was involved in each, who were the leaders and what was the impact of each on Soviet history.

**Answer:**

February Revolution:

Events-

- On 22 February 1917, a lockout took place at a factory on the right bank of the River Neva and in many factories; women led the way to strikes.
- On Sunday, 25 February, the government suspended the Duma.
- On 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> February, the demonstrators again came to the strike and by that evening, the soldiers and the striking workers had gathered to form a 'soviet' or 'council' in the same building as the Duma met.
- On 2<sup>nd</sup> March, Tsar abdicated and Soviet leaders and Duma leaders formed a Provisional government to run the country.

Effects-

- Restrictions on public meetings and associations were removed.
- 'Soviets' like the Petrograd Soviet were set up everywhere.
- In Industrial areas, factory committees were formed.
- Trade unions grew in numbers.
- Bolshevik influence grew during that time.
- Land committees were formed to handle the redistribution of land.

October Revolution:

Events-

- 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 Trotskii to organize the seizure.
- On 24 October, Prime Minister Kerenskii had left the city to summon troops. Pro-government troops were sent to take over telephone and telegraph offices and protect the Winter Palace. At the meeting of the All Russian

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Congress of Soviets in Petrograd, the majority approved the Bolshevik action. There was heavy fighting but by December, the Bolsheviks controlled the Moscow-Petrograd area.

### Effects-

- Most industry and banks were nationalised in November 1917.
- Land was declared social property and peasants were allowed to seize the land of the nobility.
- Bolsheviks enforced the partition of large houses according to family requirements.
- The Bolshevik Party was renamed the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik).
- In November 1917, the Bolsheviks conducted the elections to the Constituent Assembly but they failed to gain major support and in January 1918, The Assembly rejected Bolshevik measures and Lenin dismissed the Assembly.
- After October 1917, many experiments happened in the arts and architecture but became disillusioned because of the censorship that was encouraged by the Party.

### **Question 5.**

What were the main changes brought about by the Bolsheviks immediately after the October Revolution?

### **Answer:**

The main changes Bolsheviks brought immediately after the October Revolution are as follows:

- Most industry and banks were nationalised in November 1917.
- Land was declared social property and peasants were allowed to seize the land of the nobility.

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- The Bolshevik Party was renamed the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik).
- In November 1917, the Bolsheviks conducted the elections to the Constituent Assembly but they failed to gain major support and in January 1918, The Assembly rejected Bolshevik measures and Lenin dismissed the Assembly.
- 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.
- Trade unions were kept under party control.

### Question 6.

Write a few lines to show what you know about:

- Kulaks
- The Duma
- Women workers between 1900 and 1930
- The Liberals
- Stalin's collectivisation programme.

### Answer:

- Kulaks: This word referred to the rich peasants. According to Stalin, the rich peasants and traders in the countryside were holding stocks in the hope of higher prices and this led to shortage of grain production. So, at the time of 1928, it was found that to develop modern farms and run them along industrial lines with machinery, it was necessary to eliminate 'Kulaks'.



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- The Duma: During the 1905 Revolution, the Tsar allowed the creation of an elected consultative Parliament, which was known as the Duma. The Tsar dismissed the first Duma within 75 days and the re-elected second Duma within three months. The Tsar did not want any questioning of his authority or any reduction in his power and so, he changed the voting laws and packed the third Duma with conservative politicians.
- Women workers between 1900 and 1930: Women made up 31% of the factory labour force by 1914 but they were paid less than men (between half and three quarters of a man's wage).
- The Liberals: This group of people wanted a nation which tolerated all religions. The Liberals also opposed the uncontrolled power of dynastic rulers and wanted to safeguard the rights of individuals against government. They were not democrats and did not believe in universal adult franchise and did not want to vote for women.
- Stalin's collectivisation programme: This programme had been started by Stalin in 1929 to improve the condition of grain supplies and production. Stalin's party forced all peasants to cultivate in collective farms (kolkhoz). However, this plan failed and the bad harvests of 1930-33 led to one of most devastating famines in Soviet history when over 4 million people died.

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