

LESSON – RUSSIA AFTER THE CIVIL WAR

1921 – Workers Opposition - Kronstadt uprising – Economical Crisis – 10th Party Congress – NEP – new problems - Foreign Trade – Lenin’s first stroke - ...

1921 – CRISIS!

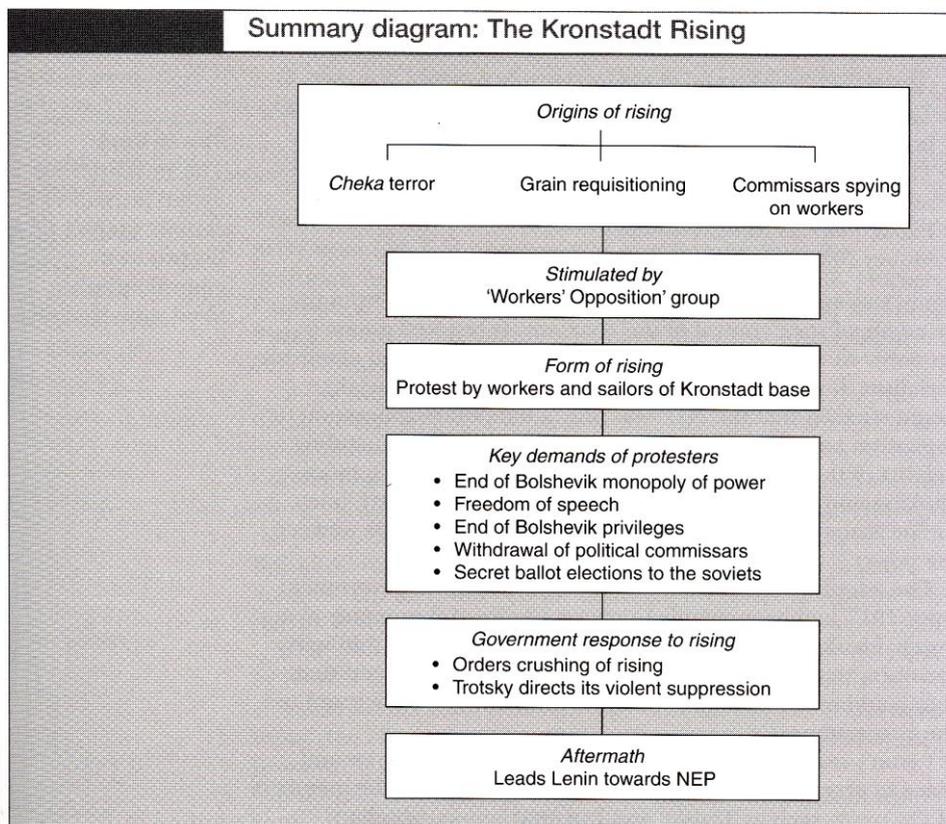
Opposition against Lenin’s policies.

1. ”Workers Opposition” formed – they demanded:

- Higher wages
- Better working and living conditions
- More food
- Worker’s control of the industry

2. Kronstadt uprising in March 1921

- Released the Kronstadt manifesto (see appendix)



- 20,000 men were killed and wounded in the attack against Kronstadt
- Many sailors and soldiers were executed after this uprising

3. Economic Problems

- At the Peace Treaty of Brest-Litovsk Russia lost much land and resources
- Civil War between 1918-1920
- Industrial Production fell disastrously
- Agriculture collapsed – due to the Civil War and Grain requisition (War Communism)

1921 – DROUGHT – FAMINE – 5 MILLION DIED – INTERNATIONAL AID

10TH PARTY CONGRESS 1921...

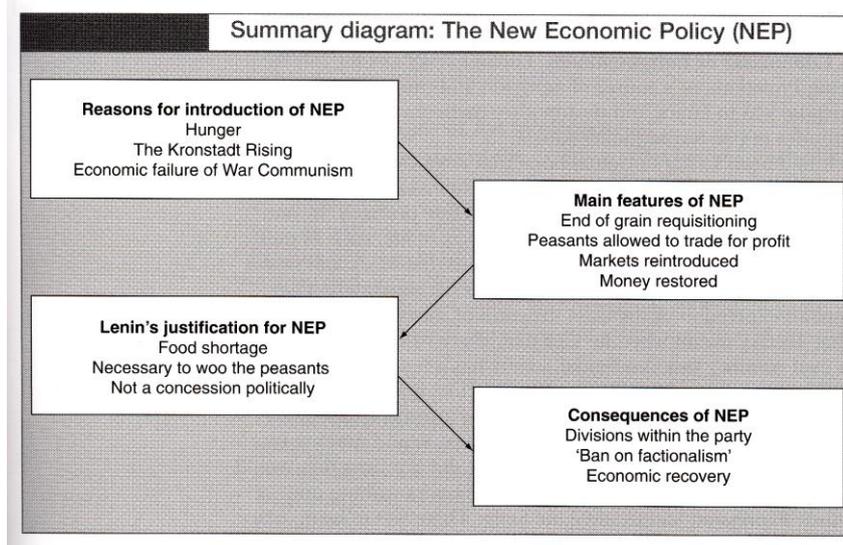
1. **NEP (New Economic Policy)** – *“Just a temporary solution”* Lenin (Trotsky described NEP as the *“first sign of the degeneration of Bolshevism”*...)
2. Established **GOSPLAN** *“Gosudarstvennyj planovyi komitet soveta ministrov USSR”* – The USSR Economic State Planning Commission = The Government body responsible for national economic planning
3. Resolution **“On Party Unity”** – *The Congress orders the immediate dissolution, without exception, of all groups that have been formed on the basis of some platform or other, and instructs all organizations to be very strict in ensuring that no manifestations of factionalism of any sort be tolerated. Failure to comply with this resolution of the Congress is to entail unconditional expulsion from the party.*
4. Resolution that condemned the **“Workers Opposition”**
5. Lenin declared that **all political parties except the Bolsheviks were outlawed** in Soviet Russia...

NEP...

To deal with the problems Lenin introduced **NEP – New Economic Policy** (1921)

1. Grain requisitioning was stopped. An agricultural tax was introduced. The amount to be paid was a fixed proportion of the surplus. Any surplus above that could be sold on an open market.
2. Traders could buy and sell goods (had been illegal before)
3. Smaller industries and trade were returned to their former owners. They were allowed to sell the goods they made and they were allowed to make a profit.
4. The State retained control of the Heavy Industries, the transport system, foreign trade and banking.
5. The currency, the rouble was reconstituted and backed up with gold, silver and foreign currency.

Here is a *“summary diagram”* of NEP:



RESULTS NEP:

Table 1.3: Growth under the NEP

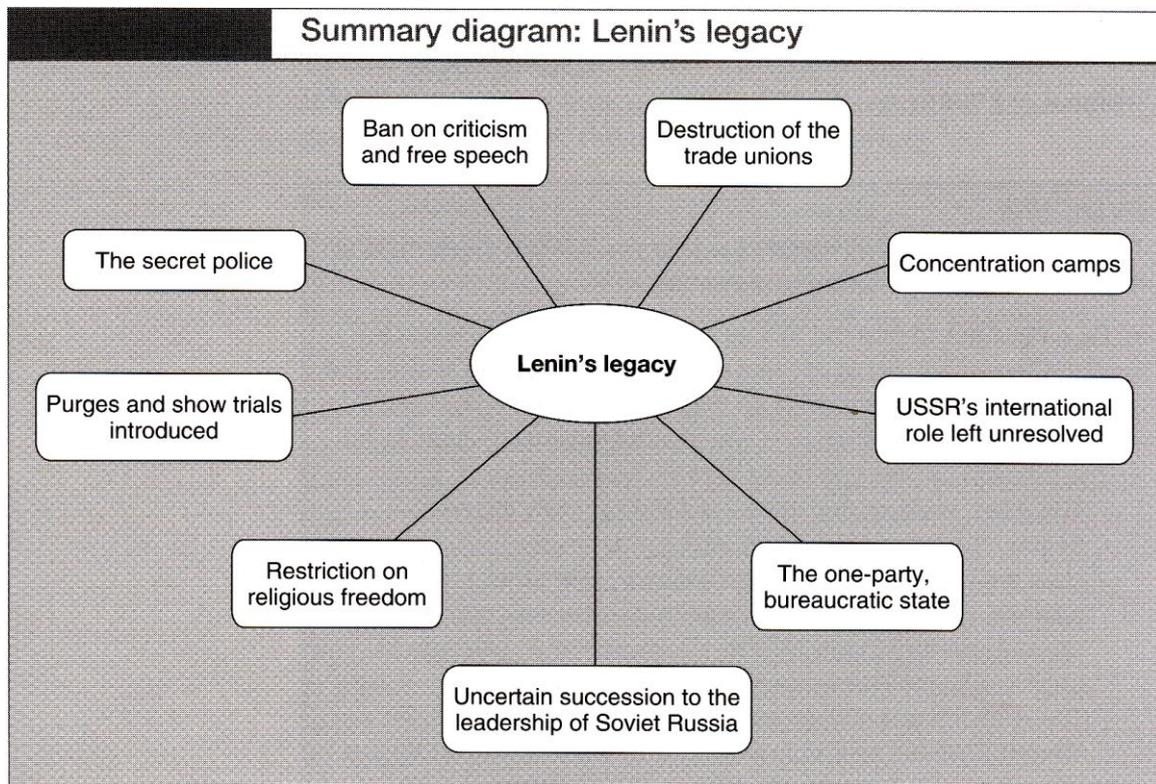
	1921	1922	1923	1924
Grain harvest (million tons)	37.6	50.3	56.6	51.4
Value of factory output (in millions of roubles)	2004	2619	4005	4660
Electricity (million kWh)	520	775	1146	1562
Average monthly wage of urban worker (in roubles)	10.2	12.2	15.9	20.8

One great step forward was the electrification of Russia. Lenin saw electric power as the key to modernizing the Soviet Union; “*Soviet Power plus Electrification equals Communism*”.

Soviet Union had been cut off from **foreign trade**. Now Russia resumed some trade again (but the diplomatic relations with the European Countries was weak);

- Anglo-Soviet Trade Agreement (1921)
- Treaty of Rapallo with Germany (1922)

Lenin had his first stroke 1922... - this made him politically inactive. A struggle between different leading Bolsheviki about who was going to succeed him started...
So what was Lenin's legacy?...



- The one-party state - all parties other than the Bolsheviks had been outlawed.
- The bureaucratic state - despite the Bolsheviks' original belief in the withering

away of the State, central power increased under Lenin and the number of government institutions and officials grew.

- The police state - the *Cheka* was the first of a series of secret police organizations in Soviet Russia whose task was to impose government control over the people.
- The ban on factionalism - prevented criticism of leadership within the party, in effect a prohibition of free speech.
- The destruction of the trade unions - with Lenin's encouragement, Trotsky had destroyed the independence of the trade unions with the result that the Russian workers were entirely at the mercy of the State.
- The politicizing of the law - under Lenin the law was not operated as a means of protecting society and the individual but as an extension of political control. He declared that the task of the courts was to apply revolutionary justice. 'The court is not to eliminate terror but to legitimize it'.
- The system of **purges** and show trials which were to become a notorious feature of Stalinism had first been created under Lenin. Outstanding examples of these were the public trials of **the Moscow clergy between April and July 1922** and of **the SRs between June and August of the same year**.
- Concentration camps - at the time of Lenin's death there were **315** such camps. Developed as part of the Red Terror they held White prisoners of war, rebel peasants, Kulaks, and political prisoners, such as SRs, who were considered a threat to Soviet authority.
- Prohibition of public worship - the Orthodox churches had been looted then closed, their clergy arrested or dispersed and atheism adopted as a replacement for religious belief.

Problems with NEP:

- Prices of manufactured goods became high
- Entrepreneurs and rich peasants (“**kulaks**”) – gained from the new system, but most peasants and many workers in the urban areas were under strict state control
- A new group of traders, the “**Nepmen**”, made huge profits from buying food and goods cheaply and selling them more dearly...
- This economy was a capitalistic economy, based on capitalistic methods. This caused a lot of criticism from the leftist Bolsheviks (caused a split within the Party) – NEP was ideologically incorrect!

Go through **LENIN'S POLITICAL TESTAMENT...**

Lenin's Testament

[The document known as Lenin's Testament is a letter secretly dictated by Lenin on December 22-29, 1922, intended for the Twelfth Congress on April 1923. The letter was known only to his wife Krupskaya and the two secretaries who took it down. On March 10, a stroke ended Lenin's active life. Fearing a split, Krupskaya kept the letter under lock and key, until it was read to delegates at the Thirteenth Congress, a year after Lenin's death. The delegates were sworn to keep the contents of the letter a secret].

I would urge strongly that at this congress a number of changes be made in our political structure. I want to tell you of the considerations to which I attach most importance.

At the head of the list I set an increase in the number of Central Committee members to a few dozen or even a hundred. It is my opinion that without this reform our Central Committee would be in great danger if the courses of events were not quite favorable for us (and that is something we cannot count upon).

Then, I intend to propose that the congress should on certain conditions invest the decisions of the State Planning Commission with legislative force, meeting in this respect the wishes of Comrade Trotsky - to a certain extent and on certain conditions.

As for the first point, i.e., increasing the number of CC members, I think it must be done in order to raise the prestige of the CC, to do a thorough job of improving our administrative machinery, and to prevent conflicts between small sections of the CC from acquiring excessive importance for the future of the party.

It seems to me that our party has every right to demand from the working class fifty to one hundred CC members, and that it could get them from it without unduly taxing the resources of that class.

Such a reform would considerably increase the stability of our party and ease its struggle in the encirclement of hostile states, which, in my opinion, is likely to and must become much more acute in the next few years. I think that the stability of our party would gain a thousand fold by such a measure.

By stability of the CC, 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 white guard in Russia was right when, in the white guards' 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 CC, 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 factor in the question of stability are such members of the CC 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 CC members to fifty or one hundred.

Comrade Stalin, having become general secretary, 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 struggle against the CC on the question of the People's Commissariat has already proved, is distinguished not only by outstanding ability. He is personally perhaps the most capable man in the present CC, but he has displayed excessive self-assurance and shown preoccupation with the purely administrative side of the work.

These two qualities of the two outstanding leaders of the present CC 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 CC. 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 CC members, I wish to say a few words about Bukharin and Pyatakov. They are, in my opinion, the most outstanding figures (among the youngest 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 favourite of the whole party, but his theoretical views can be classified as fully Marxist only with great reserve, for there is something scholastic about him (he has never made a study of dialectics and, I think, never fully understood it).

As for Pyatakov, he is unquestionably a man of outstanding ability, but shows 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.

Stalin is too rude and this defect, although quite tolerable in our midst and in dealings among us Communists, becomes intolerable in a general secretary. That is why I suggest that the comrades think about a way of removing Stalin 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, 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.

The increase in the number of CC members to fifty or even one hundred must, in my opinion, serve a double or even a treble purpose: the more members there are in the CC, the more men will be trained in CC work and the less danger there will be of a split due to some indiscretion. The enlistment of many workers to the CC will help the workers improve our administrative machinery, which is pretty bad. We inherited it, in effect, from the old regime, for it was absolutely impossible to reorganize it in such a short time, especially in conditions of war, famine, etc. That is why those "critics" who point to the defects of our administrative machinery out of mockery or malice may be calmly answered that they do not in the least understand the conditions of the revolution today. It is altogether impossible in five years to reorganize the machinery adequately, especially under the conditions in which our revolution took place. It is enough that in five years we have created a new type of state in which the workers are leading the peasants against the bourgeoisie, and in a hostile international environment this in itself is a gigantic achievement. But knowledge of this must on no account blind us to the fact that, in effect, we took over the old machinery of state from the Czar and the satisfaction of the minimum requirements against famine, all our work must be directed towards improving the administrative machinery.

I think that a few dozen workers, being members of the CC, can deal better than anybody else with checking, improving, and remodeling our state apparatus. The Workers and Peasants Inspection, on whom this function devolved at the beginning proved unable to cope with it and can be used only as an "appendage" or, on certain conditions, as an assistant to these members of the CC. In my opinion, the workers admitted to the CC should come preferably not from among those who have had long service in Soviet bodies (in this part of my letter the term workers everywhere includes peasants), because those workers have already acquired the very traditions and the very prejudices which it is desirable to combat.

The working class members of the CC must be mainly workers of a lower stratum than those promoted in the last five years to work in Soviet bodies; they must be people closer to being rank-and-file workers and peasants, who, however, do not fall into the category of direct or indirect exploiters. I think that by attending all sittings of the CC and all sittings of the Politburo, and by reading all the documents of the CC, such workers can form a staff of devoted supporters of the Soviet system, able, first, to give stability to the CC itself, and second, to work effectively on the renewal and improvement of the state apparatus.

LENIN'S POLITICAL TESTAMENT 1922

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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.

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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.

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Lenin, 24 December 1922

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Lenin, 25 December 1922

The Kronstadt manifesto

Early in March, the sailors and workers of Kronstadt produced a manifesto which included the following demands:

- 1. New elections to the Soviets, to be held by secret ballot.**
- 2. Freedom of speech and of the press.**
- 3. Freedom of assembly.**
- 4. Rights for trade unions and release of imprisoned trade unionists.**
- 5. Ending of the right of Communists to be the only permitted socialist political party.**
- 6. The release of left-wing political prisoners.**
- 7. Ending of special food rations for Communist Party members.**
- 8. Freedom for individuals to bring food from the country into the towns without confiscation.**
- 9. Withdrawal of political commissars from the factories.**
- 10. Ending of the Communist Party monopoly of the press.**

The disconcerted Communist party decided the rebels must be quickly and completely suppressed. Lenin dispatched 300 delegates from the 10th Communist Party Congress in Moscow to help crush the mutineers, while Trotsky demanded the liquidation of the rebels, calling them "White Guard mutineers." A propaganda campaign was launched to prove that the mutineers were czarist counterrevolutionaries. Meanwhile Trotsky organized a special army of Communist military units and Cheka (secret political police) forces in Petrograd. The Communist forces attacked Kronstadt across the frozen sea on mar. 8, 10, and 12, but each assault was broken by the Kronstadt forts and ships. On the 16th, the Communists, cloaked in white robes, staged a night attack and penetrated Kronstadt's defenses. Two days of fierce fighting followed before Kronstadt was conquered.

Aftermath. Some 8,000 mutineers escaped across the ice to Finland, while 2,000 were captured. The Cheka took a savage revenge, as Alexander Berkman (an eyewitness) noted in his diary: "**Thousands of sailors and workers lie dead in the streets. Summary executions of prisoners and hostages continue.**" The survivors were shipped to concentration camps. Thirteen mutineers with affluent backgrounds were put on trial as the mutiny's supposed leaders, in an effort to discredit the rebellion as a reactionary czarist plot. All 13, who had played only minor roles in the mutiny, were convicted and sentenced to death.

NEP (NEW ECONOMIC POLICY) (March 1921 - 1928)

- Ended the requisition of grain
- Introduced an agricultural tax (first paid in goods later after 1923 in money)
- Agriculture surplus could be sold for private gain
- Some smaller and local industries became private - allowed to make profit
- Some private trade was allowed
- Currency - the rouble was reconstituted and backed up
- Heavy industries, transports, foreign trade and banking was still controlled by the state
- After some years NEP ran into problems such as growing prices relative to income and unemployment. NEP also contradicted the communist ideology...

ECONOMY - "NEW ECONOMIC POLICY (NEP) 1921-1927

Lenin's new policy of March 1921 was primarily aimed at the peasants in an effort to regain their support and give them an incentive to produce more. Therefore

1. **The requisitioning of surplus grain was ended** and instead an **agricultural tax introduced**, to be paid in kind until 1923 and thereafter in cash. The amount to be paid was a fixed proportion of the surplus, hence the more that was produced, the greater the peasants share of his own surplus. In addition, this surplus could be privately traded and the peasant could by machinery, hire labor...

The "New Economic Policy" (NEP) was not restricted to agriculture.

2. **Industry and trade were restored in part to private enterprise**, although the types of works and businesses in private hands tended to be small and local. The State retained control of what Lenin called "**the commanding heights**" - **heavy industry, the transport system, foreign trade and banking.**

The third thing that needed to be restored was the

3. **Currency. Lenin reconstituted the rouble** and backed it up with gold, silver and foreign currency.

By returning to a private trade system the immediate problems were solved but at some time a fundamental reorganization would be needed. Soviet saw a considerable recovery in living standards and production levels. By 1926 in most production areas the economy had regained the 1913 output level. The NEP environment with its combination of market and planning had worked quite well, the peasants and the entrepreneurs had gained from it, but most other sectors of the economy were under fairly strict state control, so that the town worker could still be ordered where to go, and how much he could be paid and so forth, while the entrepreneurs and his country colleagues were free to produce as they liked. This paradox was unsatisfactory, not only on economic but also ideological grounds.

PROBLEMS WITH NEP:

- Prices of manufactured goods became high
- Entrepreneurs and rich peasants ("**kulaks**") – gained from the new system, but most peasants and many workers in the urban areas were under strict state control
- A new group of traders, the "**Nepmen**", made huge profits from buying food and goods cheaply and selling them more dearly...
- This economy was a capitalistic economy, based on capitalistic methods. This caused a lot of criticism from the leftist Bolsheviks (caused a split within the Party) – NEP was ideologically incorrect!