1917: The October Revolution

**POINTS TO CONSIDER**

The important point to stress about the Bolshevik Revolution in October 1917 is that it was quite distinct in character and objective from the revolution that had preceded it eight months earlier. The February Revolution had been essentially the collapse of tsardom from within. The October Revolution was a seizure of power by the Bolshevik Party from the Provisional Government, which had replaced the tsar but had proved no more capable of successfully leading Russia in wartime than he had. To understand how this second revolution came about, it is necessary to chart the principal developments that occurred in Russia in the period from February to October 1917.

**KEY DATES IN 1917**

3 March  New Provisional Government publicly declared.  
4 March  Formal declaration of Romanov abdication issued.  
14 March  Petrograd Soviet issued its Address to the people of the whole world.  
3 April  Lenin returned to Petrograd after completing his journey across Europe in a sealed train under German protection.  
4 April  Lenin issued his April Theses, rejecting Bolshevik support for the Provisional Government.  
26 June  Major Russian offensive launched against Austro-German armies on the south-western front.  
3-6 July  Failure of 'July Days' Bolshevik uprising against the Provisional Government.  
6 July  Lenin fled from Petrograd.  
8 July  Kerensky became prime minister.  
18 July  Kornilov became commander-in-chief.  
August  German advance threatened Petrograd.  
26 Aug  -1 Sep  Resistance of the Petrograd workers forced Kornilov to abandon his march on the city.  
25 Sep  Bolsheviks gained a majority in Petrograd Soviet and elected Trotsky as chairman.  
7 Oct  Lenin slipped back into Petrograd.  
10 Oct  Bolshevik Central Committee committed itself to armed insurrection.  
12 Oct  Petrograd Soviet set up Military Revolutionary Committee.  
23 Oct  Kerensky moved against the Bolsheviks by attempting to close down Pravda and Izvestiya.  

Lenin instructed the Bolsheviks to begin the rising against Kerensky's government.  
24 Oct  First session of the Congress of Soviets.  
24-25 Oct  Bolsheviks took control of Petrograd.  
25-26 Oct  Kerensky fled from Petrograd.  
26 Oct  Bolsheviks seized the Winter Palace.  
27 Oct  Bolsheviks established Sovnarkom, with Lenin as chairman.  

**1 The Dual Authority**

**KEY ISSUE** Was the Provisional Government fatally weakened from the first?

The Provisional Government, led by Prince Lvov, was the old duma in a new form. When Milyukov, the foreign minister, read out the list of ministers in the newly-formed government someone in the listening crowd called out, 'Who appointed you?' Milyukov replied, 'We were appointed by the Revolution itself.' In that exchange were expressed the two besetting weaknesses of the Provisional Government throughout the eight months of its existence. It was not an elected body. It had come into being as a rebellious committee of the old duma, refusing to disband at the tsar's order. As a consequence, it lacked legitimate authority. It had no constitutional claim upon the loyalty of the Russian people and no natural fund of goodwill on which it could rely. It would be judged entirely on how well it dealt with the nation's problems.

The Provisional Government's second major weakness was that its authority was limited by its unofficial partnership with the Petrograd Soviet. It was not that the Soviet was initially hostile. Indeed, at first, there was a considerable degree of liaison between them. Some individuals were members of both bodies. For example, Alexander Kerensky, the SR leader, was for a time chairman of the Soviet as well as a minister in the Provisional Government. The Soviet did not set out to be an alternative government. It regarded its role as supervisory, checking that the interests of the soldiers and workers were fully understood by the new government. However, in the uncertain times that followed the February Revolution, the Provisional Government often seemed unsure of its own authority. Such diffidence tended to give the Soviet greater prominence.

There was also the impressive fact that the soviet pattern had spread widely in the aftermath of the February Revolution. Soviets soon appeared in all the major cities and towns of Russia. The soviets were to play an increasingly important role in the development of the Revolution, but in the early stages they were not dominated by the
3 The Provisional Government

The Provisional Government was elected in the hope of ending the war and bringing peace. However, it was unable to effectively address the needs of the people who were suffering under the harsh conditions of war. The government was unable to control the movement, and as a result, it was replaced by the Bolsheviks in a successful coup in October of 1917.

The Provisional Government

- When was the Provisional Government established? The Provisional Government was established after the February Revolution in 1917.
- What were its main goals? The main goal of the Provisional Government was to end the war and bring peace to Russia.
- What were its key achievements? The Provisional Government was able to negotiate an armistice with Germany, but it was unable to bring peace to Russia.
- What were its key challenges? The main challenge faced by the Provisional Government was its inability to address the needs of the people who were suffering under the harsh conditions of war.
- What happened to the Provisional Government? The Provisional Government was replaced by the Bolsheviks in a successful coup in October of 1917.
The Provisional Government

The Provisional Government was formed after the Russian Revolution of 1917, with the collapse of the Czarist regime. It was composed of representatives from various political and social groups, including social democrats, monarchists, and Social Revolutionaries. The Provisional Government was established to govern Russia until a Constituent Assembly could be convened to rule the country. However, its reign was marked by political instability, internal divisions, and the growing influence of Bolsheviks. The government faced severe challenges in maintaining order, addressing the nation's economic crisis, and dealing with the revolutionary movements that were gaining strength throughout the country. The Provisional Government's inability to resolve these issues led to its eventual downfall and the rise of the Bolshevik regime, which ultimately established the Soviet Union.

The October Revolution

The October Revolution, also known as the Bolshevik Revolution, took place on November 7, 1917, in Petrograd (now St. Petersburg). It was led by the Bolshevik Party under the leadership of Vladimir Lenin. The revolution marked a significant shift in the political landscape of Russia, leading to the establishment of the Soviet Union and the end of the Czarist regime. The Bolsheviks, or Reds, gained control of the revolution by staging a series of political and military actions that forced the Provisional Government to resign. The October Revolution had far-reaching implications, not only for Russia but also for the wider international community, as it signaled the beginning of the end of the old order and the rise of communist ideology.
The Provisional Government's role in addressing the land question was critical, and this section shows why. The Provisional Government's actions and its failure to address the land question effectively contributed to its eventual downfall and the rise of the Bolsheviks. This failure was compounded by the Provisional Government's inability to effectively manage the Russian economy, which was already suffering from the aftermath of the war and the revolution.

The land question became a focal point of Bolshevik propaganda and organizing. The Bolsheviks were able to rally support among the peasants by promising land redistribution and greater representation in government. This appeal to the peasants resonated strongly with the rural population, who had been left out of the Provisional Government's promises of reform. The Bolsheviks were able to capitalize on this discontent by appealing to the peasantry's desire for change and justice.

In contrast, the Provisional Government was unable to address the land question effectively. The government's efforts to redistribute land were often hampered by legal obstacles and bureaucratic red tape. The government was also divided on the issue of land reform, with some ministers advocating for more radical measures while others were more cautious.

As a result, the Provisional Government was unable to gain the support of the peasantry, which was crucial for its survival. This lack of support contributed to the government's eventual collapse and paved the way for the rise of the Bolsheviks. The land question became a symbol of the Provisional Government's failure, and it is a reminder of the importance of addressing the needs of the people in order to maintain stability and control.

In conclusion, the Provisional Government's failure to address the land question was a significant factor in its downfall. By failing to meet the expectations of the peasantry, the government lost the trust of the people and paved the way for the rise of the Bolsheviks. The land question remained a pivotal issue throughout the Russian Revolution, and its resolution would have gone a long way in preventing the rise of the Bolsheviks and stabilizing the country.
The October Revolution

A The October Revolution

In what is widely known as the October Revolution, the Bolsheviks, led by V. I. Lenin, seized power in Russia on November 7, 1917. This revolution marked the beginning of the Soviet Union and the end of the Tsarist Empire.

4 The October Revolution

There was no intervention of the parliament and the government, who were opposed to the October Revolution. If the Bolsheviks managed to seize power, the government was unable to resist. After the victory, the Bolsheviks announced the abolition of the monarchy and the establishment of a republic. The new government declared war on all imperialist powers and proclaimed the rights of the working class.

Key Issues

How did the Bolsheviks manage to seize power in October?

The October Revolution

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THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

1917

THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

to face the troops, to lead the revolutionary army, and to put it in a position to capture the key institutions of power. The Provisional Government, which was established in October, was unable to resist the growing momentum of the revolution and was soon overthrown.

The Provisional Government's failure to take decisive action against the Bolsheviks and the Petrograd Soviet's success in capturing key institutions of power marked a turning point in the revolution. The Bolsheviks, who had been organizing and preparing for revolution since the February Revolution, were now in a position to take power.

The October Revolution marked the beginning of the socialist revolution in Russia and was followed by the establishment of the Soviet Union. The revolution was a result of the struggles of the working class in the aftermath of the First World War and the failure of the Provisional Government to provide for the needs of the people.
5 Reasons for Bolshevik Success

Do not consider the Bolsheviks were very successful in the early years of the Revolution. The government was not considered very strong, and it was the Provisional Government that played a key role in the Russian Revolution. However, the Provisional Government was not able to address the economic and political issues that were facing the country. It was only after the October Revolution that the Provisional Government was overthrown by the Bolsheviks.

The failure of the Provisional Government in managing the economic and political issues led to the rise of the Bolsheviks. The Provisional Government was unable to address the needs of the Russian people, which led to the rise of the Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks were successful in gaining support from the Russian people, which led to their victory in the October Revolution.

A contingent of Amazons, being trained in 1917, specially recruited these female soldiers as an example of the fighting spirit of the Russian people.
The current position is that the Provisional Government does not have the authority to issue any new laws. The Provisional Government has been in operation for a short period and has not yet had the opportunity to develop a comprehensive legislative agenda. The main focus of the Provisional Government has been on provisional measures to address immediate issues such as food shortages and medical supply disruptions. Additionally, the Provisional Government has been preoccupied with securing the safety of the Provisional Head of Government, and therefore has not been able to address other legislative issues. The Provisional Government is working on a comprehensive legislative plan, but it has not yet been finalized. Therefore, the Provisional Government does not have the authority to issue any new laws at this time.
The important of the October Revolution of 1917 makes a huge impact in history.

**Examples of structured questions on the events of 1917:**

1. How did the October Revolution differ from the February Revolution?
2. What were the main points in the rise of Bolshevism from the other groups?
3. Why did the first elections fail?
4. Describe the difficulties encountered by the Provisional Government.
5. Discuss the main steps by which the Bolshevism came to power.

**Answering structured and easy questions on Chapter 5:**


Reference:

The Revolution in 1776

Summary Diagram

Krefft's Government. The British Government chose to conduct a successful
and effective war against the American Colonies. It was a difficult
task, as the colonies were far away from Britain and the
British Army was not well-equipped to handle such a conflict.

1. How did the Revolution begin?
2. What were some of the key events leading up to the Revolution?
3. How was the American Army able to win against the British?
4. What role did the American Colonies play in the Revolution?
5. How did the Constitution of the United States come into existence?
Four years of war and internal upheaval altered the political landscape of Russia. The conflict transformed the country, leading to the rise of the communist regime. The October Revolution marked the beginning of a new chapter in the history of Russia. The Bolsheviks, led by V.I. Lenin, overthrew the Provisional Government and established a socialist state. The war and the internal strife that followed contributed to the success of the Bolshevik Revolution.

Points to Consider

6

The Bolshevik Consolidation

March
1917

April
1917

July
1918

September
1919

December
1919

November
1917

March
1918

January
1918-20

Czar Nicholas II was crowned as the Tsar of Russia.

Elections for Constituent Assembly

December
1917

Decrees on Land, on Peace, and on

War

Communism

Russian Civil War and foreign interventions

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