Revolution of 1905

A SHORT HISTORY

Abraham Ascher

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To our grandchildren, Alexander, Maya, and Nathaniel

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Preface

This book is essentially a precis of my two-volume work, *The Revolution of 1905*, published by Stanford University Press in 1988 and 1992. I realize, of course, that in paring down by about two-thirds my earlier account of Russia's first revolution, which really began in 1904 and ended in 1907, I had to leave out many details that are normally considered central in works of history. I also realize, however, that few students or general readers have the time or inclination to read 720 pages of text and another 67 pages of notes, even on events that, in the view of many political activists and historians, made inevitable the more momentous Revolution of 1917. As I proceeded with the abridgment of my initial study, it became clear that a credible account of the Revolution of 1905 covering all its major aspects could be encompassed in a considerably shorter book. Readers who are interested in more details on any specific topic can turn to the larger work, where they will also find the documentation for my findings as well as an extensive bibliography.

The interpretation of 1905 as the event that necessarily led to the Bolshevik seizure of power in 1917 owes its origins to Vladimir Lenin, who in 1920 referred to the first revolution as the "dress rehearsal," without which the "victory of the October Revolution in 1917 would have been impossible." Thereafter, Soviet historians explored 1905 with remarkable diligence and invariably quoted Lenin's pithy comment, which, they believed, settled the question of why the revolution was a pivotal event in modern history. As early as 1930, a scholarly bibliography devoted to Russian publications on 1905 ran to 715 pages, and in the succeeding sixty years that literature continued to grow at a very rapid pace. The Revolution of 1917 occupied first place in Soviet historical consciousness, but the Revolution of 1905 did not lag far behind.

The intense interest in 1905 in the Soviet Union must be seen as part of a general concern by the political leadership to enhance the legitimacy of Communism. If it could be demonstrated that Leninist policies were

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unimpeachable even in 1905, when the Bolsheviks suffered a major political and military defeat, then the Communist Party's claims to preeminence in Soviet society and in the worldwide struggle for socialism would be that much stronger. This concern with legitimacy explains the enormous outpouring of works on 1905 for mass circulation, generally written by well-established scholars. In 1985, only six years before the collapse of the Soviet Union, a reference book on 1905 by noted historians for the general public was issued in a run of 175,000 copies. After recounting the standard Leninist view on the subject, the authors discussed the "echo" of the revolution across five continents, including in such countries as Cuba, Uruguay, and Algeria, where interest in Russia was altogether slight at the time.

Although it is dubious whether the Revolution of 1905 was in fact the dress rehearsal for 1917, in one respect the link between the two is indisputable. Bolshevism emerged as a distinct political movement during the first revolution. Strictly speaking, the movement originated in 1903, but only after the spread of unrest in 1904 did Lenin and his followers begin to formulate the strategies and tactics that became the essentials of Bolshevism, distinguishing it fully from other strands of Marxism.

During the past three decades or so, Western historians, too, have devoted a great deal of attention to Russia in the turbulent years from 1904 to 1907. Their interpretations vary widely, running the spectrum from Marxist to liberal to conservative, and even within these broad categories there are distinct differences. For our purposes, it suffices to delineate the major lines of interpretation. Social historians and most historians on the left tend to argue that the masses, and in particular the working class, were at all times the driving force of the revolution. Moreover, many of them consider Bloody Sunday (January 9, 1905), the day soldiers fired on an unarmed procession, to have been the starting point of the upheaval and view the armed uprising in Moscow in December of that year as its high point. Finally, these historians dismiss as totally inadequate the concessions granted by the government to the opposition, contending that in light of the determination of the ruling groups to hold on to power, Russia could not have been transformed peacefully into a constitutional monarchy along the Western European model. By contrast, conservative historians insist that it was the radicalism and intransigence of the opposition that at every turn of the revolution undermined the chances of a gradual transition to constitutionalism.

The interpretation I find most congenial might be characterized, for want of a better term, as "broadly liberal." It depicts the revolution not

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as an event that made any one path of development inevitable, but rather as a critical juncture that opened up several paths. Under intense pressure, initially from liberals for political change and then from other social groups also interested in economic and social change, the autocracy appeared to suffer a loss of nerve. For an entire year, beginning in the fall of 1904, the government oscillated between accommodation and repression, but neither policy succeeded in ending the unrest. On the contrary, the government's inconsistency was taken as a sign of weakness by the various groups within the opposition, encouraging them to step up their agitation.

During the general strike in October 1905—the high point of the revolution in the "liberal" interpretation—the pressure from mass movements became so acute that it drove the autocracy to the verge of collapse, making possible Russia's transformation into a constitutional state on the Western model. Even though that prospect did not materialize, some institutional changes introduced during the period of unrest survived the failure of the revolution. Most notably, Russia retained an elected legislature as well as political parties speaking for various social and economic interests. The participants in the revolution failed to achieve their major goal, namely, the total dismantling of the autocratic regime, but the old order did not emerge unscathed from the three years of conflict. Despite all claims to the contrary, it had been substantially weakened, probably beyond repair.

When I considered writing a short history of 1905 it occurred to me that such a work might appeal to the growing number of students and general readers interested in comparative history and in the painful transition endured by societies that are economically still largely agrarian and authoritarian as they seek to establish polities with viable representative institutions. Of course, what happened in Russia in the years from 1904 to 1907 had many unique features, but in certain respects the turbulence amounted to a new kind of upheaval that presaged later ones in the twentieth century.

The challenge to the established order in Russia came from mass movements representing four different social groups: liberals among the middle class and gentry; industrial workers; peasants; and some national minorities. Serious disturbances broke out in various cities, agrarian regions, and outlying areas of the empire, as well as in many cultural institutions and in the army and navy. Virtually no social group or geographical region remained unaffected by the unrest. In a few regions of the Russian Empire, the onslaughts against the authorities actually forced

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tsarist officials to flee, which left the responsibility for local government temporarily in the hands of the insurgents. Had the disorders occurred simultaneously throughout the country, the government probably would not have been able to survive.

The dynamism of the industrial workers was yet another striking and novel feature of the revolution in Russia. For a few weeks late in 1905, this group, which was only a tiny segment of the country's total population, spearheaded the political campaigns against the autocracy that brought the government to its knees. Moreover, in St. Petersburg and elsewhere, workers formed an institution (the soviet) that briefly assumed some of the prerogatives of government in the capital. All these features make the Revolution of 1905 an especially good starting point for a comparative study of modern revolutions.

This is not to say that there was one clear pattern to the events in Russia as they unfolded from 1904 to 1907. Nor was there such a pattern in later revolutions elsewhere. The overall picture in Russia is one of great complexity. No one social group dominated the opposition throughout the period. Many of the leading participants changed strategies and tactics in the light of changing circumstances. There were ebbs and flows in the revolution, whose course was determined by various factors: a senseless war that Russia fought against Japan; the resolve of countless people to seek relief from their burdens; the government's clumsy attempts to halt the unrest; and, finally, the judgments of individuals about the strength of the movements they supported and the intentions and resilience of their opponents.

An approach to the study of 1905 that does not link it directly to the more momentous Revolution of 1917 but, instead, that stresses complexity and ambiguity, might seem to deprive the first revolution of some of its excitement. Such an approach, however, yields better—and ultimately more exciting—history: it is closer to what actually happened. The individuals who participated in the mass movements of 1905 did not believe that they were merely preparing the way for the real event at some future date. They were trying to bring about far-reaching changes then and there. Furthermore, it is worth emphasizing that during the first fifteen months of the revolution these endeavors were not necessarily doomed to fail. On several occasions the authorities considered daring reforms that might have satisfied enough of the opposition's demands to have brought the unrest to an end. The initial period of the revolution might aptly be designated as one of missed opportunities.

The problem was that the government always made its offers of reform

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too late, a stance that proved to be costly. Concessions that would have been welcomed early in the spring of 1905 were rejected in the summer of that year by opposition leaders incensed at the pettiness, callousness, and obstinacy of the authorities. When in October the government at last did promise to introduce fundamental changes, only a small portion of the opposition was willing to abandon the struggle. The authorities, who were never fully reconciled to the reforms, soon began to renege on their promises. Poor judgment and bad timing thus played a leading role in determining the course of the revolution.

During the last eighteen months of the revolution, roughly from January 1906 to June 1907, the conflict between the authorities and the opposition assumed a dimension quite different from that of the initial period. There were no longer any eruptions of mass fury that shook the foundations of the empire or that forced the autocracy to make sweeping concessions, though lawlessness and political terror became more widespread. Because of the political concessions late in 1905, the conflict was now played out to a large extent in the political arena. Political parties could organize their followers and could publish, more or less freely, newspapers as well as journals and pamphlets. To a degree unprecedented in Russia, workers and peasants could form various movements to promote their interests. The defenders of the old order also took advantage of the new freedoms and created myriad organizations to advance the cause of the autocracy. In a real sense, the Russian people had become politicized, and the Duma, the newly created representative institution, became the vortex of the many political storms in 1906 and 1907.

Under the circumstances, the overall atmosphere continued to be dangerously volatile, and many activists as well as government leaders expected a new explosion from below. The clearest symptom of this turbulence was the frequency with which rumors were taken seriously. With amazing regularity, rumors about the dissolution of the First and Second Dumas, the dismissal or resignation of prominent ministers, the establishment of a dictatorship, and the outbreak of pogroms against Jews and liberals spread quickly and caused great anxiety, if not panic. Although the rumors were often groundless, that they so easily gained credibility was a sign of the fluidity of the state of affairs and the despair that had gripped the nation. The country had undergone so many traumas and the distrust of the court and political leaders was so deep-seated that no tale of horror or willfulness could be dismissed out of hand. The political storms subsided and the revolution can be said to have ended on June 3, 1907, when Petr Stolypin, the resolute prime minister, dissolved the

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Duma and arbitrarily changed the electoral law in such a way as to inflict a fatal blow on the opposition, reducing it to virtual impotence.

On one level, it can be said that the men in positions of leadership in society and in the state were guided throughout the period of revolution by their wish to defend their interests and the interests of the social groups they claimed to represent. Yet by itself this does not adequately explain their behavior. Neither side in the fierce conflict was a monolith; in both camps important figures disagreed with each other over polices as well as tactics. Even more to the point, both statesmen and leaders of the opposition occasionally took positions out of keeping with their predilections. It was not uncommon for archconservatives to favor far-reaching concessions and for militants on the left to oppose bellicose tactics. A student of 1905 encounters many surprises, which is why the history of the revolution is such a complicated and fascinating story.

I should like to express my gratitude to those who encouraged me to undertake this short history of 1905 and helped me to bring it to light. Norris Pope, Editorial Director of Stanford University Press, was especially helpful from the moment I mentioned the idea and has been supportive throughout the period I worked on this volume. Once the manuscript was in the hands of the Press, others, most notably Mariana Raykov, contributed greatly to bringing the project to completion.

The Revolution of 1905

The Old Regime Under Siege

THE FRAGMENTED SOCIETY

On the eve of the Revolution of 1905, Russia appeared to many of its subjects to be divided into two irreconcilable camps: one favored the maintenance of the autocratic system of rule; the other was committed to rule by the people. But in fact the state of affairs was much more complicated since both camps were highly fragmented. True, Tsar Nicholas II, the leader of the conservative forces, insisted that in keeping with longstanding traditions his orders must be obeyed "not merely from fear but according to the dictates of one's conscience . . . [which are] ordained by God himself." Yet serious conflicts of interest among his supporters as well as differences over how to handle the growing popular discontent partially explain the authorities' failure to pursue farsighted and consistent policies. At the same time, opponents of the old order disagreed sharply among themselves on the political, economic, and social changes that Russia must undergo to modernize the country along Western European lines. Only by keeping in mind the fragmentation of Russian society can one understand the complexity and ambiguous outcome of the turbulence that engulfed the country in the years from 1904 to 1907, which actually constitute the full span of the revolution and which will be the focus of this book.

The tsar sought to impose his will on the vast empire of some 129 million people through an imperial bureaucracy, which served at the sovereign's pleasure and whose reach extended to the lowest level of local affairs. Although the ruler obviously could not control all activities in his realm, on issues about which he cared deeply, however trivial, his word could not easily be ignored. Moreover, his power could not be counterbalanced by public institutions. Created at the initiative of the state, these institutions were much weaker than their counterpart in Western Europe,

and most of them were to a substantial degree beholden to the state. Indeed, the principle of freedom of association was not recognized; very few laws had been enacted regulating public meetings or the establishment of private societies. All gatherings of groups of a dozen or more people were suspect and required police approval. No public lectures could be delivered without formal permission by the police, which generally declined to issue permits. The organs of local self-government (elected zemstvos and city councils), established in the 1860s, were creations of the authorities in St. Petersburg, and during the era of counterreform that began in the 1880s their functions and powers steadily eroded. The senior administrators of the Orthodox Church, a powerful institution in a country where the vast majority of the population was deeply religious, were servants of the state, appointed by the tsar.

The government went to great lengths to prevent the emergence of an organized opposition to the autocratic regime. For one thing, it sought to shape public opinion by censoring books, periodicals, and newspapers. For another, it maintained a system of police surveillance, and arbitrarily meted out severe punishment (internal exile or imprisonment) to anyone considered "seditious," a term defined very broadly. The political police (composed of the okhrana and the more secretive Special Section, both distinct and autonomous forces within the Department of Police) placed agents in educational, social, and political institutions as well as in factories to keep an eye on actual and potential dissidents. And yet, ironically, despite Russia's deserved reputation as a repressive police state, the police force was not notably efficient, primarily because the state lacked the means and personnel to create an effective security force, or, for that matter, an effective administration. Corruption and other forms of dishonesty on the part of police officials as well as other civil servants were systemic, and this, in turn, undermined respect for public authorities.

Ultimately, of course, the reputation as well as the viability of an autocratic regime depend on the political sagacity and competence of the ruler. It was Russia's misfortune that Nicholas II, who ruled from 1894 to 1917, possessed few qualifications to govern a powerful nation, least of all during periods of crisis. Although moderately intelligent and a man of personal charm, he showed little serious interest in politics and lacked the drive and vision to take charge of the government, to familiarize himself with the workings of the administration, and to instill a sense of purpose and direction in the ministers and bureaucracy. He was also a narrow-minded, prejudiced man, incapable of tolerating people who did not fit his conception of the true Russian. In a country in which close to half the population belonged to various minorities, such an attitude of the sovereign inevitably provoked widespread resentment.

At the time he ascended the throne, Nicholas was an unknown quantity to society at large, a fact that encouraged many enlightened people to hope that the new ruler would adopt policies more liberal than those of his father, Alexander III. But Nicholas quickly disabused the optimists by announcing to a delegation representing the nobility, the zemstvos, and the cities that they were entertaining "senseless dreams" of participating "in the affairs of internal administration." He intended, he said, to "maintain the principle of autocracy just as firmly and unflinchingly as did my unforgettable father." This statement, it is worth noting, was made at a time when absolutism in Central and Western Europe had either been replaced by limited monarchies of varying types or by republican polities.

It was not until 1902 that Tsar Nicholas found a man in whom he had full confidence to serve as his preeminent minister in the government. That man was V. K. Plehve, who assumed the post of minister of internal affairs. Highly intelligent and devoted to the preservation of absolutism, Plehve had few compunctions about using force to crush critics of autocracy, though at times he also favored more subtle approaches. He acquired the reputation of being the most reactionary and wiliest statesman of late-imperial Russia.

Plehve's powers were immense. The Ministry of Internal Affairs was composed not only of various branches of the police but also of separate departments responsible for economic affairs in the countryside, the mail and telegraph services, non-Orthodox religions, censorship, and the penal system. The governors of the provinces reported to the minister of internal affairs, who also exercised substantial authority over the zemstvos and city councils. It is no exaggeration to say that hardly any aspect of domestic policy remained outside the jurisdiction of Plehve's department.

Although Plehve devised some measures to conciliate the growing opposition, he did not favor granting any class or social group in society a genuine voice in government, for he considered both the masses and the educated groups inadequately trained for such a role. Obsessed with the maintenance of order and stability, he could not tolerate the slightest expression of criticism of the authorities. Nor was he capable of distinguishing between moderates who were loyal monarchists but favored gradual liberalization of the country's political institutions and radicals who advocated a fundamental reordering of society. To root out all opposition to the prevailing order, he ordered extensive police searches and stepped up the policy of Russification—the imposition of Russian culture on the minorities—throughout the empire. He directed his fire in particular against the zemstvos, ordering their employees summarily arrested, regularly overturning decisions of their assemblies, frequently refusing to

confirm in office representatives elected by the zemstvo assemblies to serve on their boards, and prohibiting zemstvos from even discussing such topics as universal education.

Neither Plehve, the tsar, nor most of the other men in positions of authority understood that the growing agitation for reform, far from being a passing phenomenon, had deep roots in Russian society. Ever since the early nineteenth century, many among the intelligentsia (writers, philosophers, political activists, and artists) had taken a critical stance toward the prevailing order. Their motives and aims varied, but they were united in the belief that the country's backwardness as compared to Western Europe was unacceptable. The various mass movements committed to political change that emerged in the early twentieth century owed their programs—or, perhaps more accurately, their ideologies—to the intelligentsia, but at the same time none of these ideologies would have attracted a large following without the profound economic, social, and cultural changes that occurred after the 1860s, many of which the government itself initiated.

Russia's humiliating defeat on her own soil during the Crimean War (1853–56) had amply demonstrated that the country's economic and social backwardness had sapped its national strength. To a large extent, that defeat prompted the government to undertake the Great Reforms of the 1860s and 1870s, which abolished serfdom, created the zemstvos, established the rudiments of the rule of law, and modernized the army. But by the 1880s and 1890s it was clear that by themselves these reforms, however far-reaching, could not maintain Russia as a European power such as it had been early in the nineteenth century. To regain its position as a significant actor in the international arena, the country would have to be modernized economically; that is, it would have to embark on a program of rapid industrialization. But the men in authority did not understand the implications of such a course. They deluded themselves into believing that they could modernize the country economically without altering the traditional social and political order.

No one fostered the illusion more fervently than S. Iu. Witte, the brilliant architect of Russian industrialization. A man of broad experience in the civil service and in private business, Witte became head of the Railway Department of the Ministry of Finance in 1889. He was so effective that three years later, at the age of forty-three, he was appointed minister of finance, and this marked the beginning of a fourteen-year period of extraordinary influence at the highest echelons of government.

Witte contended that if Russia, a latecomer to industrialization, was to make rapid progress in modernizing the economy, the state would have to play a large role in stimulating the process. He therefore launched an array of interrelated programs, the main purpose of which was to amass capital investment. Among other things, he promoted foreign loans and investments, established confidence in Russia's financial system by adopting the gold standard, placed extremely high tariffs on foreign industrial commodities, and substantially raised the rates of taxation. A large share of the financial burden for these programs fell on low-income groups, especially the peasants, who had to pay high prices for manufactured goods and absorb the high indirect taxes on such items as tobacco, sugar, matches, and petroleum.

The state also participated directly in the nation's economy to an extent unequaled in any Western country. For example, in 1899 the state bought almost two-thirds of all metallurgical production. By the early twentieth century it controlled some 70 percent of the railways and owned vast tracts of land, numerous mines and oil fields, and extensive forests. The national budgets from 1903 to 1913 indicated that the government received more than 25 percent of its income from various holdings. The economic well-being of private entrepreneurs thus depended in large measure on decisions by the authorities in St. Petersburg. This was a major reason for the relatively timid approach to politics of a substantial sector of the Russian middle class prior to 1905.

Russia's economic progress during the eleven years of Witte's tenure as minister of finance was, by every standard, remarkable. Railway trackage virtually doubled, coal output in southern Russia jumped from 183 million poods in 1890 to 671 million in 1900 (1 pood equals 36.11 pounds). In the same region, the production of iron and steel rose from 8.6 million poods in 1890 to 75.8 million in 1900. Also, between 1890 and 1900 the production of cotton thread almost doubled and that of cloth increased by about two-thirds. By 1914 the Russian Empire was the fifth industrial power in the world, though labor productivity as well as per-capita income still lagged far behind those in Western Europe.

These vast changes forced the authorities to take stock of some of their most cherished beliefs. Until 1905, senior government officials almost without exception contended that relations between employers and workers would be patriarchal in character, comparable to the relations between landlords and peasants, and that there was therefore no reason to fear trouble from below. The truth is that even though in the late 1890s the total number of industrial workers was only about 3 million (2.4 percent of the country's population) there were already signs of working-class militancy that in some respects surpassed the militancy of workers in the West. There were several reasons for this. Because of the heavy state involvement in economic development and the adoption of the most advanced forms of production and factory organization, Russia's

manufacturing economy was more heavily concentrated than those of Germany and the United States, usually singled out as the pathfinders in this regard. The existence of large factories was a boon to labor organizers and political militants, who could easily reach sizable numbers of workers resentful of the harsh conditions at the workplace.

Moreover, the "disciplinary paternalism" that governed relations between factory owners and workers placed the latter in an extremely disadvantageous position. Collective resistance to the employer was considered tantamount to an uprising against the state, punishable by fifteen to twenty years of hard labor. A strike for higher wages could result in prison sentences of three weeks to three months for agitators and seven days to three weeks for participants. Conditions for factory workers were grim. After 1897 workers normally toiled eleven and a half hours a day, five days a week and somewhat less on Saturdays. Their wages were exceedingly low, and since many of them returned for part of the year to their villages to work in the fields, they were housed in large, unsanitary barracks during their service at factories. Finally, employers and their managers condescended to the laborers, addressing them in the familiar "thou," searching them for stolen goods at the end of the workday, and imposing fines on them for infractions of the intricate "Rules of Internal Order." Any act of insubordination was punishable by a fine. It seemed to many workers that they were treated as "servants and slaves."

It did not take long for Russian workers to disprove the government's claim that they were content and would remain docile. Between 1862 and 1869 six strikes and twenty-nine "disturbances" took place; from 1870 to 1885 the average number of annual strikes rose to twenty and the number of disturbances from three to seventy-three. Then, with the intensification of economic development, labor unrest continued to rise rapidly. Between 1886 and 1894 the annual average number of strikes was thirty-three; between 1895 and 1904, one hundred seventy-six. During the massive strikes in 1896 and 1897 in the textile mills of St. Petersburg, workers revealed an unprecedented degree of sophistication, unity, and discipline. There could no longer be any doubt about the Russian workers' ability to act forcefully to advance their interests. The strike movement reached it highest level in the period before Revolution of 1905 in 1903, when 138,877 workers engaged in 550 work stoppages.

The government tried in various ways to appease workers. In 1882, it enacted laws to prohibit the employment of children under twelve and also established factory inspectors to enforce the legislation. In 1901, it adopted an experiment in police unionization known as *Zubatovshchina*, or police socialism. The scheme was the brainchild of S. V. Zubatov, one of the more colorful and imaginative police officers in prerevolutionary Russia. Zubatov envisioned the evolution of the tsarist regime into a "social"

monarchy," whose authority would be strengthened immensely by its assumption of the role of mediator in the struggle between capitalists and workers. Under his aegis, government officials organized a series of "police unions" in several major cities that submitted demands to their employers, who were pressured by police agents into making concessions to the workers. Initially, workers appeared to be rallying around the monarchy in response to Zubatov's enticements, but in July 1903 one of the police unions was believed to have been the moving force behind a general strike in Odessa, the first work stoppage of such dimensions in Russia. Alarmed at this dangerous turn of events, the authorities dismissed Zubatov and ended his experiment. But in 1904 the minister of internal affairs, Plehve, at a loss about how to defuse the protest movement of the working class, permitted a priest in St. Petersburg, Father Georgii Gapon, to revive "police socialism"—with results far more explosive than those in Odessa.

Because the working class played a critical role in the events of 1905 and a party claiming to be its representative took power in 1917, scholars have taken great pains to recount the history of the Russian proletariat. Yet early in the twentieth century the empire was still predominantly agrarian and peasants constituted well over 70 percent of the population. They also nursed many grievances, though most were still devoted to the tsar and considered him to be the only legitimate source of political authority. The peasants were convinced that the sovereign had their interests at heart and was committed to providing for the people's needs; if only they could inform him about their grievances, the tsar would overrule the landlords and officials, the source of all the peasants' miseries, and do his utmost to improve their lot. But by the early twentieth century there were increasing signs of peasant disaffection. In 1902, for example, major agrarian disturbance in Poltava and Kharkov provinces suggested that a profound malaise had taken root in the countryside. Still, it is noteworthy that even now peasants focused their attacks not on the autocrat or his officials but on the landlords, whom they held primarily responsible for frustrating the tsar's will.

The principal cause of the peasants' discontent was their economic plight, which had deteriorated steadily since their emancipation in 1861. Their average landholdings had declined more than 20 percent, tax burdens were extremely onerous, and productivity remained abysmally low, in large measure because the system of communal landownership, which governed about four-fifths of the peasants' holdings, was not conducive to either long-range planning or to the application of modern farming. Many statistics could be cited to demonstrate the wretched conditions in the countryside, but none is more telling than the following: the death rate in Russia was almost double that in England.

In addition, peasants had to endure numerous other restrictions and burdens. The emancipation decree had freed them from serfdom, but they still could not move freely from one place to another and in numerous ways remained at the mercy of local landlords. Officials could imprison a peasant or exile him to Siberia without benefit of a trial; only in 1903 did the government prohibit corporal punishment of convicted criminals. After the counterreforms of the late 1880s the land captains, appointed by provincial governors, assumed a vast amount of arbitrary power in the countryside. They could overrule decisions of local institutions, appoint personnel to important governmental positions, and order the imprisonment of a peasant for five days or impose a five-ruble fine on him without resorting to judicial proceedings.

Peasant discontent was not the only sign of social stress in rural regions. After emancipation of the peasants, the *dvorianstvo* (nobility), a highly diversified group, began to lose its grip economically and entered a period of decline as a social and political force. This was a matter of considerable concern to the authorities because the nobles, constituting about 1.5 percent of the population, was the main prop of the autocracy.

The most striking manifestation of the nobility's decline was its loss of land. Unable or unwilling to administer their estates on a capitalist basis, many nobles sold their land to townsmen or peasants, surrendering in the four decades, from 1861 to 1905, about one-third of their total holdings. To appreciate the magnitude of this development, it should be kept in mind that in the 1860s the privileged classes owned about one-half of all privately held arable land.

At bottom, the nobles' inability to turn their estates into profitable ventures was rooted in their psychological disposition. Under the system of serfdom, noble landlords had never been known for hard work, managerial skills, or frugality. Accustomed to receiving state handouts and dues as well as services from their serfs, many failed to develop the drive and initiative necessary for success in a market economy. The emancipation of the serfs made matters worse. True, a fair number of nobles moved into other fields of endeavor, but many of them found it even harder to manage their estates profitably, for now they had to fend for themselves under circumstances alien to their experience. Senior officials were alarmed at the weakening of their major supporters, but they were at a loss about how to reverse the trend.

In the political arena, two new forces made their appearance in the late nineteenth century, organized liberalism and radicalism, both aspiring to mass support. The autocracy made no effort to integrate either one of the new groups into the body politic in any meaningful way, a neglect that, on the one hand, exacerbated tensions between the authorities and the opposition, and, on the other, impelled major groups within the opposition to pay special attention to the vexing question of how they might cooperate in the struggle against the old order.

At the core of liberalism was the stress on individualism, the notion that the freedom of the individual must be protected against arbitrary encroachments by the state. Beyond that, there were important differences among Russian liberals, but all were critical of the bureaucracy and virtually all favored far-reaching limitations on the powers of the monarch. More specifically, liberals tended (again with significant variations) to favor the rule of law, civil liberties, guarantees of private property, and the creation of a legislative body with a voice in shaping the laws of the empire. Finally, until the turn of the century, the vast majority of them believed that by peaceful agitation they would be able to persuade the tsar and the bureaucracy to introduce reforms along these lines.

The zemstvos, established shortly after the emancipation of the serfs, afforded public-spirited men, often from noble families, a suitable arena in which to pursue the general good. To be sure, their scope was limited to such activities as charity, local education, health services, the building of roads and bridges, the maintenance of records, and the improvement of agricultural production, but the zemstvos were the only semipolitical institution at least partly free from bureaucratic control. And within their circumscribed sphere of competence, these local organs of self-government were remarkably effective, which accounts for the high hopes placed on them by the intelligentsia, intellectuals who were passionately interested in public issues and who played a critical role in undermining the legitimacy of the tsarist regime. The technical experts employed by the zemstvos—teachers, agronomists, engineers, statisticians, and doctors, generally referred to as the "third element," numbering about sixtyfive thousand early in the twentieth century—came to be a significant force in the liberal movement. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Russian liberalism also attracted the support of professional people not employed by the zemstvos (professors, lawyers, writers, doctors, and engineers) as well of some members of the growing industrial and commercial classes. Liberalism became an organized force in 1903 with the founding of the Soiuz osvobozhdeniia (Union of Liberation), an underground movement that included a sprinkling of moderate radicals. Its program, adopted in October 1904, called for the liquidation of the autocracy, the establishment of a constitutional form of government, selfdetermination for the nationalities of the empire, and for economic and social reform.

The liberals' success in building an impressive political movement is remarkable. Their main weapon was the pen, which they put to good use in the "thick journals" of opinion and in newspapers of very high quality. Censorship was a serious hindrance, but the regulations were loose enough to enable liberal journalists to express their views in general terms often couched in Aesopian language.

The tasks of the opposition to autocracy were greatly complicated by the fact that radicalism emerged as an organized force more or less at the same time as liberalism. This dual development produced tensions that at times weakened the camp hostile to the old order. Liberals focused on the dismantling of the autocratic system of rule, whereas the radicals insisted that economic and social changes were no less urgent.

The intellectual roots of radicalism can be traced to Alexander Herzen (1812–70), who in the first half of the nineteenth century argued that the chances for socialism were much better in Russia than in the West because the commune had accustomed the people to "communal life" and egalitarianism. The Russian peasant, Herzen contended, "has no morality save that which flows instinctively, naturally, from his communism." Although a professed revolutionary, Herzen believed, most vigorously toward the end of his life, that socialism could be attained by peaceful means.

Broadly speaking, it can be said that his ideas were adopted by the Socialist Revolutionary Party that was founded in 1902 and that developed into the largest socialist movement in Russia. The party's official program advocated the transfer of all land to peasant communes or local associations, which in turn would assign it on an egalitarian basis to everyone who wished to earn his living by farming. Industry would be similarly socialized. Although the Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs) insisted that the final goal, socialism, must be achieved by means of persuasion, they tolerated the Combat Organization, an independent organ of the party that carried out dozens of political assassinations. Political terror, many SRs believed, was necessary to bring about the dismantling of the autocratic regime.

Another socialist movement, this one representing the working class, appeared in 1883 with the formation of a Russian Marxist association (the Group for the Emancipation of Labor, the forerunner of the Social Democratic Party). Its leading spokesman, G. V. Plekhanov, contended that the economic and political development of Russia would be similar, though not identical, to that of Western Europe. Russia would first undergo a bourgeois revolution, which would usher in the kind of polity that the liberals advocated; after an undetermined period of further industrial growth, a second, proletarian, revolution would occur. But

whereas in Western Europe the proletariat had initially been a mere appendage to the bourgeoisie in the struggles against the old regime, in Russia it would constitute an independent political force during the first revolution and would even take the lead in the assault on tsarism.

It was not until 1900 that Marxism in Russia became a political movement of any consequence. That year V. I. Lenin began to publish a newspaper (*Iskra*) and to create an imposing network of illegal organizations. A strategist and tactician of revolution rather than a profound theorist, Lenin owed much of his success in creating a potent political movement (and later in making the first Marxist revolution) to his personal qualities: enormous drive, sincerity, self-assurance, modesty, and political sagacity. Still, the growth of the Russian Social Democratic Workers Party (RSDWP) was slow; in 1905, there were only twelve thousand active Social Democrats in the empire, and most of them were not workers. This Marxist party, like every contemporary Russian political movement, was dominated by intellectuals, and its inner core consisted of professional revolutionaries, men and women dedicated full time to radical politics.

The Marxists faced a problem that had plagued radicals for a long time and would be a perennial obstacle for them: the political inertia of the masses. Lenin addressed this issue in 1902 in one of his most celebrated writings, What Is to Be Done?, a work that marked a departure from classical Marxism, which had insisted that capitalism and exploitation of the masses would inevitably transform workers into a class-conscious proletariat committed to socialist revolution. Lenin abandoned this deterministic view of the historical process by arguing that by itself the working class could never attain class consciousness. As a proponent of voluntarism, Lenin held that the "revolutionary socialist intelligentsia" must imbue the workers with class consciousness. Indeed, he went so far as to assert that workers should not be recruited en masse into the Social Democratic Party, which must be controlled by a small group of professional revolutionaries. As he famously boasted, "Give us an organization of revolutionists and we shall overturn Russia." In short, Lenin maintained that human initiative, not general economic forces, would be the decisive factor in determining the political fate of the country.

At the Second Congress of the RSDWP in 1903, the party divided over precisely this issue. Lenin introduced a motion that defined a party member as anyone who subscribed to the party's program, gave it material support, and took part in the work of one of its organizations. Iu. O. Martov, up to now one of Lenin's close colleagues, wanted to substitute for Lenin's wording "personal participation in one of the party's organizations" the phrase "regular personal support under the guidance of one of [the party's] organizations." It seemed to be a minor difference, but it

soon became clear that whereas Lenin wanted a small party dominated by a hierarchy of professionals, Martov and his supporters wanted the party to be as broad as possible and to maintain the greatest possible degree of contact with the masses of workers. Although Lenin lost on this issue by a vote of twenty-eight to twenty-one, he succeeded, by a series of shrewd maneuvers, in winning a majority on other questions. He therefore called his faction Bolsheviks (Majoritarians) and the opposition Mensheviks (Minoritarians), appellations that both groups accepted.

The differences between them did not prevent Bolsheviks and Mensheviks from collaborating on several occasions during the turbulence of 1904 and 1905, especially at the lower levels of the two organizations, which suggests a blurring of distinctions between them. Yet in his writings of 1905 Lenin advanced ideas and tactics that in both tone and substance increasingly turned Bolshevism into a movement with a distinctive ideological thrust. More stridently and consistently than other Marxists, he denounced the liberals for spinelessness, advocated an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry (which he now considered to be potentially revolutionary), and urged his followers to prepare for an armed uprising against the government.

In 1904, then, it can be said that three principal issues motivated the opposition to the old order. The first was the constitutional question: How could the anachronistic political structure of the empire be altered to introduce civil liberties and to assure a redistribution of power? The second was the labor question: How could the demands of the industrial proletariat for an improvement in its social and economic conditions be met? The third was the agrarian question: How could the land hunger of millions of peasants be satisfied? Although the liberals, workers, and peasants constituted fairly distinct social groups, each of which emphasized one of the three issues, by the spring of 1905 their agitation overlapped and brought on a social and political crisis that threatened to plunge the country into chaos. The government could restore stability only if it addressed the aspirations of these protest movements, but the authorities were in a quandary, not only because they were reluctant to make any concessions at all, but also because they faced conflicting demands from the various sectors of the opposition.

To complicate matters further, the national issue also provoked discontent among large sectors of the population. The Russian Empire, the accretion of centuries of colonization, military conquest, and annexation by Muscovite rulers of weak principalities, comprised more than a hundred ethnic groups with a wide range of cultures, languages, and reli-

gions. The Great Russians claimed to be the dominant group and exerted paramount influence in politics, occupying most of the important positions in the bureaucracy and military services. By the late nineteenth century, the authorities in St. Petersburg made plain their determination to preserve the hegemony of the Great Russians and even to increase their influence by reducing to a minimum the cultural and political autonomy of the minorities. Tsars Alexander III and Nicholas II embarked on a policy of ruthless Russification not only to assert the supremacy of the Great Russians but also for reasons of security. Heavily concentrated on the borderland, the minorities were considered a potential danger in time of war. In addition, the tsars feared that the special rights and privileges, cultural as well as political, enjoyed by some of the nationalities (notably the Finns and, to a much lesser extent, the Poles) would serve as a model for other minorities, among whom national consciousness was beginning to take root. If autonomy were widely extended, the empire would cease to be a "unitary state," to use the parlance of the time, and the autocrat's power would be sharply curtailed.

The authorities in St. Petersburg were also motivated by sheer prejudice. They considered the minorities to be culturally inferior, and they were especially antagonistic toward the Jews, who numbered about five million. Economic, legal, and social restrictions imposed on the Jews were more extensive and demeaning than the measures taken against other groups. Forced, with few exceptions, to live in the one region of the empire in the western and southwestern provinces known as the Pale of Settlement, Jews also had to pay special taxes, could not attain the rank of officer in the army, and were almost completely excluded from employment in the bureaucracy. The prominence of Jews in all the radical movements and, to a lesser extent, in the liberal movement was in large measure the fruit of the government's discriminatory policies.

WAR AND POLITICAL UPHEAVAL

It is conceivable that had Russia not provoked Japan into war in 1904 a revolutionary upheaval might have been delayed and the country might even have avoided altogether a cataclysm as far-reaching as the events of 1905. As it was, the catastrophic defeats suffered by the imperial army and navy seemed to justify every criticism that the political opposition had leveled at the autocratic regime: that it was irresponsible, incompetent, and reckless.

The war between Russia and Japan did not result from fundamental

conflicts over national interests. Nor is it true, as is often claimed, that the minister of internal affairs Plehve urged his government to embark on hostilities because he believed that "in order to prevent revolution, we need a small victorious war." The basic cause of the war lies in the imprudent policies of expansionism in the Far East that were pursued by various senior officials and influential men at court. For some time, the Russian government had adopted a forward policy in the Far East, but the idea was to promote economic exploitation of an area rich in resources and markets, not to make war on Japan, which was also interested in economic expansion and had extended its influence over Korea. When a Russian speculator and adventurer, A. M. Bezobrazov, unexpectedly received a concession from the Korean government to cut timber on the Yalu and Tumen rivers, the Japanese government became alarmed because this threatened its long-range plans of expansion. To avoid conflict, the Japanese proposed an arrangement whereby Russia would be granted predominance in Manchuria in return for Japan's predominance in Korea. In January 1904 Tokyo pressed for a speedy reply to its proposal. Neither Tsar Nicholas nor his chief ministers wanted to go to war, but the monarch was too weak to resist the importunities of Bezobrazov and some other reckless men not to yield to Japan's overtures for compromise. Not receiving any reply to their proposal, the Japanese on January 26 launched a surprise attack on Russian ships at Port Arthur and Chemulpo.

One reason for the highhandedness of Russia's conduct was that no one in St. Petersburg believed that the Japanese could mount a sustained military campaign against their country. On every count—the size of its population, army, navy, annual budget, or gold reserves—the advantage seemed to lie with Russia. However, it soon turned out that these claims of superiority were thoroughly misleading. For one thing, Russian forces were scattered over a vast area of the Far East, and reinforcements from the west had to be transported piecemeal, since the roadbed of the Trans-Siberian Railroad was not sturdy enough to bear heavy traffic. Even more serious, the railway still had a gap of more than 100 miles at Lake Baikal, where the line needed to be constructed around the lake in very mountainous terrain. No immediate help could be expected from the Russian navy, much of which was stationed in Europe and under the best of circumstances could not reach the theater of operations for many months.

Japan enjoyed other advantages. Its troops and naval forces were better trained and its intelligence more effective than Russia's. In one blow on January 26, 1904, the Japanese managed to put out of action over half the Russian fleet in the Yellow Sea, while suffering very minor losses. Within a few weeks, the Japanese landed troops in Chemulpo

and strengthened their forces in Korea, which proceeded to drive the Russian outposts back beyond the Yalu River. Though surprised by the attack and indignant at Japan's treachery, Tsar Nicholas and his closest counselors were at first not particularly apprehensive. They believed that the Japanese victories amounted to a "mere episode" and that soon the Russian military would succeed in repelling the enemy forces. The public throughout the country rallied to the government's support. Even a man of thoroughly moderate views, Prince S. N. Trubetskoi, a professor of philosophy at Moscow University, was momentarily carried away by patriotic fervor. He contended that Russia was defending all of Europe against the "yellow danger, the new hordes of Mongols armed with modern . . . technology." Only a few men on the far left unequivocally denounced the adventurism of the tsarist regime and gleefully predicted Russia's defeat.

But within a few months public opinion changed dramatically. The early retreats of Russian forces could be rationalized as tactical moves to improve positions, but as the war continued to go badly for Russia, and the defeats became more spectacular, the mood in Russian society began to turn sour. As early as the spring of 1904, the patriotic Prince Trubetskoi was alarmed by the turn of events and warned that "Russia could survive only if her government agreed to reforms." General M. I. Dragomanov, a retired, highly respected soldier openly blamed the military services and the government for Russia's plight. "As is known," he was fond of saying, "fish always begin to stink in their heads; is it any wonder that the army is incapable of fighting the Japanese?"

Military humiliations were only one reason for the opposition to the war. The war also debilitated the economy, which was in the early state of recovery after a prolonged slump. Usually, wars tend to stimulate economic activity, and railway construction, arms factories, shipbuilding, and the metallurgical and mining industries did benefit in 1904 from the growth in government orders. But the decision by the Trans-Siberian Railway to transport only military goods adversely affected some important sectors of the national economy. The production of silk goods, for example, declined by more than 25 percent in 1904; that of woolen goods by about 15 percent; that of cotton goods, chemicals, and some other industrial products by a smaller, but nevertheless significant, percentage. Moreover, the call to arms of about 1.2 million reservists, often the most productive workers, reduced output in the handicraft industries. This caused a curtailment of seasonal work, an important source of income for many peasants. Not infrequently, peasants were obliged to sell grain to pay their taxes even though their supplies were barely adequate for their own consumption.

A totally unpredictable event in the summer of 1904, the assassination of Plehve, the minister of internal affairs, by a Socialist Revolutionary terrorist, was in several ways a turning point in the evolution of the public mood. The elimination of the most dynamic and reactionary figure in the government both exposed the depth of despair over the state of affairs and opened up new possibilities for agitation against the war and the government. Virtually no public figure expressed regret over the murder, and Count V. N. Lamsdorff, the minister of foreign affairs, let it be known that he was relieved not to have to deal with so "uncongenial a colleague" as Plehve. Public apathy toward the government's struggle against the opposition became more evident and increasingly people voiced criticism of the government and even of the tsar. To contemporary observers, it now seemed that the autocracy's popular support was exceedingly fragile, a precondition for the eruption of a political storm.

It took Tsar Nicholas more than a month to decide on Plehve's successor. Nicholas was inclined to appoint a man committed to Plehve's hardline policies, but in the end he heeded the advice of officials who urged him to make a conciliatory gesture to calm the increasingly vocal opposition. On August 26, he announced the appointment of Prince P. D. Sviatopolk-Mirsky as minister of internal affairs. A forty-seven-year-old bureaucrat who had occupied several important posts, Mirsky was known to have expressed enlightened political views and was widely respected for his intelligence and integrity. He quickly made clear that he favored reconciliation between the government and society and that he would distinguish between revolutionaries and people who were loval subjects but opposed the arbitrariness of the administration. More important, he committed himself to a series of reforms, such as granting additional powers to the zemstvos, reducing restrictions on the press, and the pursuit of more enlightened policies toward national minorities. He did not feel competent to make specific recommendations on the vexing agrarian question, but he vowed to study it and to propose reforms. He wasted no time in dismissing several of the more notorious hard-liners from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and in declaring that it was his aim to act on the basis of the "principle of confidence." Although people on the left and the right criticized Mirsky's first steps as either too timid or too radical, the dominant reaction was positive. But an equally notable reaction to Mirky's early pronouncements was an increase in public criticism of the government.

Historical analogies are always somewhat misleading, but the situation in Russia in the fall of 1904 may be compared roughly to that in France in the second half of 1788. Just as King Louis XVI's decision to convoke the Estates-General opened the dikes to a national movement

against the old order, so Tsar Nicholas's inauguration of moderate reforms in mid-1904 unleashed a wave of oppositional activity against the autocracy. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to suggest that it was during the last four months of 1904 and not in January 1905, as is widely believed, that the Revolution of 1905 began.

The trouble was that Mirsky's reforms, though welcome, did little to restore calm in society. Too paltry to satisfy fully the opposition, they were sufficiently innovative to suggest that the authorities were too weak to resist the growing pressure for change. As a consequence, the liberals decided to put the new minister of internal affairs to the test by convening a zemstvo congress in St. Petersburg early in November. The government was expected to prohibit this meeting, whose organizers had made clear their intention to take up political issues that transcended local matters, legally the only area of competence of zemstvos. But after some hesitation, Mirsky indicated that he would order the police to "wink" at the proceedings so long as the delegates met in private quarters "for a cup of tea." At the same time, he ordered officials to suppress all news about the congress, though he himself wanted to be informed about the outcome of the discussions. The government was playing games, but there could be no doubt that it no longer felt strong enough or self-confident enough to prevent the opposition from organizing and making its views known. And despite the news blackout, politically sophisticated people generally knew that the zemstvo representatives were meeting in the capital. More than five thousand telegrams from all over the empire arrived at the congress urging the delegates to press for fundamental changes in the "unbearable" state of affairs. Soon major newspapers ignored government restrictions and published reports on the congress. The wall of censorship was now widely pierced.

After extensive discussion, the 103 delegates overwhelmingly voted for a ten-point resolution that called for a fundamental reordering of Russia's institutions, though there was some opposition to the tenth point. The first nine points condemned the prevailing state system as "abnormal" and "arbitrary" and proposed that officials be placed under the law and that the government grant civil liberties and abandon the "estate principle" in the election of deputies to local organs of self-government, which assigned an inordinate proportion of deputies to the gentry, merchants, and clergy. Such organs, moreover, should be established in all regions of the empire. These points alone were far-reaching, but most delegates wished to go further and supported the demand in Point 10 for a popular representative body that would participate fully in running the affairs of state. D. N. Shipov, a zemstvo activist ever sine the 1890s who was widely respected as a responsible and thoroughly decent person, balked.

Devoted to the monarchy, he upheld the Slavophile conception of the Russian polity. He stressed that the Russian people were basically different from Western Europeans. Russians were good-natured, patient, modest in their needs, religious, and full of love. Developing the Slavophile theme of the 1840s—"For the people, opinions; for the Tsar, authority"—Shipov argued that Russia did not need formal arrangements, spelled out on paper, defining the relationship between the sovereign and the people. That relationship was based on moral principles and moral laws, the only kind that were truly effective. According to Shipov, the principal cause of Russia's plight was the arbitrariness of the bureaucracy, which had separated the tsar from the people. He favored a popular body of representatives, but one that would be limited to consultative functions.

For most delegates at the congress that was unacceptable, but they did not want to offend the venerable Shipov. Point 10 of the resolution therefore included Shipov's proposal as well as the majority's proposal that called for a parliament with real powers to legislate. In another concession to Shipov and his small number of supporters, the resolution did not contain the word "constitution," which was anathema to the authorities. But none of these affected the significance of the congress. Everyone who followed its proceedings knew that for the first time an overwhelming majority of zemstvo activists at a public meeting had demanded a constitution. By all accounts, the congress, having defied the bureaucrats, made an enormous impression on society and boosted the confidence of the opposition. It was now clear that "not everything that was prohibited was in fact unfeasible."

The minister of internal affairs met privately with Shipov to learn of the congress's decisions. Surprisingly, Mirsky expressed sympathy for the resolution, asked for suggestions on how it might be implemented, and promised to pass it on to the tsar. It seemed to the liberals that the government was prepared to push ahead with its reformist policies. They also believed that to maintain momentum it was critical to keep up the pressure on the authorities.

The liberals now took the offensive in local organs of self-government, seeking their support for resolutions favoring major political reform. This was not easy. Unlike the congress in Petersburg, the local bodies were official institutions with strict limitations on the issues they could discuss. Moreover, zemstvo assemblies were chaired by provincial marshals of the nobility, often men with conservative views. In any case, in many of the assemblies constitutionalists did not enjoy the support of the majority of the deputies, which meant that resolutions had to be watered down to secure their passage. Also, the central government increasingly intervened at the local level to prevent the adoption of resolutions it considered un-

acceptable. It is thus extraordinary that the liberals secured as much support as they did in the country at large.

Approximately one-third of the thirty-four provincial zemstvo assemblies adopted resolutions echoing the ones passed at the November congress in St. Petersburg. City councils in various localities also joined the campaign. Then, in the months from October 1904 to January 1905, several groups of industrial and financial leaders issued calls for political reform. At about the same time, some forty-two scholarly, cultural, and professional societies held meetings to press for changes in the political system. But none of the manifestations of support for liberal goals could match in scope, drama, and effectiveness the banquet campaign that began on November 5, 1904, and ended on January 8, 1905.

The Union of Liberation had initially thought of launching such a campaign on February 19, 1904, to celebrate the anniversary of the emancipation of the serfs, but the wave of patriotism after the outbreak of war made such a demonstration of opposition to the government inadvisable. By the fall, however, the national mood had changed, prompting the liberals to resurrect their earlier plan. Modeled on the famous banquets in Paris in 1847–48, the events were intended to unite the intelligentsia "around the constitutional banner." Local liberals were urged to organize banquets in honor of the fortieth anniversary of the judicial reforms. The authorities were, as always, reluctant to permit the meetings, but in the end they relented, on the understanding that all the gatherings would be "private."

The rash of political meetings that ensued was unprecedented in Russian history. Never before had so many citizens, most of them from the educated classes, joined to give vent to their profound unhappiness with the state of affairs. Even some Social Democrats were sufficiently impressed to urge their followers to participate in the banquets. In several cities, Social Democrats attempted to drive the liberals to the left by staging street demonstrations and by delivering speeches in the meeting halls.

In all, thirty-eight banquets were held in twenty-six cities. Zemstvo activists (physicians, lawyers, engineers, and "third-element" people) were the most prominent participants, but some local bureaucrats, nobles, journalists, and teachers also took part. The banquets adopted various kinds of resolutions, but to one degree or another all contributed to mobilizing support for the demands of liberals. Although the banquets were "private" affairs, several major newspapers described most of them in detail, thus publicizing the demands of the opposition.

Students at institutions of higher learning added their voice to the protest movement in the fall of 1904. As early as October 11, a group meeting at the Polytechnical Institute expressed its lack of confidence in

the government and demanded an "end to the war and the convocation of a constituent assembly on the basis of universal suffrage." In the next two months, similar meetings were held at other institutions of higher learning in the capital and in Moscow, Kharkov, Odessa, and Kiev. At one demonstration, on November 28 in St. Petersburg, the police charged the crowd and beat students cruelly, but on the whole the zemstvo campaign proceeded peacefully.

The various campaigns by Russian liberals in the fall and winter of 1904 created a new political climate in Russia. Some important new organizations, such as the Physicians' Union, the Academic Union, and the Engineers' Union, were formed; these served as the precursors to the influential Union of Unions organized in May 1905. It was all very bewildering, both for the people enjoying a degree of freedom unheard of in Russia and for the authorities unused to hearing so much criticism of their conduct. "Men," according to one observer, "say many things they would have gone to Siberia for six months ago. The papers print the most rabid attacks against the bureaucracy, the war, and the government." The critical question now was: How would the authorities handle the ferment that had gripped the people?

Sometime in the fall, Tsar Nicholas concluded that further conciliatory gestures were needed to pacify the country. But he now ignored Mirsky, who favored a fairly bold move, the establishment of an institution composed of elected deputies that would participate in legislative work. Nicholas turned instead to Witte, who was opposed to any far-reaching constitutional changes and proposed, instead, the issuance of a ukase (decree) promising some rather minor reforms. On hearing the news of the tsar's decision, Mirksy lost heart. "Everything has failed," he said to some colleagues. "Let us build jails." He offered to resign as minister of internal affairs, but the tsar prevailed on him to remain in office. It would be difficult to prove that Mirsky's modest proposal would have satisfied society and ended the political storm. But its rejection signified beyond any doubt that the government's attitude toward the demands of the opposition had not fundamentally changed. Support for the beleaguered autocracy within society dwindled dramatically, and for that reason alone, Nicholas's decision to follow Witte's advice must be classed among the most critical ones of his reign.

Witte's ukase, which was signed by the tsar on December 12, announced that the government intended to propose legislation extending to the peasants rights equal to those enjoyed by other subjects. It also promised that the Committee of Ministers under the chairmanship of Witte would prepare legislation to eliminate arbitrariness in the application of the law, extend the authority of zemstvos, establish a system of insurance

for industrial workers, impose limitations on the application of emergency measures, provide for greater toleration of religious dissenters, and ease restrictions on the press. Witte had persuaded himself that this decree would be welcomed by society, but in fact liberals found the measure totally inadequate. Not only did it merely promise reforms, and modest ones at that, but also it was accompanied by a reassertion of the principle of autocracy. In addition, the authorities disregarded the spirit of the decree by launching a new campaign of repression, which included a tightening of the censorship over the press, dismissal of moderates from state service, and the imposition of new limitations on local organs of government.

Liberals immediately warned the government that the decree would further enrage the opposition, and one of their leaders, P. B. Struve, urged his colleagues to "make ever tighter the ring of blockade around the autocracy." Rebuffed by the opposition, the government also managed to confuse their own supporters with further displays of ineptitude in coping with the growing unrest. The senior police official in Kharkov, for example, was at a loss about how to respond to the agitation by liberals because he received no instructions from the government. Within a month of the issuance of the ukase of December 12 the ineptitude of senior officials became even more startling as they attempted to cope with unrest involving not simply liberals but masses of people in most of the empire's cities.

GAPON AND BLOODY SUNDAY

Inexplicably, a development more threatening in the near term to the regime than the agitation for reform by liberals received scant attention from the authorities. That was the impact of the liberal campaign in the fall and winter of 1904 on a growing number of worker-activists. A fair number of them were deeply impressed by the outpouring of petitions, which they read with great interest and which prompted them to consider producing their own petitions. Perhaps more important, a leader of the St. Petersburg workers at this time and a key figure in the unfolding of the revolution, Father Georgii Apollonovich Gapon, established contact with several members of the local branch of the Union of Liberation, who supplied him with newspapers and information on the liberal movement. The Liberationists also made serious efforts to persuade workers to agitate for both economic improvements for themselves and for political concessions that the Union of Liberation considered to be of paramount importance.

Actually, by the time of the liberal offensive the workers of St. Petersburg had already developed on their own an impressive organization under the leadership of Father Gapon, who was as charismatic as he was enigmatic. Some contemporaries denounced him as a "thorough-paced revolutionist" who "utterly deceived" workers into believing he had their interests at heart; others claimed that the "Jewish press" had elevated him to the level of a "historical figure," whereas he was in reality a depraved man who had violated a girl twelve years of age; still others viewed him as nothing but a toady of the tsarist secret police. About the only judgment on Gapon on which his associates, contemporary observers, and historians can agree is that he was influential in triggering the second phase—the most turbulent and violent phase—of the revolution.

Remarkably, each one of the divergent assessments contains a grain of truth. Gapon was a man of extraordinary abilities and charm, driven by an urge to make his mark in the world by serving a noble cause, but as the twists and turns in his career demonstrate, he was not always scrupulous in the means he used to achieve his ambition. Born in 1870 in the small village of Beliki in Poltava Province into a family of modest means, Gapon was very much influenced by his mother and grandmother, both of them extremely pious. He was an intelligent child, spent an inordinate amount of time praying to the icons in his home, and after excelling in primary school he followed the advice of his priest that he continue his education at the Lower Ecclesiastical School in Poltava. After graduation, Gapon entered the Poltava Seminary, but at some point he lost interest in the priesthood as a profession. He was distressed by the church's emphasis on ritual, its "religious formalism," and the hypocrisy and corruption of the clergy. At the same time, exposure to people in dismal poverty deeply stirred his sympathies, and after recovering from two serious illnesses (a nervous disorder and typhus), Gapon decided that he preferred working among the "toiling and suffering classes" to the priesthood.

When he failed to gain admission to a university to complete his studies, Gapon worked briefly as a statistician for the Poltava administration. In that position he came into further contact with the poor, making him even more eager to serve them. His wife, also a very pious person, persuaded him to enter the priesthood after all, because, in her view, as a man of God he would be better placed to pursue his interests. For a few years Gapon served with great satisfaction and success as a "spiritual leader" in Poltava, and he was also very happy with his wife and two children. This period came to a tragic end when his wife contracted a serious illness and died, a loss that deeply affected Gapon. Gapon became something of a mystic, claiming to have visions, and in 1898 he entered the St. Petersburg Theological Seminary for further religious studies.

Within a year, however, he again suffered from a nervous disorder and in a state of almost total collapse went to the Crimea to recuperate. There his future career was decided when he fell in with some intellectuals who reinforced his doubts about the "formalism and hypocrisy" of the church and convinced him to abandon religious work for his other interests.

By all accounts, Gapon was an imposing man. Handsome, intelligent, and articulate, he impressed acquaintances with his deep dedication to humane principles and his loyalty to his associates. He was a fine speaker, and, when it served his interests, he could be crafty and even duplicitous. When he returned to St. Petersburg after recovering from his nervous condition, he resumed his studies but also worked again among the downtrodden and attracted many people to his religious services and the various discussions he organized. His numerous schemes to help the poor came to the attention of the Empress Alexandra Feodorovna, who urged the Committee of Ministers to take an interest in his work and to invite him to one of its meetings. Gapon now considered himself to be a man destined for great achievements in improving the moral and material condition of the common people. He also had developed a strong faith in the tsar's devotion to the well-being of the Russian people, especially those at the lowest rung of society.

Sometime in 1902 or early 1903, Gapon seized on a new opportunity to enlarge his influence among St. Petersburg workers. He was intrigued by the elaborate scheme of Zubatov, chief of the Moscow Okhrana, to mobilize mass support for the tsar. For his part, Zubatov was eager to enlist the services of a man with Gapon's appeal to workers. A local okhrana agent arranged a meeting between the two men, and although Gapon disapproved of Zubatov's stress on tight police control over workers' unions, they reached an understanding. Zubatov began to send the priest a monthly subsidy of one hundred rubles (a substantial sum at the time), and in the summer of 1903 Gapon founded the Assembly of the Russian Factory and Mill Workers of the City of St. Petersburg. He had secured Zubatov's agreement to minimize police involvement in the organization as well as to allow members to play a more active role in determining its work than had been the case in other police unions. The assembly did not intervene in labor disputes, concentrating instead on organizing dances, concerts, and lectures, and on promoting various other projects for self-improvement. Gapon deliberately restricted the assembly to activities that were politically innocuous because he planned eventually to expand the organization, both in the capital and in other cities, and wanted to avoid any action that might appear provocative or threatening to the authorities. He was astonishingly skillful and cunning in retaining the confidence both of his lieutenants in the assembly, some

of whom were much more militant than he on the labor question, and of high officials in St. Petersburg. He himself, it seems, continued to believe in the tsar's benevolence and in his willingness to grant constitutional rights to the people.

Yet as early as March 1904 he showed four leaders of the assembly a document he had drafted containing demands that he then knew to be anathema to the tsar and most of his advisers. Among other things, the document called for political rights for the Russian people, an eight-hour workday, and the right of workers to form trade unions. Gapon swore his associates to secrecy about the document, but in informing them of his ultimate intentions, if that is really what they were, he strengthened his hold on their loyalty. Gapon's true convictions and intentions remain something of a mystery. Conceivably, he himself had not yet sorted out his beliefs and plans and still held contradictory views on the autocracy, which would be consistent with his mercurial character. He cherished great ideals and great ambitions, but beyond that he lacked clarity of purpose.

Gapon's organizational skills were outstanding. One hundred and fifty people attended the opening ceremony of his assembly on April 11, 1904; within five months he had established a total of nine branches with a total membership of five thousand, and the estimates of the assembly's membership in January 1905 range from six to twenty thousand. He made a point of enlisting women, arguing to subordinates that if they were not drawn into the movement, women would hinder men's work. No event could be scheduled without Gapon's personal approval. His authority was so great that some of his assistants referred to him as "dictator," an appellation he rather savored. Intellectuals were wary of him, in part because he was not a cultivated man. Moreover, he lacked theoretical sophistication and was ignorant of the history of radicalism. But none of these deficiencies reduced his appeal to workers. On the contrary, they liked the fact that he was, socially, of their class, did not talk down to them, treated them as comrades—in short, that he acted and spoke as they did. Although workers under the influence of revolutionary movements distrusted him, there is no question that he had "cast a spell" over large numbers of common laborers and that his adherents were prepared to "march with him through fire and water."

Late in 1904, when the liberal movement was moving into high gear, Gapon intensified his efforts to turn the assembly into a powerful organization. He went so far as to hold secret discussions with several of his associates on the desirability of drafting a petition, possibly containing political demands, that would be submitted to the tsar on the occasion of a new military defeat or perhaps on February 19, to commemorate the

emancipation of the serfs in 1861. But a series of unexpected events at the Putilov plant, a large armaments and shipbuilding factory in the southwestern section of St. Petersburg, led Gapon to change the timing and to some extent the focus of the petition. Many workers at the plant belonged to the assembly and when, in December 1904, four of them were arbitrarily dismissed by the director, S. I. Smirnov, who had displayed strong hostility toward Gapon's organization, open conflict seemed inevitable. At first, Gapon thought that the issue could be settled amicably, but the administration of the factory refused to reinstate the four workers, who, in fact, did not have a strong case since they were neither industrious nor reliable. Gapon concluded that he had to insist on their reinstatement to retain the prestige of the assembly among the membership and among workers in general. On January 3 the workers at the Putilov plant decided to go on strike, which Gapon immediately supported. The strike spread to other factories with remarkable speed, which suggests that the dismissals were only the spark that ignited the flame. By January 7, about two-thirds of St. Petersburg's factory force—some one hundred thousand people at 382 enterprises—had stopped working.

The workers initially focused on economic issues, but to maximize their support they quickly began to voice political demands. Gapon wasted no time in exploiting the mood of militancy; on January 5, he raised the question of preparing a petition to be presented to the tsar by a large, peaceful procession through the streets of St. Petersburg. Gapon informed the city governor of his intentions, and neither he nor any other official tried to deter the priest from his scheme, which turned into the most momentous event of the revolution, known in history as Bloody Sunday.

For three days Gapon worked endlessly to organize the procession, to be held on Sunday, January 9. On one day alone he delivered fifty short speeches to workers, always exuding unbounded confidence in his plans. Generally, he told his audiences that the tsar was a good man who would help the people once he understood their plight. But occasionally he acknowledged the possibility of failure, in which case it would be evident that "we have no tsar." Workers responded enthusiastically to his speeches and indicated that they considered their demands to be nothing less than sacred: when votes were taken on specific points to be included in the petition they would signal their approval by making a cross with their fingers. Both the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, who prided themselves on their class-consciousness, disapproved of the procession on the grounds that the assembly's demands did not put sufficient stress on political demands. As a consequence, the Social Democrats exerted virtually no influence on the events leading up to Bloody Sunday.

The authorities appeared to be confused and failed to give clear signals about their intentions. Rumors circulated that the army had been placed on alert, but there were also various hints that no action would be taken to hinder the procession. A few policemen actually attended some meetings of the assembly's branches without interfering in any way. Some of the event's organizers managed to convince themselves that the tsar intended to invite forty to sixty workers elected by the people to attend a "gala entertainment" at the Winter Palace. Only at the last minute did several prominent citizens become apprehensive, prompting them to make efforts to forestall any untoward incidents. On Saturday evening, January 8, I. V. Gessen, a prominent liberal, visited Witte and pleaded with him to persuade officials not to order the army to block the procession. Gessen warned that workers were at such a high pitch of emotion that if the army tried to stop them there would be a bloodbath. Witte received Gessen rather coolly, stressing his lack of influence at court. Other appeals for restraint also failed to impress the authorities, who had concluded that to yield to the demands of people demonstrating in the streets would inevitably open the door to disorder on a massive scale and would undermine the autocratic regime. Although it should be noted that there is no evidence that the tsar and his advisers wanted a violent confrontation, by January 7 the government had reached two operational decisions that made a clash unavoidable: (1) not to grant Gapon a meeting with the tsar to present the petition and (2) not to permit marching workers to enter the center of the city. Troops were now brought in from various regions to reinforce the local garrison, and by January 9 about nine thousand infantrymen and three thousand cavalry were held in readiness in the capital. Callousness and mindlessness rather than malice were the guiding principles of the authorities at this critical moment.

Gapon made a last ditch effort to assure a peaceful procession. The evening before the march he sent a formal letter to the Ministry of Internal Affairs requesting a meeting with the tsar at the Winter Palace at 2 PM the next day to present the petition. Gapon assured the minister that there was no reason to fear the marchers, whose only interest was to further "the well-being of our country." "Tell the Tsar," Gapon continued, "that I, the workers, and many thousands of subjects have reached the unalterable decision to come peacefully and with faith in Him to the Winter Palace." The petition itself was, in fact, a desperate plea to the tsar, still referred to as "the father," to treat his subjects not as slaves but as human beings and to institute the necessary reforms from above because such were the dictates of compassion. Significantly, the petition blamed the people's agonies not on the sovereign but on the bureaucracy, which was accused of robbing "the government and the people" and of having "devastated the country."

Although in tone the petition was moderate, its demands were quite radical. It called for a constituent assembly elected on the basis of a democratic suffrage, civil liberties for all subjects, equality of all before the law, the right to establish trade unions, and an eight-hour working day, all demands that aligned Gapon's movement with the political opposition that had become active in 1904. The petition, it is worth emphasizing, did not demand the abolition of the monarchy or the introduction of socialism. Nor did it contain threats of violence. The commission of seven lawyers set up on January 16 to investigate the events surrounding Bloody Sunday was right to stress that the march was "nothing other than a religious procession." A foreign observer was also right in noting that had police conduct been efficient and restrained, the crowds could have been handled without resort to "extreme measures."

Early on January 9 somewhere between fifty and one hundred thousand people appeared in their Sunday best at designated places. Many women and children showed up, and all participated in prayer meetings held before the procession began. Marchers carried icons and portraits of the tsar and sang "Save Thy People, O Lord" and other hymns. Many workers pointedly raised their hands and emptied their pockets to show that they were unarmed. In the words of the lawyers' report, the people "went like children to weep out their grief on their father's breast." As the crowds approached their destination, soldiers in a few places told the marchers to turn back, but this was not the case everywhere. The authorities seem not to have formulated a clear-cut pattern of action.

The marchers did not heed the orders to disperse. When one large crowd that included Gapon, who was surrounded by a protective shield of workers, reached the Narva Gate, a bugle was blown as a signal to the soldiers to open fire. The workers would have understood the meaning of the bugle call, but no one could hear anything over the din of the singing. Moreover, virtually no time elapsed between the signal and the shooting. Some forty people were immediately killed or wounded. Gapon escaped injury, though two of his bodyguards and an official of the assembly died on the spot. Several other bodyguards threw Gapon over a fence, and the priest then hid in different private apartments, including that of the writer Maxim Gorky. Enraged by the violence, Gapon exclaimed, "There is no God any longer! There is no Tsar!"

Shooting erupted at other places where marchers refused to retreat, and when the carnage ended some 130 people had been killed and 299 had been seriously wounded. The fury of the people in the streets was uncontrollable. Many were heard to shout: "Murderers! Bloodsuckers! Hangmen! You run from the Japanese, but shoot your own people."

The day that immediately came to be known as Bloody Sunday could hardly have ended more disastrously. An occasion that the government

could have exploited to its advantage became instead a rallying cry for the opposition. Had Tsar Nicholas, who did not even bother to be at the Winter Palace, received a delegation and announced some concessions such as the reduction of the working day, he would have earned, as one foreign observer noted, "the admiration and undying loyalty of the workingmen." Instead, the massacre electrified public opinion throughout the empire and cost the tsar the affection of masses of people. Within hours of the catastrophe, meetings were held to denounce the government and to collect funds for the families of the victims. Within a few days zemstvos adopted resolutions more radical than the resolution of the Zemstvo Congress of November 1904.

But the most disruptive development and the one that the government found most difficult to handle was the vast strike movement that erupted in the country. On January 10, some 160,000 workers stayed away from their jobs in St. Petersburg. Very quickly, the strike movement spread to Moscow, Riga, Warsaw, Vilna, Kovno, Tiflis, Baku, Batum, and the Baltic provinces, to mention only the major regions affected by the unrest. All told, some 414,000 people within the empire participated in the work stoppage during the month of January 1905. Bloody Sunday activated the working class to a degree unprecedented in Russian history.

Serious disorder also erupted at institutions of higher learning, which for some time had been centers of oppositional agitation. Students at one school after another staged strikes, often after tumultuous meetings and with the support of many professors. To a lesser but nonetheless significant extent, students at secondary schools also stayed away from class and joined street demonstrations.

Even in conservative circles only a few voices could be heard in defense of the government's handling of the procession. Some unknown organization or group of rightists made a feeble attempt to put the blame for the disorder on Anglo-Japanese agitation. Placards appearing in Moscow and Libava (Latvia) alleged that English and Japanese agitators provoked disturbances in order to delay the departure of the Baltic and Black Sea fleets to the Far East. The charge was so preposterous that as soon as the British protested the Russian government issued an official denial of the charge. But this denial did little to counter the widespread criticism of the behavior of the Russian authorities on January 9. Russia's image in the West, never exactly benign, plummeted to its lowest depth.

The tsarist government's most critical task was to halt the spread of disorder within Russia. As usual, it alternated between repression and heavy-handed attempts at reconciliation. On the one hand, on January 10 the Ministry of Internal Affairs sent instructions to officials in 194 cities recommending "decisive measures" to quell "strikes and disorders." In St. Petersburg the authorities closed down all branches of Gapon's or-

ganization and asked factory owners to supply lists of unreliable workers, who were to be exiled. On the other hand, the government sought to conciliate the workers, but resorted to a clumsy gesture that completely misfired. On January 19, Tsar Nicholas received a delegation of thirty-four workers, all of them chosen by factory managers and police officials because the workers themselves refused to make the selection. Mindlessly, the tsar told his visitors that during the recent troubles the workers of St. Petersburg had been misled by "traitors and enemies of our country." Nevertheless, he offered his forgiveness and donated fifty thousand rubles for the families of the victims of the bloodshed, without acknowledging, however, that he or his officials had had been guilty of any wrongdoing. The entire opposition was enraged and all the newspapers decided that it was the better part of wisdom not to print any comment at all on the workers' reception at court.

Still, a few concessions were made to workers shortly after Bloody Sunday. Industrialists gave some "grants" to workers who had been out on strike, agreed to the election of workers' representatives to negotiate with their employers, raised pay rates, and set limitation on fines imposed on delinquent workers. Also, on January 19 the government established a commission, under the chairmanship of N. V. Shidlovsky, to examine the causes of the worker's discontent and to recommend measures to prevent future disturbances.

Gapon, who had played a key role in stoking the upheaval that spread across the Russian Empire, now became a rather pathetic figure without any influence on the future course of the revolution. He escaped to the West, where he denounced the "beast-Tsar and his jackal-ministers" and declared himself a convert to radical revolutionism. He also made contact with several Russian radicals in Switzerland, but his erratic behavior—first he declared himself a Social Democrat and within days he joined forces with the Socialist Revolutionaries—quickly persuaded them that he could not be relied on as an ally. The truth is that Gapon regarded himself as a dynamic leader who had already shaped the course of events in Russia and would, somehow, continue to do so on his own.

In the fall of 1905, Gapon returned to St. Petersburg and performed yet another volte-face; he abandoned his extremist views and established contact with the government. Witte, now prime minister, was pleased with this turn of events but, fearing the priest's influence, saw to it that Gapon was given five hundred rubles on the promise that he would leave Russia immediately. Gapon did just that and once again aroused the enmity of the radicals for speaking favorably of Witte as the only man who could save Russia from the abyss. Within weeks, Gapon was back in St. Petersburg determined to resurrect the assembly. When the police blocked that plan, he conceived of a series of intricate maneuvers to secure permission from

the police to reestablish his workers' organization. He approached Petr Rutenberg, the man who had marched next to him on Bloody Sunday and who was now a Socialist Revolutionary of some prominence, with a bizarre plan. Rutenberg was to claim to have information about a conspiracy on the part of some of his comrades to murder the minister of internal affairs. In return for informing on the plotters, Rutenberg would receive one hundred thousand rubles from the police, who would be able to boast of having foiled a dangerous conspiracy. But the conspirators would be forewarned so that they could escape apprehension. And Gapon, having done a good turn for the police, would be allowed to resume his organizational activities among the Petersburg workers. No one would be hurt and every participant in the scheme would benefit.

Rutenberg discussed Gapon's scheme with his SR colleagues. E. F. Azef, then head of the party's "Combat Organization" and later exposed as a police agent, insisted that Gapon must be killed. Azef's motive is still unclear: he may have been carrying out orders from police officials eager to get the priest out of the way; he may have wanted to accommodate the Socialist Revolutionaries, who considered Gapon a dangerous traitor; or he may simply have wanted to get rid of Gapon because he feared that the priest knew he was working for the police. In any case, on March 28, 1906, Rutenberg and several other SRs lured Gapon to a cottage in a small town near the Finnish border and brutally murdered him.

Even though Gapon's reputation had by this time been irreparably tarnished, his role as a catalyst of the revolutionary process cannot be overstated. This is not the role he had envisioned for himself in 1904, but the violence of Bloody Sunday unleashed a train of events that fundamentally changed not only the workers' movement in the capital but also the course of the entire revolution. It greatly weakened the people's trust in the autocrat, it turned the working class into a dynamic political force, and it made possible a loose sort of alliance between the liberals and working class, all ominous developments for the old order. Finally, Bloody Sunday marked the transformation of what had been primarily a political struggle between the proponents of change and the authorities into a conflict that remained political but was accompanied by lawlessness and mass violence on a scale unknown since the Time of Troubles early in the seventeenth century.

THE GOVERNMENT FLOUNDERS

By temperament and ability, the men who occupied the leading positions in the empire were ill-equipped to cope with the turbulence. The ruler, the

linchpin of the regime, showed no understanding at all of the unrest that had been set off by Bloody Sunday. In his diary he limited himself to brief and superficial comments on the events that day and made his usual innocuous remarks about his family and the weather. In his conversations with various officials and visitors, Nicholas insisted that since only a small area of the country had been affected by the disorder, there was no reason to be overly concerned. His leading minister, Mirsky, was thoroughly demoralized. Conservatives held him responsible for having "opened the doors to violent agitation" by introducing internal reform without taking adequate measures to keep the protest movement under control. No longer confident that his policies would pacify the country, Mirsky asked to be relieved of his office. Nicholas readily accepted his resignation on January 18 without any word of gratitude or reward. The tsar replaced him with A. G. Bulygin, an easygoing, decent, honorable man endowed with common sense but lacking either the knowledge or capacity for statesmanship. He favored the retention of the autocratic regime, not out of deep conviction, but rather because he had never bothered to examine other forms of government. His main defect as a leader was that he disliked tense situations and always sought to avoid personal confrontations. Most liberals considered him an "absolute nonentity," and it soon became evident that he would not be able to carry out the tsar's charge to formulate new reform proposals.

In fact, the dominant figure in the government was a newcomer in the top echelons of authority, General D. F. Trepov, a man held in the highest regard by Nicholas's advisors at court. Not surprisingly, the fifty-year-old Trepov also impressed the tsar as the ideal public servant. A dashing general "with terrifying eyes," Trepov had served with the cavalry guards and gave the appearance of a resolute and energetic man. In private conversations with Nicholas, he had criticized the liberal views of Mirsky, and as chief of the Moscow police since 1896 he had demonstrated an ability to handle revolutionaries. On January 11, 1905, he was appointed governor-general of St. Petersburg and on May 21 he assumed the additional post of assistant minister of internal affairs. In effect, Trepov now took charge of police affairs throughout the empire, and it seemed to many knowledgeable people that there were really two ministers of internal affairs: Bulygin, who exercised little authority, and Trepov, who often made policy without even consulting Bulygin. This arrangement, if it can be called that, was a sign of the disarray that characterized the government throughout much of 1905.

Although Trepov came to symbolize the arbitrariness and rigidity of the old order, it is not accurate to depict him simply as a bureaucrat whose only remedy for disorder was brute force. He was a more complicated and

thoughtful man than his many detractors realized. As police chief of Moscow, he had concluded that police measures alone would not suffice to stifle agitation against the autocracy. He contended that workers had legitimate demands for better conditions, and he also argued that student unrest would not end until the government's restrictions were loosened. Then in July 1905 he urged the tsar to allow Jews to participate in the elections to the planned national assembly on the grounds that only if the causes of their discontent were removed would the Jews cease to be active in the opposition.

Trepov was not the only senior official to advocate concessions in the wake of Bloody Sunday. On January 17, 1905, A. S. Ermolov, the minister of agriculture and state property, solemnly warned the tsar that the protest movement would grow more intense. There would be a rash of assassinations of officials, the tsar would no longer be safe, and disorder would break out in the countryside. Moreover, Ermolov predicted that the monarch would soon not be able to count on soldiers to continue obeying orders to shoot people who simply wanted their grievances to be heard. Two weeks after delivering this message to the tsar, Ermolov contended that there existed "general disorganization in all spheres of our social life" and advised Nicholas to enlist the support of the "healthy elements" of the people by establishing a legislative body of elected representatives that would participate in the formulation of government policies. Ermolov, it should be stressed, was speaking as a person committed to the preservation of the monarchy. V. N. Kokovtsov, the minister of finance, was not as outspoken or liberal as his colleague, but he, too, favored concessions. He wanted the government to urge industrialists to find ways of satisfying workers' demands without undermining the economic well-being of their enterprises.

Even if the government had decided to adopt all these reform measures, it still had to decide how to deal with an immediate problem, rising unrest. The truth is that despite its long-standing concern with threats to domestic tranquillity posed by radical agitators, the Ministry of Internal Affairs had not drawn up any directives on riot control by local officials. Responsibility for police activities in the empire rested with governors or governors-general, who were required to report to the ministry in St. Petersburg. However, officials in the capital never established clear lines of responsibility within the department or clear channels for reporting on local developments, with the result that provincial bureaucrats devised their own strategies to contain the disorder in their jurisdictions, which is precisely what happened when unrest spread across the country in 1905. The differences in those strategies underline the degree to which bureaucratic centralization in late-imperial Russia was deeply flawed.

The government had at its disposal one weapon against disorder that, theoretically at least, made possible a degree of uniformity in its approach: it could proclaim emergency regulations in any region of the empire. This power originated in a statute of August 14, 1881, which provided for two kinds of special measures, Reinforced Security (*Usilennaia Okhrana*) and Extraordinary Security (*Chrezvychainaia Okhrana*). The first could be imposed by the minister of internal affairs or a governorgeneral acting with the minister's approval. The second could be imposed only with the approval of the tsar. Designed to facilitate the eradication of sedition, the statute was vague about what conditions would justify placing a region in a state of emergency. In each case of unrest, the ultimate decision lay in the hands of the authorities in St. Petersburg. In addition to these emergency powers, the government could declare an area under martial law, which meant military rule pure and simple.

The arbitrary power invested in local officials (governors-general, governors, and city governors) under the exceptional measures of 1881 was enormous. Under Reinforced Security, officials could keep citizens in prison for up to three months, impose fines, prohibit public gatherings, exile alleged offenders, transfer blocks of judicial cases from criminal to military courts, and dismiss local government and zemstvo employees. Under Extraordinary Security, a region was under the authority of a commander in chief, who was empowered to dismiss elected zemstvo deputies and even to dissolve zemstvos completely, to suspend periodicals, and to close universities and other centers of advanced study for up to one month. Implementation of the exceptional measures largely depended on the whims of local officials: in some provinces they acted with restraint, whereas in others they used their powers to the utmost. Frequently, officials operating under the emergency rules arbitrarily exiled beggars, vagrants, and "generally disorderly persons."

The indiscriminate application of the statute of 1881—appropriately referred to by one historian as the "real constitution" of the empire—demonstrated more than anything else the absence of a legal order in Russia. But the statute was of dubious effectiveness in maintaining order, as some government officials acknowledged. The people's resentment of the emergency regulations often intensified their defiance of authority, which, in turn, provoked officials to apply even harsher measures. Early in 1905, a prestigious commission under the chairmanship of Count A. P. Ignatiev noted that the use of emergency measures raised serious legal and practical questions but he made no far-reaching recommendations on their future application. It is doubtful whether the government would have allowed the statute of 1881 to lapse for the simple reason that it commanded no other weapon in the struggle against unrest. The security

police was quite inept and ill-informed about the activities and whereabouts of radical opponents to the regime, who were increasingly resorting to terror. In February 1905, they shocked the government and much of society by assassinating Grand Duke Sergei Aleksandrovich, the uncle and brother-in-law of the tsar. True, the authorities depended on nonbureaucratic groups such as the nobility to assume some of the burdens of administering local regions, but such an arrangement could not be very efficient, especially in times of crisis. The only recourse appeared to be the emergency regulations, which were applied on a vast scale after Bloody Sunday. By March 1906, thirty of the empire's seventy-eight provinces were entirely ruled by officials exercising special powers; in another thirty provinces sizable regions were administered under emergency rules.

For weeks after Bloody Sunday, Nicholas received conflicting advice—more repression or more concessions—from his ministers and advisers on how to deal with the unrest. He himself could not make up his mind and in frustration turned to Bulygin, who urged concessions. "One would think," the tsar said, "that you are afraid a revolution will break out." To this the minister of internal affairs replied, "Your Majesty, the revolution has already begun." Nicholas now opted for a conciliatory course, but once again he followed a procedure that had become a pattern with him: he coupled the promise of reform with a savage attack on the instigators of unrest and a restatement of his commitment to the old order—all in one day.

On the morning of February 18, the monarch published an imperial manifesto denouncing the "ill-intentioned leaders" of disorder who wished to "create a new government for the country based on principles alien to our fatherland." He called on all Russians to "stand firm around the Throne, true to the traditions of Our past . . . and support the autocracy for the good of all Our faithful subjects." But in the evening, Nicholas issued a ukase to the Senate that directed the Committee of Ministers to present him with suggestions, based on ideas proposed by "private persons and institutions," on how to improve the government and the "people's existence." Both pronouncements emanated from Tsarskoe Selo, the ruler's favorite residence, without the prior notification to any minister, which in itself was highly unusual. Then, to compound the confusion, the tsar sent a rescript to Bulygin, also on the evening of February 18, informing him of his intention to permit individuals—the "worthiest people"—elected by the population of Russia to participate in the discussion and preliminary formulation of legislative proposals. The minister of internal affairs was to head a commission to draw up plans for the implementation of this rather vague promise to establish some kind of legislative assembly.

The ministers and many political activists were "dumbfounded" to discover that within one day the tsar had made such inconsistent pronouncements. "Is it any wonder," asked I. I. Petrunkevich, a leading liberal, "that the authority of a government that does not know in the morning what it will undertake in the evening declined in the eyes of the people to the point of complete rejection."

For about four months—roughly from late February until July—organizations of various kinds, but most notably zemstvos, city councils, and cultural and professional societies, engaged in a "petition campaign" in response to the tsar's request for ideas on how to improve the state. Hundreds of meetings were held throughout the empire to discuss reform proposals and to adopt resolutions that were dispatched to the minister of internal affairs. The newspapers carried accounts of the meetings and thus publicized the grievances and demands that were being voiced by growing numbers of people. Instead of curbing unrest, the monarch's ukase proved to be a catalyst that mobilized masses of people who had not previously dared to express opinions on political issues. By the spring of 1905 the government was struck by an avalanche of petitions from virtually every corner of the empire. It was a spontaneous outpouring of popular sentiment, which represented the only more or less coherent movement for change. Dominated by liberals and liberal demands, the petition campaign really amounted to a revival, in more intense form, of the liberal offensive of the fall and winter of 1904-5.

It was clear that public opinion had shifted to the left since late 1904. Groups that a few months earlier had been quite conservative now joined in the demands for freedom and for the rule of law. In the borderlands, city councils called not only for political reform but also for an end to national and religious discrimination and for social and economic reforms. A growing number of groups among the intelligentsia demanded the introduction of a genuinely democratic suffrage. Often, the resolutions of the opposition contained demands for an immediate end to the war with Japan and for the convocation of a constituent assembly, which would devise an entirely new structure of government. Some of them also called for the lowering of the working day to eight hours, the introductions of a progressive income tax and workers' insurance, and the nationalization of the land.

In mid-May the zemstvo movement took the bold step of seeking an audience with the tsar to urge him to change his policies. It chose as the leader of the delegation a moderate liberal who had initially supported the war, Prince S. N. Trubetskoi. A man of rare charm, universally admired for his sincerity and decency, Trubetskoi was an excellent choice to deliver a plea for reform, and after some hesitation the monarch agreed

to meet the liberals on June 6. Trubetskoi began his powerful address by expressing his gratitude for the audience and by assuring Nicholas that "Love of the motherland and the consciousness of our debt to You have led us here." He then pleaded with the monarch not to allow his advisers and officials to pervert his announced policy to change course and to "call together elected representatives of the people." Trubetskoi deliberately avoided specific recommendations on the nature of the future legislature except to express the hope that it would not be a body chosen only by some classes of the population. "As the Russian Tsar is not the Tsar of the nobility," Trubetskoi said, "not the Tsar of the peasants or of the merchants, not the Tsar of classes, but the Tsar of all Rus, so also the elected people from the whole population, called to work with You on the affairs of state, should serve general and not estate interests." The prince also urged Nicholas to permit free discussion of all issues affecting the well-being of the state and concluded with the following words: "Sire! The renewal of Russia should be based on trust."

The tsar seemed to be moved by the courteous, patriotic, and moderate address. He was clearly relieved not to have been exposed to a polemic. He even nodded a few times in apparent agreement with Trubetskoi's points, especially when he spoke of a legislature representing all the people. One of the delegates was so moved that he wept openly, and two others were on the verge of tears.

In his official response to Trubetskoi's address, Nicholas restated his intention of proceeding with major reforms. "Cast away your doubts," he declared. "My will—the Tsar's will—to call together representatives from the people is unswerving. Attracting them to the work of the state will be done in orderly fashion. I concern myself with this matter every day. . . . I hope that you will help me in this work."

Although left-wing liberals criticized Trubetskoi for his lack of militancy and expressed doubts about the tsar's will to carry out his promises, a large portion of the opposition viewed the audience of June 6 as highly significant. Simply by listening to the plea for reform the tsar, it was widely believed, had in effect legalized a sizable portion of the opposition. Even liberals skeptical of the ruler's motives came to realize that the meeting was bound to benefit their cause. If the tsar kept his word, the encounter would mark a major step toward some sort of constitutional order. If he reneged, moderates would be driven to the left.

It took only two weeks for the tsar and his advisers to confirm the worst suspicions of the skeptical liberals. On June 20 and 21, Nicholas made a point of greeting with singular warmth two groups of conservatives whom he considered to be a counterpoise to the liberal activists. He informed the first group that he favored a representative body that would

have consultative authority only and that would be elected only by the nobility and the peasantry. He listened with apparent approval to the second group, which advocated the retention of the autocracy. It was clear that the court was mobilizing public opinion against the constitutionalists, making a mockery of the tsar's conciliatory words on June 6.

The meeting on June 6 marked the last occasion on which leaders of a significant sector of the opposition sought reform by appealing to the tsar. There is every reason to believe that if the delegates led by Trubetskoi had been met halfway by the government, they would have done their best to calm the political storm. But the tsar's intransigence and duplicity persuaded them that their goals could be realized only be aligning themselves with the more militant elements in the country, elements that were resorting increasingly to direct actions of various kinds to wrest concessions from the authorities. According to the left-liberal Petrunkevich, he and many of his associates now concluded that a revolution was necessary. The nonsocialist opposition was seized by a new mood of political distemper, which lasted from late June until the fall of 1905.

This shift came only weeks after the government's attempts to pacify the workers had backfired. It will be recalled that shortly after Bloody Sunday the government had created the Shidlovsky Commission, to be composed of representatives selected by the authorities, industry, and workers themselves for the purpose of examining workers' grievances in the capital and developing proposals to improve working conditions. The elections of the workers' representatives were to be indirect, leaving the final selections to chosen electors. But before the final selections were made, the 417 electors, many of whom either belonged to Social Democratic organizations or sympathized with their aims, decided to formulate a series of seven demands. Senator N. V. Shidlovsky had no difficulty with the first three demands, which called for full participation of the worker's representatives in all deliberations of the commission. But he reiected the last four, which called for publication of the protocols, the reopening of eleven branches of Gapon's assembly, release from prison of workers arrested since January 1, and a guarantee of immunity for workers who openly discussed their "needs." The workers' electors threatened a general strike if their demands were not met. On February 20, the tsar, acting on Shidlovsky's advice, disbanded the commission. When between fifty and sixty thousand workers protested by going out on strike, the government launched a new wave of arrests. But for the workers of the capital the events surrounding the commission had two positive consequences: (1) they amounted to an acknowledgment that industrial unrest in Russia was a serious problem, not simply the concoction of outside troublemakers; and (2) they laid the groundwork for the labor unions that were formed later in 1905 as well as for the soviet that played so prominent a role in St. Petersburg during the last months of the year.

On the very day the tsar disbanded the Shidlovsky Commission, he authorized the formation of another commission to examine the workers' question under the chairmanship of the minister of finance, V. N. Kokovtsov. This commission consisted solely of bureaucrats, though the chairman was empowered to call on experts for information. Kokovtsov was a conservative but he now believed that reform was necessary and his group made some surprisingly progressive proposals: legalization of workers' organizations, the creation of a special fund for medical assistance for workers, shortening of the workday, and the establishment of a state insurance system for workers. Industrialists who were invited to the plenary sessions of the commission were aghast, insisting that industrial unrest stemmed not from workers' dissatisfaction with their economic plight but from their dissatisfaction with the political system. The industrialists also claimed that the proposals of the commission could not possibly be enacted without seriously harming the national economy. Then they withdrew from the commission, which continued to meet periodically without accomplishing anything of importance. Various other commissions formed to deal with workers and peasants' demands also failed to produce reforms.

All in all, in the first weeks following Bloody Sunday the government made few significant concessions to the opposition beyond the vague promise to establish a national legislature. In February it began to ease restrictions of religious freedom, and over the course of several weeks some 1,600 people who had been punished for religious dissent were either granted pardons or allowed to return from exile. On April 15, the authorities bowed to reality by revoking two official circulars of 1897 on the punishment of strikers. Industrial strikes in 1905 were so numerous and involved so many people that it was no longer possible to arrest instigators of work stoppages or to exile strikers to their native villages. Also, the government finally grasped the foolishness of sending strikers back to the countryside, where they could stir up unrest among the peasantry. None of these measures succeeded in dampening unrest. Hostility toward the autocratic regime continued to deepen and intensify.

The Assault on Authority

CIVIL DISORDER AND LABOR UNREST

Did the events of 1904–7 amount to a revolution? Certainly, an orthodox Marxist might dispute the designation, for political power was not transferred from one social class to another. Non-Marxists, who define a revolution as a fundamental change in the system of legality, might also hesitate to use the term, since the tsar's authority remained paramount even though it was clearly reduced. Yet it is understandable that the term should have been adopted by contemporaries and retained by political activists as well as historians. From mid-1904 until late in 1905, there occurred an assault on authority from below so massive, potent, and successful that by all appearances the old regime was disintegrating. Civil order broke down, and for several months the government seemed incapable of little more than biding its time until the outbursts of defiance, generally unplanned and unorganized, had spent themselves. So effective a challenge to the state's monopoly of power, even though temporary, may justifiably be characterized as a revolution.

A few examples of how authority was flouted with impunity will suffice to demonstrate the changed atmosphere in Russia. Officially, censorship still prevailed in 1905 (in modified form), and the press was certainly mindful of it, but beginning in mid-1904 newspapers daringly criticized the old order. After Bloody Sunday the press widely adopted a practice that came to be known as *iavochnym poriadkom*—"without prior permission." It would print what it believed the public should know, and the government, in effect acknowledging its impotence, largely ignored the infractions of regulations. Readers of the press were now informed in vivid detail of disorder in the cities and countryside, of the clamor for basic reform, of the military disasters Russia suffered at the hands of Japan,

and of discussions by opponents of the autocracy on how to change the country's institutions. On several occasions, highly confidential deliberations of senior bureaucrats or official committees were leaked to newspapers, which readily ran articles about them. The liberal *Russkie vedomosti* frequently denounced the incompetence and arbitrariness of the "disgraceful . . . bureaucratic system" and asserted that nothing short of a constitutional order with civil liberties guaranteed to all subjects would restore order and stability. In May 1905 the paper echoed the by-now-popular cry of liberals: "We can no longer live like this."

There were other signs of governmental weakness. The authorities failed to maintain order during the rash of attacks on innocent civilians by hooligans and right-wing extremists known as Black Hundreds that broke out shortly after Bloody Sunday in many cities and towns.

The purpose of the attacks was to intimidate anyone inclined to participate in antigovernment strikes or demonstrations. In Nizhnii-Novgorod, for example, mobs regularly and with impunity assaulted well-dressed people or anyone who appeared to be educated. On a single day in July, between seventy and eighty people were injured. In Moscow and Pskov, hooligans accused children, some of them only nine or ten years old, of "sedition" and then beat them in full view of the police, who did nothing at all. Also in Moscow merchants were subjected to so many wanton attacks that they provided for their own defense. In Mogilev, policemen themselves engaged in lawlessness. They arbitrarily arrested fifty people on charges of antigovernment activities. No evidence was uncovered to sustain the charges and all were released, but only after many of them had been physically abused.

Pogroms against Jews were an especially virulent form of disorder. Though sporadic and scattered over a wide area of the empire, they wreaked havoc on numerous local communities. During the last four months of 1904, there were thirty-three anti-Jewish riots, many of them staged by soldiers in response to allegations in newspapers that Jews were helping the enemies of the fatherland. Then in the spring and summer of 1905 the Black Hundreds went on the offensive against Jews, believing them to be the main instigators of the opposition to Tsar Nicholas. There is little evidence to support charges that the government in St. Petersburg inspired the attacks, but very often the police and soldiers looked the other way for several days; occasionally they joined the marauders.

The breakdown of public order was so widespread that in the spring and summer of 1905 one local organ of authority after another called for major reform of the police powers of the central government. A few of the authorities went so far as to refuse allocating funds to reinforce the existing police force, others asked provincial governors not to dispatch

Cossacks to areas of unrest because they only made matters worse by provoking "irritation and resentment," and still others took up the question of organizing local militias. In some localities, government officials actually gave their blessing to private citizens who showed interest in forming their own paramilitary units to maintain order.

By the summer of 1905, the police also became increasingly ineffective in coping with common criminality. Foreign observers noted that "murder, pillage, massacres and riots are rife in different parts of the country," and that citizens had come to view criminality "as being quite in the ordinary course of events." To protect themselves, citizens in St. Petersburg, Moscow, and in other cities resorted to mob law, which the police often ignored. In some cities, criminals, fearful of roving bands, saw to their own protection by forming "fighting organizations" that struck back at the vigilantes. In Kishinev the situation deteriorated to such an extent that the governor of Bessarabia Province feared that the city was being converted into "an arena of civil war," for which he held the police responsible because they had taken no action against criminal elements. To one observer, it seemed as though the entire country was "on the high road to complete anarchy and social chaos."

Of course, the Russian police had never been known for efficiency or scrupulousness, but in 1905 their performance reached a new low. More than likely, they were demoralized by the rash of terrorist attacks on policemen, which could not be contained. All over the country, "the assasination of police officials," according to a British diplomatic report of April 12, "continues on a large scale," with hardly a day passing "without at least . . . [one] victim being recorded."

Another, no less dramatic, sign of governmental weakness was its inability to enforce the law against strikes, which increased at a rapid rate after Bloody Sunday. In the spring of 1905, some of the more moderate officials, among them the minister of finance Kokovtsov, came to terms with the realities of the new situation and proposed legalizing trade unions and the right to strike, only to be overruled by other, stronger elements at the highest levels of government. This intransigence further embittered workers, who increasingly supported various protest movements.

The labor unrest that swept across the empire was unprecedented not only in its magnitude but also in its thrust. None of the previous strikes had touched as explicitly, directly, and frequently on political issues, though a few words of clarification are in order on the classification of strikes. Factory inspectors, who were government employees, tended to make a rigid distinction, often stressed by historians, between workers' economic and political demands. But in fact it was not always possible to draw a clear line of demarcation between the two kinds of demands. To

be sure, in many instances workers who went on strike emphasized economic grievances, but in autocratic Russia, where collective action against an employer was illegal, a work stoppage was inevitably a challenge to the authorities and therefore a threat to the political status quo. Moreover, early in 1905 many workers on strike called for the legalization of workers' committees, and this came close to being an explicit political demand. In effect, the strikers were asking for the right of free association, which, if granted, would have amounted to a significant liberalization of the political order. The point is that although striking workers may have stressed economic issues, they were engaged in an activity with serious political implications. The authorities were never in doubt about this, a point that should be kept in mind whenever the workers' concern with economic issues is considered.

Nevertheless, it is useful to draw attention to a change in emphasis in the workers' articulation of demands during the first half of 1905. For several months early in that year, workers on strike concentrated on economic questions. Only rarely did they touch explicitly on larger political issues, such as the abolition of the autocracy, alterations in the economic system, or ending the war with Japan. When they began to do so with some frequency late in the spring and during the summer of that year, it was clear that industrial workers had been radicalized.

During the early months of 1905, strikes also tended to erupt spontaneously and lacked firm leadership. By the end of the year, however, they often assumed the character of reasonably disciplined affairs; in some workers' organizations, political activists, generally Social Democrats but also Socialist Revolutionaries, attained positions of prominence. Moreover, professionals and white-collar workers began to form unions, a development of the utmost importance during the national crisis in October. Equally important, until mid-November 1905 the strike movement commanded the support of many liberals, not because they approved of all the workers' economic demands, but rather because they viewed the industrial disorder as an effective means of prodding the regime into granting political concessions.

The vast amount of statistical information on labor unrest in 1905 must be treated with caution. Not only was the collection of data incomplete, but also the strike movement was extremely complicated, making it difficult to decide what criteria to apply in assessing its magnitude. Should workers who laid down their tools three times in 1905 be counted as one or three strikers? Should workers who deliberately performed below capacity or who stopped working one or two hours before the end of their shift be regarded as strikers? Should an enterprise at which 25 percent of the labor force staged a job action be considered in effect

closed down, especially in those instances where a large percentage of the strikers were skilled workers? These are only some of the more frequent problems encountered in any attempt to quantify the strike movement. Still, labor unrest was so critical a development in 1905 that a few statistics are worth mentioning.

Strikes occurred most often in the first and last quarters of the year. During the three months from January to March, more than twenty times as many workers participated in work stoppages in Russia as went on strike in any one year from 1895 to 1908 in Germany, the United States, and France. According to officials who monitored only 70 percent of the industrial labor force, in January 1905 some 414,000 workers were on strike and in February, 291,000. In March and April the number declined to 72,000 and 80,000 respectively, but in May it rose to 220,000, in part because of the celebrations on May 1. In June and July the number of strikers decreased to 142,000 and 150,000, respectively. In the summer months of August and September, the strike movement declined again: 78.000 and 36,000. In October it rose to its peak, 481,000, and it remained high in November (323,000) and December (418,000). Altogether in 1905, 13,110 establishments were affected by work stoppages. More than 2.5 million working days were lost. The cost of labor unrest to employers has been estimated at 127 million rubles and to workers at more than 17.5 million rubles.

Initially, in January 1905 workers in St. Petersburg as well as in other regions of the empire drew up lists of demands only *after* going out on strike, further indication that the strikes were spontaneous. Once formulated, the demands focused on the following issues: increased pay, the eight-hour workday, improved medical care, and better cultural facilities such as libraries and schools. But workers also made what might be characterized as social demands: they insisted on polite treatment by foremen, who habitually demeaned workers by addressing them with the informal "thou," fining them for infractions of factory rules, and searching them to prevent theft of company goods. Finally, workers demanded the right to elect committees of their peers to represent them.

Because the weeks after Bloody Sunday were marked by political instability, workers scored some notable successes: in 70 percent of the so-called economic strikes, they won partial or complete victories. Although some of the concessions were rather minor, such as a reduction of the working week of textile workers from sixty-three to sixty hours, the standard of living for a large number of industrial workers seems to have improved noticeably in many regions of the country.

Officials who believed that the strike movement would dissipate quickly from sheer fatigue discovered that they were deluding themselves.

On the contrary, there was every indication that labor unrest would intensify because workers were succeeding in creating a variety of organizations capable of pressing workers' demands in a more disciplined way. The deputies elected by numerous factories in St. Petersburg in response to directives from the Shidlovsky Commission continued to function as local committees representing their constituencies. More significantly, in the spring of 1905 workers began to establish trade unions in defiance of the law. All in all, by the end of September sixteen unions were formed in the capital, twenty-four in Moscow, and a few others in scattered parts of the empire. During the last three months of the year, fifty-seven unions appeared in the capital and sixty-seven in Moscow. Industrialists were alarmed at this development, but the movement toward unionization was too powerful, and the government too weak, for it to be stopped.

The intelligentsia also formed "unions," though strictly speaking that was a misnomer. Although composed of individuals with similar professional interests, the unions of the intelligentsia directed most of their efforts not at obtaining improved economic conditions but at abolishing the autocracy. Lawyers in St. Petersburg took the lead when they met, in defiance of police directives, on January 30, 1905, and by late April no less then fourteen national professional unions had been established representing physicians, journalists, engineers, pharmacists, academicians, accountants, agronomists, veterinarians, teachers, railway employees, and zemstvo activists as well as people advocating equality for women and Jews. The membership of these unions ranged from 1,500 to 7,500. On May 8–9, sixty delegates from the fourteen unions attended a congress in Moscow and founded an umbrella association, the Union of Unions, which served as a "connecting link" between liberals and revolutionaries. Its overall strategy amounted to a fusion of "liberal tactics with the threat of revolution." Actually, by the summer of 1905 P. N. Miliukov, a leading liberal and the chairman of the Union of Unions, seems to have adopted the cause of revolution. At the union's second congress in June he wrote the resolution (adopted by the delegates) that called for the most radical measures to topple the regime: "All means are now legitimate against the frightful menace that is posed by the very fact of the continuing existence of the present government, and all means should be employed." Two months later, the union's Central Committee voiced its support for a general strike directed specifically at the achievement of political goals. Moderate liberals recoiled at this lunge to the left, and by the late summer Miliukov, fearful of a split within liberalism, began to distance himself from the union. In fact, his change of tactics merely delayed the split.

In 1905 one other mass organization worthy of discussion made its appearance: the soviet (council). Its importance in Russian and Soviet his-

tory is of course beyond dispute, but its impact on the turbulent events of 1905 has generated considerable controversy among historians, who have not been able to agree on whether it was originally devoted to a revolutionary conquest of power or to gaining economic concessions for workers. In fact, the distinguishing feature of the earliest soviets is that they represented not only people from one factory or trade but a wide range of workers in a variety of plants in one geographical region, generally in an entire city. Their purpose was to provide unified leadership for workers and to serve as strike committees; gradually many of them evolved into organizations that fused the struggle for economic and political change. The emergence of soviets was a complex and confusing process, and no account that emphasizes only one of their functions does justice to them.

An organization widely considered to have been the first soviet (even though it did not adopt that name) appeared in mid-May in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, a city of eighty thousand inhabitants in the central Russian industrial region. Known as the "Russian Manchester," Invanovo-Voznesensk was a center of the textile industry, one in which conditions of work were especially harsh—a fourteen-hour workday was common. In an attempt to secure better conditions, workers at one factory went on strike on May 12; within a few days some thirty-two thousand other workers joined the strike and every factory was closed. When the workers submitted a list of twenty-four demands to the district factory inspector, the inspector suggested that deputies from individual plants be elected to conduct negotiations for them all. The workers agreed after the authorities promised not to arrest the deputies. On May 15, the Ivanovo-Voznesensk Assembly of Delegates (composed of 151 deputies) was born, and it quickly elected a presidium to act as an executive. Thus, the first "soviet," an institution that came to be revered and romanticized by Russian revolutionaries, owed its origins, at least in some measure, to a suggestion by a tsarist official.

For the first three weeks of the strike there was no violence in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, in large measure because the assembly quickly succeeded in establishing its authority over the city's labor force and because it took measures to avoid disturbances. Most notably, it created a militia charged with forestalling clashes between strikers and Black Hundreds as well as between strikers and strikebreakers and with keeping workers in remote factories informed of the assembly's decisions. Late in May, however, relations between the strikers and the authorities began to deteriorate, mainly because the governor prohibited a mass meeting called to protest the use of strikebreakers. The workers held their meeting anyway and were attacked by Cossacks; several workers were killed and many were arrested. Infuriated, workers went on a rampage, throwing stones at

buildings and policemen, tearing down telegraph poles and wires, and looting factories and liquor stores. The acting governor received authorization to place the city under "Reinforced Security" and ordered Cossacks to conduct extensive searches. After forty-seven days, a group of workers gave up and returned to their jobs with a vow to resume the struggle as soon as they regained their strength. Most continued the strike, but after the employers made very some modest concessions they, too, began to drift back to the factories and by July 18 the strike ended. The assembly, acknowledging defeat, disbanded.

Nevertheless, the labor unrest in Ivanovo-Voznesensk was hailed by many workers and people on the left as an historic event. Outside the Kingdom of Poland, it was the longest and most disciplined strike between January and October 1905. Moreover, the assembly in Ivanovo-Voznesensk as well as in Kostroma, where an assembly was also formed, marked a new development in workers' organizations. It was not the brainchild of any theorist; no one planned the formation of the assembly and no one had defined its functions and goals. The assembly made its appearance because workers as well as tsarist officials were looking for a practical way of dealing with a work stoppage of major proportions. Originally interested primarily in economic concessions for workers, the assembly in Ivanovo-Voznesensk within short order assumed certain police powers, which was even more threatening to the authorities than the demands for freedom of speech and assembly. The evolution of this first "soviet" demonstrates anew the difficulty of attempting to draw a firm distinction between workers' economic and political demands. In the Russia of 1905, protest movements could rarely avoid politics, even if they were disposed to do so.

By engaging in strikes and by creating labor organizations—generally without the participation of political activists—workers acquired a sense of their own power, of which they had been only remotely conscious before 1905. For this reason, the labor unrest from January to August 1905 must be considered one of the more critical developments of the revolution. Without it, the most massive attack on the autocracy in October would hardly have been possible.

MINORITIES, PEASANTS, SOLDIERS, AND SAILORS

The assault on authority spread to several borderlands of the empire, where it was characterized by two features: it was notably violent from its inception, and it acquired an explicitly political thrust earlier than the

mass protest movements in the ethnically Russian regions of the country. Deep national resentments intermingled with economic and social factors to produce particularly explosive conditions. Ever since the reign of Alexander III (1881-94), the government had sought to exploit Great Russian national sentiments to quash the growing unrest. Ruthless policies of Russification and persecution of minorities, it was hoped, would prompt the masses of Great Russians to rally around the autocracy. But as soon as the central government was perceived to be under siege in the days following Bloody Sunday, it turned out that the government's policies on the national question had failed. National sentiment was still strong among the minorities and clearly played a role in the unfolding events, though it is not easy to separate the national from the social and political factors in assessing their relative importance in stimulating unrest of 1905. But there is no doubt that in several outlying regions of the empire there was disorder marked by special ferocity, most notably in the Polish kingdom, the Caucasus, and the Baltic provinces (Estland, Livland, and Kurland).

The people of the Polish kingdom, under Russian control since the partition of Poland (1772–95) and subjected to Russification after the late 1860s, harbored profound grievances against the tsarist regime; however, for a variety of complex economic, political, and cultural reasons, they failed to unite behind an anti-Russian program. Economically, the Poles enjoyed several advantages as subjects of the empire. Although the 11.3 million people in the Polish kingdom constituted only 7.9 percent of the empire's population, their industrial output amounted to about 25 percent that of the entire country. For some time, the metallurgical and textile industries in Poland had benefited from the protective tariff imposed by the tsarist government as well as from the lucrative markets in Russian Asia. A growing number of Poles also held high managerial positions in various sectors of the Russian economy.

But the economic benefits were offset by the heavy-handed domination by the tsarist government. The government in St. Petersburg did not permit the Poles to form zemstvos or city councils and tried in numerous ways to hamper the development of Polish culture. It prohibited the teaching of Polish or the Catholic religion in the schools; it mandated the use of the Russian language in all public institutions, and it refused to employ any person of Polish origin or of the Catholic faith in government positions. On a per-capita basis, less was spent on education in Poland than in Russia proper, and the Poles were required each year to contribute 150 million rubles to the imperial treasury.

Deeply patriotic, most Poles detested the Russians for seeking to crush their national and cultural heritage, but many also could not help being grateful for their economic advantages. Moreover, however repressive the Russians were, the Germans were even harsher in pursuing the "Germanization" of the Polish territory under their control. This complicated matters for political leaders hostile to tsarism: if they succeeded in weakening the Russian government, they might facilitate the expansion of Germany's influence in Russia.

Opinion in Poland on the Russo-Japanese War was divided. The so-called Loyalists or conservatives, broadly representative of the gentry, supported Russia unconditionally because they feared that its defeat would give Germany and Austria-Hungary a free hand in the Balkans and in the Polish areas that each country controlled. The left vigorously opposed the war, and the leader of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), Josef Pilsudski, actually went to Japan to win support for his plan to stage an insurrection for Polish independence. The Social Democratic Party of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania (SDKPiL) also advocated the overthrow of the autocracy and the introduction of socialism, but did not favor Poland's separation from the empire. Finally, the National League, a middle-class party led by Roman Dmowski, sought conciliation between the Russians and the Poles, but only if the kingdom were granted cultural and political autonomy within the empire.

The war in the Far East had a devastating impact on the Polish economy, and by late 1904 the mood of the country was decidedly tense. On November 14, the PPS organized a mass demonstration in Warsaw that was accompanied by a good deal of violence. Then, within four days of Bloody Sunday, major strikes broke out in Warsaw and Lodz, and, significantly, the strikers immediately emphasized political as well as economic demands. In Lodz they called for an end to the autocracy and to the war and asked for an eight-hour workday and a raise of no less than 166 percent. Angered by the rejection of these demands, workers attacked soldiers with stones and on occasion with guns, and in the ensuing scuffles the Poles suffered numerous casualties. There was considerably more violence in Warsaw, where workers staged a general strike on January 14. Initially, peaceful demonstrations were held, but the presence of large numbers of troops in the city made clashes virtually inevitable. On January 16 alone, some sixty thousand cartridges are said to have been fired at demonstrators in Warsaw. Within a three-day period, sixty-four civilians were killed and sixty-nine wounded (of whom twenty-nine eventually died). On January 17, the government placed Warsaw under a state of siege; nevertheless workers in the city periodically engaged in massive strikes.

By February 1905, the protest movement had spread to Polish educational institutions, where the major cause of discontent was Russification.

Students at Warsaw University and the Polytechnical Institute, as well as pupils at high schools and even at some elementary schools, stopped attending class and joined street demonstrations.

Early in April and again in May, the government relented somewhat and permitted schools at all levels to teach the Scriptures in Polish and lifted other restrictions on the use of Polish in the classroom. These concessions, and a few others, were too niggardly and came too late. Workers and numerous professional groups continued to demonstrate and to pass resolutions in favor of a constituent assembly and autonomy for Poland or, at the very least, greater cultural freedom. In the meantime, disorder spread to smaller cities and towns, and from May to November 1905 the country was on the verge of civil war. For the tsarist government, unrest in Poland was extremely burdensome, for it felt obliged to maintain an army of some three hundred thousand men in the country at a time when every soldier was needed at the front in the Far East.

Even before the outbreak of the revolution, the structure of authority had collapsed in Guriia, a small, picturesque area in western Georgia bordering on the Black Sea and Turkey. Early in 1903, many peasants, acting under the influence of Social Democrats (who later turned to Menshevism), stopped paying taxes; the harsh countermeasures by the authorities proved to be futile. The peasants simply boycotted all government institutions and in some villages they even tore up portraits of the tsar and publicly burned them. It was not uncommon for the clergy to participate in the protest movement by refusing to perform burial rites for government spies murdered by enraged citizens. Within a few months, the local organs of government literally ceased to function and authority now rested with a newly formed Guriian Social Democratic Committee. For all intents and purposes, Guriia may be said to have seceded from the empire by mid-1903. The government took no action to crush the committee, apparently because the rebellion was confined to a small, sparsely populated, and remote region.

Shortly after Bloody Sunday, however, the protest movement spread to areas bordering on Guriia and to other parts of Transcaucasia. "We want what [the peasants] in Guriia have," was a cry widely heard in January and February of 1905. In numerous localities, peasants began to ignore the directives of the authorities and engaged in violent attacks on officials, nobles, and clergymen. When it became evident that the army could not stop the unrest a revolutionary peasant committee announced its seizure of power in Georgia. It abrogated all taxes as well as obligations to landlords and the clergy, and it confiscated state and private lands,

which were distributed to peasants without compensating the owners. In addition, the committee established a system of obligatory and free education for children, urged peasants in the villages to create organs of self-government, and demanded the convocation of a democratically elected constituent assembly, the teaching of Georgian in every school, and the use of the Georgian language in the conduct of official business.

In the regions of Batum, Kinstrik, Ozaugueti, Echialauri, and Tiflis, as far as the northwest area of Kakhetia, the peasants also proceeded to organize their own system of police and justice. In each village every group of ten families delegated one man "of good reputation" to serve as policeman and to dispense justice. Whenever a crime was committed, the plaintiffs would appear before the "deputy," who then formed a "sort of tribunal" with other deputies to investigate the case and pass sentence on the transgressors.

On February 18, 1905, the government placed all of Georgia under martial law and dispatched General A. M. Alikhanov-Avarskii with ten thousand troops and several pieces of artillery to quash the uprising. For four months Alikhanov held his fire, apparently because he was outnumbered by the rebellious peasants and because he feared his troops would fraternize with them. In July he withdrew his forces completely, only to return in October to assault the insurgents in earnest. But it was not until January 1906, when the government was reasserting its authority throughout the empire, that the insurrection in Georgia was completely crushed, and then only after much blood had been shed.

The ferocity of popular unrest in the Baltic provinces in 1905 is explained by the fact that the national movement nurtured resentments of two kinds. On the one hand, the imperial government insisted on the use of the Russian language in most classes in the schools and encouraged the Orthodox Church to convert the local population, which to a large extent was Lutheran. On the other hand, the local nobility, who owned a disproportionate share of the land, and the persons who occupied most of the managerial posts in the factories were overwhelmingly of German extraction. Germans also held most of the important positions in the local organs of government, the police, the courts, and the educational institutions, and tended to treat the Latvians and Estonians with contempt, a pattern of conduct that senior Russian officials often noted in their reports to the ministries in St. Petersburg.

Although the Baltic provinces were still largely agricultural, industrialization had taken root, and Riga and Revel (later Tallin) had become important centers of economic activity. In Estland, where the cultural

level of the population was fairly high, a wide range of cultural societies had been formed sometime before 1905 and had exerted a fair amount of influence on workers. As soon as word of Bloody Sunday reached them, virtually all of Revel's fifteen thousand workers went out on strike, setting forth economic demands very similar to those of workers in St. Petersburg. There was relatively little violence, and the workers managed to wrest some concessions from employers.

In Riga, however, the strike that began on January 13 was immediately marked by violence, in part because the governor-general, A. N. Meller-Zakomelskii, was especially ruthless in dealing with demonstrators. During one skirmish alone soldiers fired into a crowd of workers, killing seventy and injuring about two hundred. Proud of his handiwork, Meller-Zakomelskii informed Tsar Nicholas that he had proved that a small company of soldiers could control hordes of unruly demonstrators. It was regrettable, the governor-general noted, that more local commanders were not willing to act as decisively to put an end to unrest.

Actually, his methods were less effective than he believed. Worker unrest continued in the Baltic provinces for much of the year and soon spread to the countryside, where the Germans were even more prominent than in the cities. Some 1,500 nobles, most of them German barons, owned about 2.5 million desiatinas of land, whereas 1.3 million Latvian peasants owned approximately 2 million desiatinas. Many of the poorer peasants owned between .5 and 5 desiatinas and could eke out a living only by becoming agricultural laborers. On several occasions, these agricultural workers engaged in strikes and in other forms of protest. They refused to pay taxes and rents, boycotted Russian administrative offices, and attacked the castles and estates of German barons. Because of a shortage of police and troops, the barons assembled their own military forces, and by the summer of 1905 bloody clashes between them and the rebellious peasants had in effect turned into a civil war. In the fall, the government imposed martial law, which only provoked more attacks on private estates. Toward the end of the year, Russian troops entered the Baltic region in force and crushed the peasants and workers' movement.

Minority groups in several other regions of the empire gave vent to their aspirations, though the agitation varied in intensity. In Lithuania, for example, a congress of one hundred delegates in November 1905, controlled by the Lithuanian Democratic Party, voted for a democratic system of government and for autonomy for Lithuania within the empire. In Belorussia and the Ukraine nationalist movements were relatively docile, though people began to demand that local languages be adopted in the schools and in institutions of higher learning. Several Ukrainian political parties had been formed by 1905, and in June of that year a congress of

two of them (the People's Party and the Radical-Democratic Party) called for the convening of an elected legislature in Kiev with substantial powers in matters affecting the Ukraine. In Finland, the opposition to the tsarist policy of Russification had been intense for some years and reached a high point late in 1905, when the country literally became paralyzed. Warned by officials that the Russian administration in Finland faced a complete loss of authority, the tsar in November beat a hasty retreat. He issued a manifesto suspending earlier measures (especially the manifesto of 1899) that had stripped the Finns of autonomy. The Finns had won a major victory, but the unrest continued because by now a growing number of people demanded complete independence.

Tsarist officials who remained optimistic about the regime's ability to survive the assault on authority counted on the docility of the peasants, which is surprising since historically unrest in the countryside was by no means uncommon. But many officials still labored under the illusion that peasants' loyalty to the tsar, their "little father," was so deep that they would not join the revolution.

In fact, unrest in the countryside in 1905 became very intense; according to reliable estimates, more than three thousand incidents of unrest involving peasants occurred throughout the empire. There was no one pattern to this peasant movement, which makes generalizations about it hazardous. But it is possible to delineate the rhythm of peasant disorders, though even in this matter caution must be exercised because official reports did not distinguish between major and minor outbreaks of violence. Still, the data available are useful in revealing the cyclical nature of the peasant upheaval. During the first few months of 1905 there were relatively few incidents of disorder in the countryside: 17 in January; 109 in February; 103 in March; 144 in April. In May, when the thaw had set in, the number grew substantially—to 299. It remained high for two more months: 492 in June and 248 in July. In August and September, when peasants were preoccupied with reaping the harvest and sowing the winter crop, the number declined to 155 and 71. In October it rose sharply (to 219), and in November and December reached the highest levels of he year—796 and 575, respectively.

In the Baltic provinces and the Caucasus, peasant unrest was directed at governmental authority, but in European Russia most of the disorder—slightly more than 75 percent of all incidents—were directed at landlords' estates. For the rest, peasants in European Russia attacked the clergy (less than .5 percent of the disorder), kulaks (about 1.4 percent), and merchants, usurers, and liquor stores (roughly 8 percent). In slightly

less than 15 percent of the incidents did governmental authorities bear the brunt of the peasants' rage. It is noteworthy that the "rhythm" of the peasant movement was different from that of the labor movement. The months of greatest labor unrest, January, February, and October, were not the months of greatest peasant unrest, although the last two months of 1905 witnessed a considerable amount of disorder in both the industrial and the agrarian sectors of the economy. Had the two protest movements developed simultaneously throughout 1905, the autocracy would have found itself in an even more precarious condition than it did.

The first major disorder in the countryside broke out in Dmitriev in mid-February 1905 and spread quickly to the neighboring regions in the provinces of Orel and Chernigov. Although there is no evidence of an overall plan to the peasant actions, on the local level they were often well organized. Straw was burned as a signal to gather for an attack. In some localities "initiative groups" of peasants, after receiving the signal, moved from one village to another to incite people to action. Larger groups of peasants, numbering between six and seven hundred, would then make for an estate, fire a few shots, break the locks on the granaries, load the grain on carts, and drive away. Frequently, peasants also divided the livestock and poultry among themselves and destroyed the offices where the records of their debts and obligations were stored. In about one-sixth of the incidents the peasants pillaged the estates; in about the same proportion they resorted to arson. Rarely did they seize privately owned land or harm the landlords physically. Indeed, it was not uncommon for peasants to tell landlords in advance exactly when they intended to appear; if the masters were still on the premises, they were permitted to witness the proceedings.

Peasants were reluctant to defy authorities in a way that would imply a revolutionary challenge to the government. On the contrary, they assumed that the tsar had authorized the actions against landlords or that, at the very least, he was disposed to tolerate them. The peasants also assumed that after their actions, the owners, no longer considering their estates worthwhile, would abandon them; the peasants would then simply take over the land. These notions may seem odd, but they were in keeping with the general outlook of the peasants. The legal concept of private property was alien to them; they believed that all the land belonged to the people who had worked it.

One of the most persistent and widespread forms of peasant protest throughout the revolutionary period from 1905 to 1907 consisted of the illegal felling of trees and seizure of lumber. It has been estimated that 15 percent of all the unrest in the countryside involved this sort of action. It occurred wherever forests could be found and, significantly, was engaged

in by quite a few well-to-do peasants. The woodlands mostly belonged either to the government or to landlords, who in recent years had begun to exploit the trees for industrial purposes. Once that happened, peasants were no longer permitted to roam the forests for firewood, as they had done in earlier years, and the well-to-do peasants could no longer sell the wood on the market. The unrest in the countryside was also marked by strikes by agricultural workers, seizures of meadows and pastures by the peasants, and conflicts over rent between tenants and landlords.

By the early summer of 1905, peasant unrest of one form or another had broken out in sixty-two districts, or 14 percent of European Russia. In some western provinces more than half the districts were affected, and between 10 and 30 percent of the peasants joined in the actions. Generally, peasants of all socioeconomic levels took part, and, perhaps surprisingly, the poorest peasants and agricultural laborers, who could not survive without their daily earnings, were often the most restrained.

A complex set of factors accounts for the peasant unrest. The most obvious reason was economic distress, whose causes can be easily summarized: the primitive level of agriculture; the inadequacy of peasant landholdings; the lack of access to meadows, pastures, and forests; the high cost of leasing land; and the low wages of agricultural laborers. No doubt, peasants were deeply troubled by reports of the government's bungling of the war—all the more so since they suffered severe hardships from large-scale mobilization of their young men, many of whom were killed or maimed in the Far East. The news of Bloody Sunday and of the unrest in the cities also heightened the peasants' sense of despair. Then, in the summer of 1905, the harvests were poor, especially in the central black-earth regions, causing serious food shortages. Admittedly, these factors are so general that they do not amount to a very satisfactory explanation for the outbreak of unrest in 1905. But it is almost always difficult to account for the transformation of discontent into activism and violence. Moreover, since the peasant movement was essentially a spontaneous one, unaffected in its initial stages by any revolutionary party or the intelligentsia, documentary evidence of motives is bound to be skimpy.

Although violence was the most dramatic expression of peasant unrest, in the long run the petition campaign in the countryside, which developed in response to the ukase of February 18, was probably more important, for it reflected the politicization of the peasantry. The bureaucracy did its utmost to prevent the ukase from being disseminated in the villages; where that failed, it tried to prevent the peasants from drafting petitions. But by the spring and early summer, the contents of the ukase had become fairly widely known in the countryside, in large measure because of the liberal

movement and the liberal zemstvos. In the province of Kherson, for example, the zemstvo distributed one hundred thousand copies in April, and similar zemstvo initiatives took place in other parts of the empire. Within a few months, some one hundred petitions were sent to St. Petersburg—and this despite initial coolness toward the campaign on the part of the Socialist Revolutionaries, who feared that the villagers would be diverted from the more militant struggle against the landlords and the authorities.

Leaders of communes played a decisive role in organizing the petition campaign. In addition, peasants discussed their grievances at secret meetings in the forests attended by political activists unaffiliated with any commune. But the final drafts clearly represented the thinking and wishes of the peasants themselves, who voiced their concerns without hesitation and voted on the documents paragraph by paragraph. After mentioning the peasants' centuries of devoted service and sacrifice to Russia, the petitions would list demands such as the following: the transfer of all state and landlords' land to the peasants; the convocation of a democratically elected constituent assembly; the granting of civil liberties; the extension of local self-government, and the liberation from prison of all political dissenters. Although the peasants clearly were making common cause with the liberal movement, it was not unusual for their petitions to end with the following words: "Help us, Your Majesty! Maintain our faith in Your desire to aid us."

This might suggest confusion on the part of the peasants, but it can also be taken to mean that in linking their expressions of loyalty to the tsar with demands for extensive economic and political changes, they were suggesting that their continued allegiance was conditional: the tsar would retain it only if he embarked on a program of far-reaching reform. As one historian has put it, the petition campaign revealed that "the peasant world . . . was revolutionary in spite of itself."

The militancy—in particular the violence—of the peasants caught the government and landlords by surprise. Initially, in February and March, landlords in many of the affected regions panicked and fled to nearby towns, where they sought military help to crush the unrest. It took the authorities a while to react to the disturbances, but once they recovered from the shock, they ruthlessly applied force. Police and soldiers would swoop down on villages to search for stolen goods, and people found with such goods were flogged without mercy. In one village in Chernigov Province, a group of peasants were forced to keel in the snow for several hours, after which they were flogged. Half-dead, the peasants had to be carried away; some were so shaken by the ordeal that they tried to commit suicide. In many localities, soldiers sought to intimidate organizers of

disturbances by burning the homes of presumed leaders of the protest movement. Often military courts were set up to hand down quick and severe sentences on people who had engaged in illegal actions or who had submitted demands to landlords accompanied by threats of violence.

By late spring some sectors of the peasantry entered the arena of national politics, an ominous development for the authorities because it further undermined the official belief in the loyalty of the villagers. Once again, as in the case of the soviets, a high tsarist official unwittingly took an initiative that opened the way for the establishment of a mass organization hostile to the government. The governor of Moscow City urged some peasants to issue a statement in support of the war. A number of peasants responded to the appeal by holding a congress in May in Moscow, but the gathering showed no interest in the governor's patriotic project. Instead, under the influence of reports about the formation of unions by the intelligentsia, the peasants' Congress announced plans for the creation of an All-Russian Peasants' Union, which was to take up larger economic and political issues. The congress called for the election of representatives in each *guberniia*, *uezd*, and *volost* to attend a meeting that would set up the new organization.

On July 31 and August 1, the "Constitutional Assembly of the All-Russian Peasants' Union" met secretly near Moscow. Considering the peasantry's lack of organizational experience, the attendance of more than one hundred delegates from twenty-two provinces was remarkable. Whether the assembly was the authentic voice of the Russian countryside is hard to say, but there can be little doubt that the resolutions reflected the political drift of a significant portion of the peasantry. The assembly called for the abolition of private property in land, the confiscation without compensation of all lands owned by the church, the imperial family, and the tsar, the confiscation (partly with and partly without compensation) of privately held lands, and the convocation of a democratically elected constituent assembly. As for means to be used to attain these goals, the assembly declared itself in favor of both conspiratorial methods and the orderly political processes of a constituent assembly. But it rejected a Bolshevik resolution in favor of a democratic republic, a reflection of the fact that sentiment for a monarchy was still strong in the countryside. Finally, the assembly elected a "Bureau of Assistance," which was to serve as the union's Executive Committee. The villagers, it was now clear, had turned to politics on a national scale.

Ultimately, the fate of the autocracy depended on the loyalty of the country's military forces. If they had refused in large numbers to obey orders,

if they had gone over to the side of striking workers, rebellious peasants, or minority groups in the borderlands, the autocratic regime would not have survived. It is true that the minister of war, General A. F. Rediger, and some of the senior officers resented the use of the army to suppress civilian disturbances because it hindered military training and lowered the army's prestige among the people. In the end, however, the army carried out orders to crush the opposition, although the authorities experienced some anxious moments. On July 22, 1905, for example, General O. A. Bertel reported from Orel that his troops lacked enthusiasm for the war and, more troubling still, some of them had come under the influence of revolutionary propagandists. Even more serious signs of unrest appeared in the navy. Because the operation of modern warships required skilled personnel, the navy recruited a fairly large proportion (29 percent) of its men from the cities, the main centers of radical agitation. By mid-1904 disaffection had become apparent among the Black Sea Fleet, where some sailors in Sevastopol formed a revolutionary organization that acquired a degree of influence in the radical political movement in southern Russia. This organization talked of staging a mutiny throughout the fleet; nothing came of the plan, largely because Social Democrats in the area insisted that the initiative for armed struggle should come from civilians.

But on June 14, 1905, an incident on the battleship Potemkin, patrolling in the Black Sea to test its guns, triggered a mutiny that resulted in carnage in Odessa more severe than that of Bloody Sunday. The men on the ship, some of whom were active revolutionaries, were provoked to mutiny by the mindless conduct of several senior officers. Meat that was to be served to the sailors turned out to be rotten and when the men complained, the executive officer, Giliarovskii, in a fit of rage shot and killed the sailors' spokesman, G. M. Vakulenchik. At this—amid shouts of "Grab the rifles and cartridges," "Hurrah," and "Long live freedom" several of Vakulenchuk's companions grabbed the commander, threw him overboard, and, as one of the assailants put it, "shot him, out of pity, since he was floundering in the water." Other members of the crew quickly joined the fray, killing four or five officers, and under the leadership of the noncommissioned officer A. N. Matiushenko seized control of the ship. The *Potemkin* then set sail for Odessa, where for about two weeks strikes and demonstrations had been almost daily events and violent clashes between workers and Cossacks had broken out sporadically. By the time the Potemkin arrived in the harbor during the night of June 14 a mass uprising seemed to be imminent.

Though astonished by the appearance of the ship, the strikers and demonstrators warmly welcomed the mutineers. When a group of Cossacks and policemen arrived at the harbor, a red flag was raised as a signal for sailors on the *Potemkin* to fire. The Cossacks and policemen immediately retreated, whereupon the sailors invited representatives of local radical groups on board to discuss concerted action against the authorities. The mutineers then placed the body of the slain Vakulenchik, surrounded by a body guard, in a prominent place in the harbor. As expected, this attracted a large crowd, which after a few hours turned violent, for reasons that are not clear. People looted warehouses at will, carrying away bolts of silk, champagne, tea, clothing, anything they could find. They also began to set fires, and soon the entire harbor area was ablaze.

Alarmed by these events and by rumors about the likely spread of the mutiny to other ships, the government placed Odessa under martial law and Tsar Nicholas directed the governor-general of Odessa, I. S. Kakhanov, to "take the most decisive measures to suppress the uprising." Early on June 16, the army arrived in force and shortly after midnight the troops began to shoot indiscriminately into the crowd, which was hemmed in from all sides. Unable to escape, many people jumped into the sea, where they drowned, and many others perished in the flames. The shooting lasted several hours and according to credible accounts, two thousand people died and three thousand were seriously injured. Dazed by the massacre and demoralized and intimidated by the sight of large numbers of soldiers (about twenty thousand in all), the workers of Odessa became quiescent and many people tried to flee the city. By June 20, factories began to operate again and most shops were open.

In the meantime, on June 18 the *Potemkin* set out to sea, hoping to spark mutinies on other ships, but the response was tepid. Totally isolated, the ship sailed toward the Romanian port of Constanza in search for supplies and fresh water. The Romanian authorities turned down the request, but offered instead safe refuge in return for surrendering the ship. After some hesitation, the men on the *Potemkin* accepted the offer.

By itself, the mutiny on the *Potemkin* did not pose a threat to the regime, but it was nonetheless an embarrassment to the government and a source of concern about the depth of disaffection in the armed forces. Sailors on one of the most prized ships of the fleet had been influenced by revolutionary propaganda, and the government could not but wonder whether this was an isolated incident or the harbinger of things to come. As a precautionary measure, it placed some five thousand men of the Black Sea on leave and for a time completely deactivated the fleet. That proved to be no more than a palliative. To many citizens, it seemed as though the autocracy was losing its grip on the country and that the social fabric was disintegrating.

THE FAILURE OF REFORM

In the summer of 1905, the government at last took some measures to shore up its position: it prepared a major reform project and conducted successful negotiations with Japan to end the war. The authorities were responding not only to the widespread unrest but also to a new, intense campaign by liberals for reform. At the first national Congress of City Council Representatives on June 16, attended by 126 delegates from eighty-seven towns, the constitutionalists were in the ascendancy and succeeded in securing the endorsement of the four-tail suffrage (that is, a suffrage that was universal, equal, direct, and secret, though limited to males), which marked a significant shift to the left of this sector of public opinion. Another sign of the delegates' leftward drift was their condemnation of police brutality while refusing to criticize revolutionary terror. Finally, they accepted an invitation from the organizing bureau of the zemstvo movement to attend a congress on July 6 in Moscow. It was to be the first time that representatives from the two systems of local selfgovernment joined forces, and as such the meeting marked a new stage in the campaign for a constitutional order.

The authorities, as was their wont, adopted heavy-handed but futile methods to prevent that meeting of the opposition, which, they feared, would transform itself into a constituent assembly. The congress, attended by about two hundred people, did not take so radical a step, but it did formally approve a new tactic that left-wing liberals had been advocating since late in the spring: agitation from below instead of merely appealing to the autocrat for reform.

This drift to the left led to a split within liberalism. The moderates, led by D. N. Shipov, continued to favor a special path for Russia, that is, avoidance of a constitution on the Western European model. The July Congress of Zemstvo and City Council Representatives did in fact publish a draft of a "Fundamental Law of the Russian Empire," which provided for the rule of law, civil liberties, freedom of association, and the creation of a bicameral legislature, one branch of which was to be elected by "every citizen of the male sex." The draft did not advocate the abolition of the monarchy, but it did propose a sharp curtailment of the tsar's powers, since it stipulated that the legislature was to control the finances of the state and that no proposal could become law without its approval. In making public the draft constitution the liberals intended to prepare public opinion for a critical stance toward any concessions the autocracy might offer to the opposition. At the same time, in reasserting their com-

mitment to a constitutional monarchy, the liberals served notice that their goals differed sharply from those of the radical opposition.

About four weeks after the congress adjourned, the Bulygin committee, formed in February, at last issued its reform proposal. Nicholas had continued to insist that there was no need to move hastily, but on August 6 he was somehow prevailed on to approve the committee's reform project, which came to be known as the Bulygin Constitution. Once again, the government misread the mood of the opposition, which could muster no enthusiasm for a concession that met none of its principal demands. The Bulygin Constitution provided for an elected State Duma whose functions would be essentially consultative; the government would be free to enact laws with the approval of only the State Council, an upper chamber to be composed of dignitaries appointed by the tsar himself.

The constitution's value as a concession to the opposition was further diluted by the electoral procedures. The legislature was to be chosen on the basis of a highly restricted suffrage and the elections were to be indirect, in two, three, or four stages. Newspapers subjected the provisions on the suffrage to careful scrutiny and arrived at some astonishing conclusions. In St. Petersburg, for example, out of a population of approximately 1.4 million, only 7,130 people would be able to vote for electors in the first stage of the elections; in Moscow, 12,000 out of 1.1 million; in Tsaritsyn, 542 out of 85,000. Industrial workers were almost completely disenfranchised. In the final stage of the elections, 7,591 electors would select the 412 representatives to the State Duma.

Except for the followers of Shipov's moderate wing of liberalism, every sector of the opposition dismissed the Bulygin Constitution as totally inadequate. But there were differences among them on tactics. Some liberals argued in favor of a boycott of the upcoming elections while others wanted to participate in them because they believed that the parliament, despite all its imperfections, would provide a new arena for open political struggle. In mid-September the Second Congress of Zemstvo and City Council Representatives voted in favor of participation in the elections, but made clear that this was merely a tactic, not an abandonment of their demand for a democratically elected parliament with real powers. But before the elections could be held the assault on authority gained such momentum that the government was forced to give up the Bulygin reform and make far more extensive concessions.

For a short period in the summer of 1905 it seemed as though the government might be able to strengthen its hand because it had finally taken steps to end the catastrophic war with Japan. Until late in March that

year Nicholas had refused even to consider the possibility of peace, but then several developments caused him to change his mind. The Russian government failed to secure a loan in Paris, whereas the Japanese had succeeded in floating loans in Berlin. The German emperor, convinced that Russia could not prevail militarily, intimated to the tsar's officials that the time had come to begin negotiations for peace. Probably most important, after the ignominious defeat of the Russian navy in the Straits of Tsushima on May 14, public support for the war virtually evaporated. When President Theodore Roosevelt offered to act as intermediary between Russia and Japan in arranging for peace, Nicholas consented on June 7, on the understanding that his decision remain secret until the Japanese also agreed to enter the discussions. The Japanese, militarily and economically exhausted, quickly accepted Roosevelt's proposal that peace negotiations be conducted in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Witte, Russia's negotiator in Portsmouth, had long favored an end to the war and was prepared to make extensive concessions to the Japanese, including the surrender of Sakhalin Island and the payment of a "disguised indemnity." But in a display of tenacity and independence, Nicholas formulated his own terms for peace, on which he did not waver. Under no circumstances would he agree to conditions that he considered a blot on Russia's honor. In the end, the Japanese backed down on most issues. Under the Treaty of Portsmouth signed on August 29, the Japanese obtained control over the Liaotung Peninsula, including Port Arthur and Dalny (Dairen), and one half of Sakhalin, as well as preponderant influence in Korea, but Russia did not have to pay an indemnity.

Throughout the country, the outcome of the negotiations was greeted with satisfaction. But even this achievement did no more than temporarily blunt some of the hostility toward the government. The protest movements had by now developed their own momentum and could not be stopped by minor reforms or diplomatic triumphs that many believed would not have been necessary had the government pursued a judicious foreign policy.

The truth is that ever since Bloody Sunday it had become increasingly evident that the revolutionary upheaval was essentially an unpredictable and spontaneous affair. Neither the government nor the leaders of the opposition could control the drift of events. Thus, although illegal groups of Mensheviks, Bolsheviks, and Socialist Revolutionaries operated in numerous cities, none of them planned or directed the strikes in the cities or the disorder in the countryside. The size of their membership was simply too small for them to exert a powerful influence on the course of events on a national scale, though late in 1905 they did play a significant part in several armed uprisings. It has been estimated that in 1905 there were

8,400 "organized Bolsheviks" and an equal number of Mensheviks in Russia. The only known estimate of the Socialist Revolutionary Party's strength is for November 1906, at which time there were about fifty thousand "regular and organized" SRs. In the Kingdom of Poland, the socialists were more successful in attracting members. The "labor-oriented parties" (SDKPil, PPS, and the Jewish Bund) increased their combined membership from five thousand to about one hundred thousand in the two years from 1904 to 1906. The Mensheviks in Georgia set down deep roots among the population and also established a strong organization. In all of Transcaucasia, several thousand workers and peasants are said to have belonged to the Marxist movement.

It is also worth noting that women had launched a protest movement designed to secure political equality for them. Some women had participated in the banquets organized by liberals late in 1904, and in February 1905 a group of activists established the All-Russian Union for the Equality of Women, whose goal was "freedom and equality before the law without regard to sex." The organization petitioned the Moscow City Council and the local zemstvo for the right to vote for deputies in those institutions, and then set up branches throughout the empire. The union's first congress, held in May and attended by seventy delegates, adopted a political program that resembled that of leftist liberals, though it contained one new demand—full political equality for all citizens. Many liberals, including P. N. Miliukov, were not overjoyed. They dismissed the demands of women as "inopportune," because they believed that the masses, especially the peasants, were not ready for so radical a measure as women's equality. The first two congresses of the Zemstvo and City Council Representatives refused to support the women's demand, but a congress that met in the fall, subjected to intense lobbying, yielded on the issue. The Social Democrats and Socialist Revolutionaries had all along favored universal suffrage without discrimination to sex. But the efforts of women to achieve equality bore few concrete results during the revolution.

One of the more effective and threatening movements from below emerged in Russia in educational institutions, to a large extent the bastion of the well-to-do. Because the educated classes generally considered university students to be the "barometer of the mood of society," the ferment in institutions of higher learning after Bloody Sunday received the closest attention from the government, opposition groups, and the public at large. On some days, newspapers devoted close to one-fifth of their columns to the massive student strikes, political meetings, and street demonstrations that paralyzed schools. Most of the interest centered on secular institutions

of higher learning—universities and specialized institutes—but much attention was also paid to secondary schools, seminaries, and theological academies, many of which participated in the protest movement. Though its primary impulse and thrust were political, the protest movement in education must also be seen as an attempt to effect important cultural changes. Quite often, students and their parents demanded changes in the educational structure, the curriculum, and pedagogy.

On March 18, a Committee of Ministers, bowing to reality, in effect sanctioned the closing of all institutions of higher learning until the fall. The secondary schools, meanwhile, were not closed down en masse, but this did not mean that they remained quiescent. In many localities of the empire, students submitted petitions for educational reform. Although there were variations among them, some themes appeared in almost all of them, and they can be summarized as follows: elimination of police surveillance; abolition of obligatory attendance at religious services; improvement of sanitary conditions; provision for parents to be allowed to select accommodations for their children; reduction of educational costs and fair distribution of stipends: permission for students to visit theaters. concert halls, libraries, and public reading rooms; access to all books authorized by the censorship; the granting to parents of the right to vote in pedagogical councils and to participate in the administration of schools; establishment of honor courts to settle disciplinary cases; and freedom for students to hold meetings in school buildings and to organize mutual-aid societies. In ethnically non-Russian regions of the empire, students and many of their parents wanted schools to be mindful of local cultural traditions. Thus, to cite just one example, a petition in Vilna and Kovno asked that students be permitted to speak Polish and Lithuanian at school and that the language of instruction be in those languages.

Not until late summer did the government undertake any significant reform in the country's educational institutions. On August 27, it issued a decree restoring to universities and advanced institutes the autonomy they had been deprived of in 1884. Councils of faculty members could now elect the rector and the deans. The councils also assumed authority over educational matters and student affairs. For example, they could permit students to hold meetings on school grounds and, in the event of a disorder, could close down the institution. Courts of professors were established to rule on student infractions of disciplinary codes.

Interestingly, General Trepov, the arch-reactionary, was the moving spirit behind the granting of autonomy, an imaginative gesture he would live to regret. It seemed to him that among students "a form of insanity" prevailed, which required a "pathological form of treatment." By allowing them to hold meetings, the "excited hotheads," Trepov believed,

"would exhaust themselves." He also thought that the autonomy measure would encourage students to concentrate on affairs at their own campuses, making it more difficult for them to maintain contact with other opposition groups. Trepov was confident that any attempt by students to radicalize workers would be met with ridicule.

Trepov's strategy misfired completely, as commentators on the right and left later recognized. In his memoirs, Witte contended that the "decree on university autonomy . . . was the first breach through which the revolution, having matured underground, emerged into the broad light of day." N. Cherevanin, a Menshevik activist, attached even greater significance to the decree: "One can say with confidence that the great October strike was prepared within the walls of the higher educational institutions in the atmosphere of free speech and ardent exchanges of opinions. . . . Workers, railway employees, representatives of professional groups discussed their needs, decided whether or not to join the strike that had started, organized the forces of the strike, [and] discussed measures to be taken to bring about its spread."

Initially, students showed little interest in Trepov's concession and insisted that until the political system was fundamentally liberalized the institutions of higher learning should not be reopened. However, at a meeting of students in September representing twenty-three institutions from all over the empire it was decided to adopt a proposal by the Menshevik F. I. Dan that students should abandon the strike, not to pursue their studies but rather to open the universities to the people for mass meetings. There was considerable disagreement among students as to whether they should take an active part in the revolution, but there was little opposition to allowing political agitation in the schools, and that proved to be critical. At one institution of higher learning after another throughout the empire, people thronged to meetings that were blatantly political. In addition to university students, workers, soldiers, women, and secondary-school pupils attended. To be assured admission into the university, many workers in Kiev, at least initially, donned rented double-breasted jackets, attire common among students.

The gatherings were treated to lectures on such subjects as the political tasks of the working class and its relations with other classes, the State Duma, the tactics of progressive parties, the agrarian question, and the philosophical principles of scientific socialism. To attract the largest possible audience, a speaker on October 4 at the Polytechnical Institute in Kiev delivered a political address in Yiddish, surely the first time that had occurred at a Russian institution of higher learning. The organizers of the meetings also attended to practical matters. They openly collected money for strike funds and for the acquisition of weapons. Some speakers urged

their listeners to prepare for an armed uprising and for terrorist actions against the authorities. Invariably, the meetings would end with shouts of "Down with the autocracy." At the Veterinary Institute in Kazan, one speaker demanded that the portrait of the tsar be removed from the hall. When this was refused, students had the portrait covered with a veil. In Kiev, students punched three holes into the portrait of Nicholas I.

A few statistics indicate the popularity of the meetings. Four thousand people attended meetings at the University of Kazan on September 20; two thousand at the Polytechnical Institute in St. Petersburg on October 1; about thirteen thousand at St. Petersburg University on October 5; four thousand at the University of Kiev on October 9; and ten thousand at the University of Odessa on October 9. At Moscow University on September 20, the crowd filled not only all the lecture halls but also the corridors, stairways, and, finally, the porter's lodge. The meetings would last for hours on end, but the crowds never seemed to tire. Nor did they heed the pleas of university officials to halt the illegal and occasionally dangerous gatherings. At St. Petersburg University, so many lecture halls were in use at night that they feared that the overloaded electrical system threatened to ignite, but this, too, dampened no one's enthusiasm. It has been estimated that in the course of about three weeks in the capital alone, tens of thousands of workers attended one or more meetings devoted to political indoctrination.

Dan, who had conceived of the "meetings campaign," was sure that the government would close down all the schools, and this in turn would provoke the masses into a new offensive against the government. Trepov, however, decided against closure because he continued to believe that in time his policy of permitting the popular movement to let off steam would succeed: people would tire of the endless discussions of revolutionary tactics. The authorities in St. Petersburg and in most other cities did little except station policemen and soldiers nearby when meetings were in progress so that "the fire in the buildings would not spread onto the streets." In a few places, armed bands directed by plainclothesmen occasionally assaulted the participants, but generally the authorities looked the other way.

The government's restraint seems to have encouraged defiance. Even the Orthodox Church, presumed to be a solid pillar of the autocracy, had to contend with serious rebellions in its religious schools. In the spring, unrest had erupted at only three seminaries, where discipline and living conditions were especially harsh. But now, in the fall, strikes broke out at forty-eight of the country's fifty-eight seminaries, many of them severe enough to prompt officials to close the schools for prolonged periods. With some exceptions, the seminary students submitted demands that

echoed those of students at secular institutions. They asked for better food, the abolition of the harsh disciplinary system, the transfer of libraries to their control, and the introduction of a secondary-school course of studies that would prepare them for admission to secular institutions of higher learning. The last point underlines the unwillingness of many students at the seminaries to prepare for the priesthood. They attended church schools mainly because they had no other way to obtain an education.

Early in October, student disorder at all four theological academies (in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kazan, and Kiev) caused the suspension of classes. This turn of events astonished church officials, who considered the academies as elitist institutions immune to disaffection. Their students were carefully selected for both intellectual and personal conduct. Moreover, their graduates faced good prospects for employment as teachers or in other moderately well-paying posts. But in the fall of 1905 even these students joined the assault on authority, and their principal demand was that their institutions be granted the kind of autonomy that had been extended to secular schools. At the Kiev Academy, students also explicitly referred to a broad political demand, the necessity of "creating a new system of life in Russia." Officials at this institution adopted a harsh approach: they issued an ultimatum warning students that if they did not immediately certify in writing that they intended to return to class they would be expelled. The students paid no attention to the ultimatum and their academy, as well as the three others, remained closed until after the general strike in October.

The General Strike

At the height of the "meeting epidemic," a new wave of labor unrest erupted unexpectedly and within a few days shook the autocratic regime to its foundations. Although a few opposition leaders had broached the idea of a general strike, no one sensed that the urban labor movement might be on the verge of its greatest show of strength and its most notable triumph. Not until vast numbers of workers had laid down their tools did those leaders appreciate the significance of the strike movement and become active in it. In short, the general strike of October 1905 was a classic example of a momentous historical event that developed spontaneously.

The first signs of labor unrest appeared on September 20, when the printers in Moscow went on strike in what seemed to be a routine dispute over wages and working conditions. It was initially a peaceful affair, but since the printing works were near the university, the strikers came into contact with students and soon began to take part in street meetings devoted to politics. Attempts by the police to clear the streets resulted in some violence, prompting printers in St. Petersburg to stage a three-day strike in solidarity with their comrades. Still, the total number of idle workers was quite small, and on October 1, the Moscow Okhrana reported that the situation was under control and that the strike would soon end.

However, there were other indications of restlessness in Moscow. On October 3, several thousand people joined a funeral procession for Prince S. N. Trubetskoi, who had died unexpectedly at the age of forty-three. The first elected rector of Moscow University, Trubetskoi had been a leading spokesman for moderate liberalism and had become a national hero after his address to Tsar Nicholas on June 6 calling for reform. Students, professors, and representatives from various professional groups viewed the occasion of his funeral as an opportunity not only to honor a decent man but also to demonstrate their hostility toward the old order.

Although Social Democrats chose not to participate in the procession, some marchers sang revolutionary songs and carried wreaths adorned with red ribbons. The streets were lined with sympathetic spectators. It was, in the words of one eyewitness, "the most grandiose political demonstration to date."

The funeral itself had not been marred by any incidents, but a crowd of several hundred students who were making their way to a separate location to listen to revolutionary songs was attacked by Cossacks, who arrested more than twenty of the young people. The educated public in Moscow was so enraged that the police felt obliged to issue a statement justifying its conduct as self-defense against student provocations.

In the meantime, a strike movement of vast dimensions had begun at the instigation of the Central Bureau of the All-Russian Union of Railroad Employees and Workers. Formed in April 1905, the railroad union, with a potential constituency of 750,000 workers of widely differing economic and political interests, had adopted a nonpartisan stance, focusing on such broad political goals as the convocation of a constituent assembly and the attainment of political and civil rights for the people. The central bureau, however, which ran the organization, sympathized with the aims of the radical parties, and at the union's second congress in July it obtained authorization to agitate for a general strike of railway workers in support of the organization's aims and to call such a strike whenever conditions seemed propitious.

Late in September the government unwittingly played into the hands of the militants in the union by convoking a congress in the capital of union delegates to consider certain controversial changes in the rules governing the pension fund that the authorities wished to introduce. Since most of the delegates would be either professionals or managers of the pension fund, the government believed that it would be able to dominate the proceedings. The delegates, however, rejected the man selected by the government to act as chairman and chose instead one of their own, a certain M. D. Orekhov. It was a dramatic and unexpected victory for the central bureau, which had initially opposed the pension congress for fear that it would divert workers from political concerns. The bureau now viewed the gathering as a rallying point and as a possible catalyst for a massive strike movement. It decided to expand the local, uncoordinated strikes that were already a frequent occurrence by calling for a general strike of all the railways, to start on October 4.

Within two days, the work stoppage gained momentum, fueled in part by rumors that turned out to be false that some delegates to the pension congress had been arrested. By October 10, service in Moscow stopped completely, and since Moscow was the hub of the entire railroad system, the strike there had enormous impact on transportation throughout the empire. The strikers sent delegations to Witte, then chairman of the Committee of Ministers, and to Prince M. I. Khilkov, minister of transportation, to persuade them to come out in support of a constituent assembly and some economic concessions. Witte's response that the strike would have to end before discussions about reform could be undertaken drove the congress, some of whose delegates had been reluctant about a general strike, fully over to the side of the central bureau. Once the congress officially opted for the strike, the railway workers in St. Petersburg gave their unanimous support to it, and by October 16 the strike had spread to every line in the country.

Meanwhile, the strike had also garnered wide support throughout society. On October 11 mass meetings at the University of St. Petersburg, totaling about thirty thousand people, unanimously adopted a resolution to join the all-Russian railway strike, and within the next few days industrial workers, telegraph operators, salesmen, pharmacists, and employees of private banks, government offices, and at city utilities failed to show up at work. University students as well as high school students stopped attending class. Even the Imperial Theater, private theaters, and the Mariinskii Ballet closed their doors. Food stores opened only for three hours a day. Surprisingly, a fair number of revolutionary activists initially remained diffident about the mass action. The Bolsheviks in Moscow, distrustful of any action not directed at a seizure of power, failed to come out in support of the general strike until October 10, and the Bolsheviks in St. Petersburg waited even longer, until the night of October 12.

The crippling strike caused severe hardships in the cities and towns. Food supplies became scarce and rose dramatically in price; in Moscow citizens panicked because the water had become muddy, the result, many believed, of contamination by workers. The governor-general tried to cope with the shortage of medicines by ordering military pharmacies to fill civilians' prescription, but he warned that supplies were running low. Large numbers of the deceased could not be buried for lack of transportation; as one newspaper reported, "The mortuaries at city hospitals are overflowing with bodies." Fearing a catastrophe, the city council deputy A. I. Guchkov declared that "the present strike can only be explained as a psychosis that has seized our society." If Guchkov was right, then the disease was highly contagious. By October 16, virtually every urban center in the empire was affected by it. According to reliable estimates, more than two million workers and other employees joined the general strike. The empire was paralyzed. Deprived of many vital services, people believed that they were "experiencing the predicament of Robinson Crusoe."

On the whole, the strike was peaceful, largely because there was an outlet for the people's anger and frustration. They would attend innumerable meetings, most often at institutions of higher learning, where radicals excoriated the government and called for an end to the autocratic regime. But there was another reason for the absence of violence, the reluctance of the authorities to resort to force against a movement that was supported by so many different social groups. The support lent by the middle class was, in fact, astonishing. Some industrialists promised to pay their workers for days they missed during the strike—a promise that was kept. Industrialists in Moscow organized breakfast meetings at the Metropol Hotel to collect money for the families of striking workers. On one such occasion they collected fourteen thousand rubles. At a different meeting, middle-class participants contributed six hundred three rubles for Social Democratic workers. Some affluent sympathizers set up canteens in their homes for children of destitute families. The cooperation of the various social groups continued for the duration of the strike, in large part because the emphasis was on one overriding political goal, the elimination of the autocratic regime; differences over economic and social issues were downplayed.

Although there were a few incidents of violence and some attempts by strikers to intimidate colleagues who refused to leave their jobs, the general strike was in many ways an extraordinary event, remarkable for the high degree of discipline and self-sacrifice shown by masses of people. It is no exaggeration to say that in October 1905 the industrial proletariat emerged as an organized—and for a time also the most dynamic—force in the revolution. It clearly initiated the strike, kept it going, and provided most of the cannon fodder for the assault on the old order. The workers probably could not have succeeded in bringing the government to its knees without the support of white-collar employees, professionals, and the middle class. But if the workers had not taken the lead, there would have been no general strike in the first place. In the nine months since the Bloody Sunday, the proletariat had undergone a notable process of politicization, and the autocracy's failure to introduce fundamental reforms had induced a decisive shift to the left in society at large. It was the congruence of these two developments that furnished the essential backdrop to the general strike, the opposition's most impressive challenge to the autocracy during the revolution.

The establishment of the soviet in St. Petersburg further testified to the growing political activism of the working class. On the evening of October 13, about forty deputies, more or less formally elected by workers at the behest of Menshevik agitators, met at the Technological Institute to set up a "strike committee" to provide unified direction for the move-

ment now engulfing the entire city. The newly formed committee called on all factories to elect deputies, one for every 500 workers, for a total of 562. On October 17, the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, as it came to be called, elected an Executive Committee of fifty, which made the major decisions, although some issues were publicly debated and voted on by the entire soviet. After electing as chairman G. S. Khrustalev-Nosar, a left-liberal lawyer, the soviet took pains to adopt a neutral stand on partisan politics, which was one of the reasons for its great popularity. Leon Trotsky (L. D. Bronstein), who had aligned himself with the Mensheviks, was the only revolutionary Marxist of any prominence to play an important role in the soviet. The Bolsheviks initially favored the soviet, but as soon as it assumed political leadership of the St. Petersburg workers they became hostile to it because they were uncomfortable with any organization that strove to be nonpartisan. Lenin did not come to St. Petersburg until November and he apparently succeeded in persuading his colleagues to desist from attacking the soviet outright. He attended only a few sessions of the Executive Committee and made no significant contribution to its work. However, his rivals for proletarian support, the Mensheviks, enthusiastically supported the soviet and assumed a position of leadership in it. For the Mensheviks, the creation of the soviet was part of their larger plan to create a broad proletarian political party in which workers would play a key role.

The St. Petersburg Soviet became the headquarters of the general strike, exerting pressure on wavering workers, intimidating industrialists disinclined to close their factories, and keeping people informed of developments in the work stoppage by means of a newspaper that had a run of thirty-five to sixty thousand copies. The soviet also directed food stores to open during specified times of the day, and it proclaimed freedom of the press. But in a less liberal spirit it directed vendors not to sell "official publications." The kiosks of vendors who disobeyed this directive were to be destroyed and the offending newspapers confiscated. On various other matters, such as the removal of the army from the city and the granting of funds to the soviet to form a workers' militia, the soviet applied pressure on the city council to take action. The council, unwilling to offend the soviet, neither approved nor rejected the requests. By the time the general strike ended, the soviet in the capital had arrogated to itself powers normally exercised by a governmental authority.

In all, workers in some forty to fifty cities formed local soviets in the fall of 1905; in addition, soldiers and peasants established their own councils in several regions, bringing the total to about eighty. The activities of these soviets varied considerably. Several acted primarily as strike committees, while a few in the mining districts of the Urals and the

Donets Basin concentrated on preparing for an armed struggle. The latter did not last very long, and consequently not much is known about them. In most of the soviets, Social Democrats predominated: in Odessa, Kiev, and Baku, and in the south of Russia generally, the Mensheviks had the upper hand; in Moscow, Kostroma, and Tver, and in the cities of the Donets Basin, the Bolsheviks were ascendant.

THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE STRIKE

The government, under growing pressure from various sectors of the public to put an end to the strike, vacillated for several days and then decided on a course that proved to be unfeasible. On October 12, Nicholas ordered General Trepov to deal vigorously with the unrest. Trepov immediately sent a directive to all police chiefs in all provinces with a sizable revolutionary movement to "act in the most drastic manner" to prevent disorder, "not stopping at the application of force." A day later, he ordered the governor-general of Moscow to prevent any public meeting that had not been sanctioned, if necessary "with all means, including the overt use of force." Most dramatically, on October 14 Trepov issued a proclamation to the people of St. Petersburg that was printed on the first page of the daily newspapers and posted on walls and fences. The proclamation promised that the authorities would protect lives and property but also warned citizens that the police and army had been ordered to put down all disturbances with the "most decisive measures," and that they had been advised "not to use blanks [or] to spare bullets."

Given the tense atmosphere in St. Petersburg, it is hard to imagine a government action less calculated to restore calm. On the very day the proclamation was distributed, some forty thousand people defiantly streamed into the streets near the university. In addition, every auditorium in the main building was filled to capacity with men and women from various labor unions. But the army and police were nowhere to be seen. Apparently, the authorities realized that any attempt to disperse the crowd would have led to a bloodbath even more terrible than the one on January 9.

Several advisers to the tsar now concluded that only political reform could bring the crisis to an end. The main spokesman of this group was Witte, who had recently returned from the Japanese peace negotiations with a greatly enhanced reputation. Witte still believed that a progressive autocracy with far-sighted leadership was the best form of government for Russia, but he recognized that in view of the revolutionary assault on authority it was now impossible to maintain the old order. Reluctantly,

the tsar accepted Witte as the man to deal with the crisis. The problem was that however much Nicholas recognized Witte's abilities, he could not abide the man, believing him to be overbearing and dangerously ambitious. At the same time, Witte nurtured a strong dislike for the monarch, whom he regarded as shallow, indecisive, and utterly devoid of political wisdom. Still, Witte, profoundly patriotic and eager for glory, could not resist the chance of being the savior of Russia, the man who would restore calm and stability.

The reform that Witte had in mind was an imperial manifesto granting civil and political rights to the people and providing for the establishment of a "unified ministry" headed by a prime minister who would have primary responsibility for running the government. Under the prevailing system, each minister reported directly to the tsar, an arrangement that made it possible for ministers to pursue contradictory policies. Witte was confident that his proposed concessions, which would amount to the creation of a constitutional order without reducing the monarchy to political impotence, would succeed in detaching the moderates from the opposition and thus place the country back on an even keel. This strategy was to become the core of Witte's policies over the next few months.

In an audience with the tsar at which he outlined his strategy, Witte pointed out that the only alternative to his approach was the appointment of a dictator, who would have to subdue the opposition by force. He emphasized his preference for a political solution, but, as was his wont in the presence of the sovereign, Witte did not insist that his proposal was necessarily the best one.

After extensive discussion with his advisers, Nicholas indicated partial acceptance of Witte's program, the creation of a "unified ministry." Apparently, the tsar would not go any further because he suspected Witte of trying to enhance his own prestige, and even of planning to become "president of the All-Russian Republic." But Witte insisted that the partial implementation of his program would not succeed in ending the turbulence. Nicholas now called another meeting of advisers, including his cousin, Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, the only person who possessed all the qualifications for the post of dictator: he was a zealous defender of the autocracy, enjoyed the confidence of the sovereign, and was in the good graces of the imperial family. But Nikolai Nikolaevich had reached the conclusion that there was no acceptable alternative to political reform, and it was only after a dramatic meeting between him and Nicholas that the latter finally decided, on October 17, to accept Witte's proposal. According to Witte, when Count Frederiks, the minister of the court, informed the grand duke that the tsar wanted him to take over as dictator, the following scene was played out: "The Grand Duke took a revolver from his pocket: 'You see this revolver,'" he said, "'I am now going to the Tsar and will implore him to sign the manifesto and Witte's program; either he signs or I will shoot myself." "With these words," Frederiks continued, "he left me. After a while, the Grand Duke returned and transmitted to me an order to rewrite in final form the Manifesto and report, and then . . . bring them to the sovereign for his signature."

Nicholas had not changed his mind because he was persuaded of the wisdom of restructuring Russia's political system. He realized that he had no choice. As he put it in a letter to his mother, "From all over Russia they cried for it, they begged for it, and around me many—very many—held the same views. . . . There was no other way than to cross oneself and give what everyone was asking for." Even Trepov, one of the most unyielding hard-liners, warned that unless Witte's reform proposals were implemented, order could be restored only by means of a bloodbath, and even then he was not certain of success.

The Manifesto of October 17 was quite brief, basically an outline of reform the government intended to introduce in the coming months. It would grant such civil liberties as personal inviolability, freedom of conscience, speech, assembly, and the right of association, and it promised that in the future no measure would become law without the approval of an elected State Duma. The last point was critical, for by conceding that he was no longer the sole repository of political power, Nicholas did what he had vowed never to do: he abandoned the principle of autocracy. The liberal press rightly hailed the Manifesto as a "great historical event," the "first step toward a Russian constitution," the beginnings of a "new order," the triumph of a "peaceful national revolution." With relatively few exceptions, Russians from all walks of life greeted the October Manifesto with enthusiasm. There could be no doubt that a decisive moment had been reached in the revolution.

In the view of many historians, the issuance of the Manifesto marked the high point of the revolution. There is much to be said for this interpretation, for the dismantling of the autocratic regime had been the central demand of the liberals who had launched the campaign against the authorities in the fall of 1904, the real starting point of the upheaval.

Within a matter of days, most workers, who were beginning to suffer great hardships, returned to their jobs despite the urging of the St. Petersburg Soviet on October 18 that the strike be continued until "such a moment when conditions necessitate a change in tactics." One day later, when it became evident that workers were following their own instincts, the soviet quickly retreated and voted to end the strike.

Social Democrats of both persuasions stridently denounced the Manifesto as a hoax and some left-wing liberals, most notably Miliukov,

dismissed the concessions with the words "nothing is changed: the war [against the old order] continues." But even among those who welcomed the Manifesto there were many who harbored serious doubts the government's determination to implement it fully. Witte, newly appointed prime minister of a "unified government," understood that he faced an enormous challenge: not only did he have to draft a constitution, but also he had to change the administration's conduct of affairs quickly to persuade the country that the old methods of rule would in fact be abandoned. With a nice sense for public relations, he invited several editors of leading newspapers to his office to convey his earnest desire for public support. Witte frankly admitted that his policies could not succeed without the backing of the "vital social forces" of the country and that the press could help by fostering public confidence in the new government. But then he added, ominously, that only after calm had been restored, would it be possible to carry out the reforms that had been promised.

In another effort to secure public support, Witte invited several moderate liberals to join his government, but when the prime minister indicated that he planned to appoint as minister of internal affairs P. N. Durnovo, a well-known reactionary with a dubious moral reputation, the liberals immediately turned him down. It was a missed opportunity for both Witte and the liberals and it is still a mystery why Witte insisted on Durnovo for so critical a post. The most plausible explanation for the prime minister's stubbornness is that he wanted a strongman in that sensitive post to counterbalance the influence of the liberals. In any case, Witte did not give up and turned to other liberals for support, but none would serve in his cabinet. Inevitably, the approaches to the liberals embarrassed the prime minister, and the tsar was thoroughly dismayed at his courting of "various extremists, especially as all these talks appear in the press the next day, and as often as not are distorted."

It is an open question whether the liberals acted wisely in turning down Witte's overtures. Though certainly not a democrat or a parliamentary constitutionalist, Witte did believe in the weeks after the general strike that major reforms were necessary. Yet within the highest official circles he could count on few to support such a policy. The presence of committed liberals in the government might have strengthened his reformist proclivities and added weight to the argument that the country could be pacified only by political means. If after a few weeks it became evident that they were impotent or, worse, hostages to the reactionaries, the liberals could have resigned. It is not certain that such a course of action would have irreparably harmed the cause of constitutionalism.

Nevertheless, the liberals were in a difficult position. Their rebuff of Witte was, no doubt, partly motivated by principle. But political consid-

erations also played a role, perhaps a decisive one. Joining the cabinet, the liberals feared, would cost them the support of substantial sectors of society, which harbored strong doubts about Witte's true intentions. "The gentlemen whom . . . [Witte] has consulted," the British ambassador to St. Petersburg reported, "confess to him that their power would vanish as soon as they became ministers."

In the end, the cabinet of fourteen people that Witte assembled all came from the bureaucracy, which did not enjoy the confidence of society. Only one member of society, Prince S. D. Urusov, agreed to serve in the government, as assistant minister of internal affairs. But by himself he could not exert much influence on government policy, and in any case, he soon resigned in disgust when he discovered that a high official in the Department of Police had helped incite pogroms.

NEW POLITICAL PARTIES

The political landscape was transformed by the general strike and the October Manifesto. Vast numbers of people were now politicized, and activists formed three new parties, two of which were to play a key role in national affairs over the following decade, when a primary issue was the consolidation of Russia's transition from monarchical rule to representative government. Liberals had taken the initial steps toward organizing a party during the summer so as to mobilize popular support for the elections announced by Bulygin on August 6. Their efforts came to fruition during the general strike, when the Constitutional Democratic Party (or Party of People's Freedom, generally known as Kadets) held its founding congress in Moscow (October 12–18). Somewhat later, Shipov and Guchkov took the lead in forming the Union of October 17 (Octobrists), which spoke for conservative liberalism. Finally, the ultraconservatives founded the Union of the Russian People (URP) to activate the masses to defend the old order.

The Kadet Party was essentially a movement of professionals and liberal landowners who subscribed to the political views of the zemstvo constitutionalists and the Union of Liberation. The professional class predominated in the party's leadership. Although the party intended to be "above class" and to represent the interests of the entire population, it never attracted many workers or peasants. Nor did it succeed in gaining a foothold in commercial and industrial circles. Nonetheless, politically the Kadets achieved a remarkable degree of prominence, and, eventually, influence, in large measure because their leaders were highly intelligent,

articulate, determined, and skillful as politicians. Several Kadet leaders were also first-rate journalists, and they had at their disposal several distinguished newspapers and journals, which became their main weapon in the political struggles. By January 1906, the Kadets succeeded in creating an impressive organization. Approximately one hundred thousand people belonged to the party, which maintained local groups in twenty-nine provinces as well as party sections in many districts and cities. More than one thousand activists ran the affairs of the movement at the local level.

The Kadet program was progressive and generally judicious, even though their tactics were often militant. The program called for a democratic system of government, the rule of law, a progressive system of taxation, an eight-hour workday, and the distribution, "insofar as is necessary," of "land alienated from private landlords and paid for by the government at equitable, not market, prices." Whether the monarchy should be retained was left open. With this broad program, combining political liberalism and social reform, the Kadet leaders hoped, on the one hand, to steer a course between revolution and reaction and, on the other, to preserve the unity of the opposition. Probably the Kadets' greatest handicap was that they were liberal democrats in the Western European mold in a country without a strong tradition of hospitality to liberal ideas.

To the right of the Kadets stood the Union of October 17, which may more properly be considered a political association than a political party. It never attained the status of a mass movement, relying for its support on commercial and industrial interests in the cities and the moderately conservative nobility in the provinces. Not until late in 1906 did A. I. Guchkov, a wealthy Muscovite industrialist, succeed in imposing an organizational structure on the union thereby transforming it into a party. Opposed to the arbitrariness of the autocracy and bureaucracy, the Octobrists were generally content with the October Manifesto, which they confidently expected to lead to a political system according civil rights and equality before the law to all. They considered additional reforms desirable and believed that they could be achieved through the State Duma.

Unlike the Kadets, the Octobrists were strong supporters of the monarchy, both as a symbol of national unity and as a center of political authority. They opposed calling a constituent assembly, which, they held, would signify a complete break with tradition, and much more than the Kadets, they tolerated and even sanctioned repressive measures against revolutionaries. The Octobrists supported the right of workers to form unions and to strike over economic issues, but condemned attempts to make union membership or participation in strikes compulsory, and they repudiated political strikes. The Octobrists favored various measures to

aid the peasants economically and were prepared, in "cases of state significance," to support the alienation of some private lands if these measures proved to be "insufficient."

Nationalism was a key element in Octobrist political outlook. Any plan that even remotely suggested a federal system of government was anathema to the party's leader, Guchkov. He opposed political autonomy for Poland as well as all schemes to decentralize the legislative tasks of the government, though he did favor civil liberties and cultural autonomy for minorities. He was prepared to make an exception for Finland, which, he believed, should retain its autonomous status so long as it remained part of the empire.

Late in 1905 and for about two years thereafter, the Octobrists commanded too little mass support to play a major political role, but nonetheless their impact on the course of the revolution was not negligible: in creating a movement that strongly supported the October Manifesto, they accorded a measure of legitimacy to the new order.

Supporters of the old order were reluctant to form a political party because that ran counter to their belief in the untrammeled authority of the autocrat. But early in November 1905 Dr. A. I. Dubrovin, having concluded that a mass party of the right was necessary to counter the left and the liberals, established the Union of the Russian People, which, despite its very small following, became by far the most important of all the right-wing organizations among the approximately two hundred that made their appearance during the revolutionary period. Although some professionals, businessmen, landowners, and lesser officials attended the meeting that founded the movement, the upper reaches of Russian society were not represented at all at that gathering and never became prominent in the URP leadership. Beyond that, not much can be said with certainty about the social composition of the movement, except that it apparently attracted the support of some Lumpenproletariat ("backward provincials") as well as some disgruntled members of other classes, and that the leaders of the movement regarded themselves as spokesmen for a particular middle-class stratum whose position was especially precarious and threatened by the revolution.

The single most important feature of the URP's ideology was anti-Semitism, derived mainly from two spurious documents that until 1919 were hardly known outside Russian right-wing circles, the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and the *Rabbi's Speech*. According to these two works, the elders of international Jewry were engaged in an international conspiracy to take control of Europe and Russia by means of revolutions staged by Christians against their own leaders. Some URP leaders advocated mass slaughter of the Jews to solve the Jewish problem, but in its

official pronouncements the URP urged the authorities to do everything in their power to encourage Jews to emigrate to Palestine. The Jews who remained in Russia should be regarded as foreigners "but without any of the rights and privileges extended to all other foreigners." The union, in fact, regarded only the Great Russians, Little Russians, and White Russians as "native Russians," defined in the official organ as people "whose father and mother, grandfathers, and forefathers were born in Russia, chose the Orthodox religion as their own, and chose the Russian language." All other national groups within the empire were "aliens" who did not merit rights equal to those of the "natives" and must not be granted political or cultural autonomy.

The URP sought to influence national politics in two ways. It engaged in a massive propaganda campaign, bombarding the tsar with messages of loyalty, and on occasion, the URP organized street demonstrations, in most cases not well attended. The URP's second tactic was more sinister: it organized "armed squads" that assassinated political leaders of the opposition.

The tsar looked with favor on the union and formally received its delegates, including Dubrovin, at his court in Tsarskoe Selo to listen attentively to their expressions of loyalty. He also accepted the gift of two URP badges, one for himself and one for his son, and indicated that he agreed with his visitors that the autocracy must be retained. For the ruler and his associates, the very existence of such organizations was heartening, because it allowed them to believe that far from being isolated, they actually enjoyed a groundswell of support among the people. Such reassurance could only have stiffened their resolve to hold the line against the forces of change.

CONCESSIONS ENDANGERED

The October Manifesto, the opposition's most stunning victory over the autocracy in 1905, led not to domestic tranquillity but to a new round of unrest that further undermined the social and political order. None of the enthusiasm for the October Manifesto translated into political support for the author of the document, Count Witte, who had been appointed prime minister on October 17. At the head of a system of government that was, in the words of one observer, an "absolute chaos," he immediately faced an array of intractable problems.

First of all, more than one million soldiers were still in the Far East clamoring to be demobilized. Frequent strikes on the railroads and administrative confusion had caused delays of up to six to eight weeks in bringing the men home. Frustrated and angry, many soldiers became unruly. Witte was also short of funds to run the government and it took him close to six months to negotiate a loan with Western European governments. Moreover, Witte encountered great resistance from established institutions in implementing the Manifesto. The new chief procurator of the Most Holy Synod of the Russian Church, Prince A. D. Obolenskii, for example, complained that he "had the greatest difficulty" in persuading the synod to send out a pastoral letter urging the faithful to "accept the new order of things." Witte himself struggled to find competent men to serve in his administration, and to make matters worse, two days after issuing the Manifesto, Tsar Nicholas began to criticize his chief minister for inaction and disorganization. Early in November rumors began to circulate that Witte would be dismissed and replaced by a reactionary who would assume the powers of a military dictator.

That did not happen, but Witte never exercised the authoritative position in the cabinet that he had demanded and had been promised. Whenever Nicholas wanted some action taken that he suspected Witte would oppose, he dealt directly with other ministers. Moreover, Trepov, the eminence grise ever since Bloody Sunday, continued to serve as the tsar's adviser and was appointed to the prestigious position of commandant of the court. In his new position, Trepov controlled the flow of information to and from the tsar and thus wielded enormous influence over policy. "I give . . . [Trepov] Witte's bulky memoranda to read," the tsar told his mother early in 1906, "and then he reports on them quickly and concisely. This is of course a secret to everybody but ourselves." To add to Witte's burdens, the extremists on the right viciously attacked him, hunting him down "like a wild beast." The extraordinary pressures took their toll. He was so overworked that six days after assuming his new office he was thoroughly exhausted.

Nonetheless, Witte quickly made several moves in keeping with the spirit of the Manifesto. On October 21 a ukase was issued at his initiative granting amnesty to various categories of political prisoners and reducing the punishments of others. The opposition was not satisfied, but the ukase did lead to the release of many political prisoners; in Warsaw alone 1,511 people were freed. Then, on October 22 the government issued another manifesto abolishing all measures taken since 1899 in violation of Finland's legal system, thus restoring the rights that the Finnish people had enjoyed during the period of autonomy. Late in November, in another conciliatory gesture, the government added 133 Russian towns to the list of places where Jews were permitted to reside. Still, Witte failed to enlist the support of liberals, which he considered essential to provide

his government an aura of legitimacy, and so long as that was the case his reform program remained in grave jeopardy.

Most troubling, Witte's attempts to establish his government's authority took place against a background of mass violence, one of the more puzzling outbursts of raw passion in 1905. For nine months, pressure from below for reform had seemed irresistible and the government, without much visible popular support, appeared to be helpless. From time to time, defenders of the status quo had shown signs of life, but their efforts on behalf of the autocracy had been sporadic and ineffective. Then, precisely at the moment when the autocracy was at its weakest, when it had been compelled to grant its first major concession, the defenders of the old order unleashed their most intense and ferocious attack on the advocates of change. This resort to brute force to silence the tsar's critics threatened to undermine the new order before it could be consolidated.

The violence that erupted in the streets and countryside of the empire was as sudden as it was widespread. Although Jews were the principal focus of the pogroms, they were not the only ones to come under attack. The rampaging mobs also targeted the intelligentsia—anyone, in fact, who was presumed to have participated in the movement to extract the Manifesto of October 17 from the tsar or who simply rejoiced in it.

The disorder began on October 18, the day after the concession was made, and within four days it seemed to one sober commentator that "complete governmental anarchy" prevailed in Russia. The shock to society was profound. "No one thought that the first day of a Russian constitution would end in tragedy." After seven days the mobs largely ran out of steam, but sporadic incidents continued until late November.

There was no one pattern to the disorder. For the most part, it appears to have started when organized gangs attacked demonstrators celebrating the opposition's victory over the autocracy. Often, Jews took part in the celebrations, and that served as a pretext for specifically anti-Jewish riots, but sometimes pogroms erupted after rumors circulated that Jews had perpetrated acts of wanton violence. When Jews in Kiev were accused of having set fire to the Golosoeevskaia Monastery and murdering all the monks, rioters destroyed stores in the Jewish bazaar, killed twelve people, and injured forty-four. In some localities, the pretext for a pogrom was the charge that Jews were planning to place one of their coreligionists on the throne. In still others, patriotic processions—occasionally inspired by ecclesiastics—were organized to counteract the celebrations and then degenerated into orgies of violence.

Funerals for people slain by right-wingers were yet another occasion

for mass violence, because such events often turned into demonstrations against the old order. The most notable such funeral took place in Moscow on October 20 for N. E. Bauman, a thirty-two-year-old Bolshevik with impressive credentials as an activist, who had been shot and then beaten to death by a worker sympathetic to the Black Hundreds. The stage was set for a spectacular procession, organized by the Bolsheviks and attracting many thousands of ordinary people. At the conclusion of the procession, which had been entirely peaceful, about four thousand mourners gathered at the university, where they unexpectedly came under attack, first from Black Hundreds and then from Cossacks. To ward off the assault, revolutionary militiamen with the mourners fired their revolvers, and in the ensuing exchange of gunfire six marchers were killed and thirty injured, half of them seriously. The authorities promised to conduct a "strict investigation" of the incident, but it soon became evident that they were not interested in bringing right-wing criminals to justice. When a prime suspect in Baumann's murder, a certain N. F. Mikhailin, was apprehended, the procurator released him as soon as a mob of Black Hundreds besieged the courthouse demanding that he be handed over to them. In the end, Mikhailov was tried and sentenced to two years of hard labor, but the tsar pardoned him. After the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, Mikhailin was tried again; this time he was shot after a court found him guilty of Bauman's murder.

For several days attacks on Jews occurred with such frequency that newspapers carried special sections entitled "Jewish pogroms," and they told only part of the story. All in all, according to the most reliable estimates, 690 anti-Jewish pogroms occurred, primarily in the southwestern provinces; 876 people were killed and between 7,000 and 8,000 injured. In a few cities the Jews lost property estimated at more than 1 million rubles. Altogether, the damage to property during the pogroms has been calculated at 62 million rubles.

In accounting for the disorder, critics of the autocracy claimed that the hooligans had been organized by reactionaries and abetted by officials at every level of government. Some critics also contended that the government in St. Petersburg had actually planned the violence so as to deal a crushing blow to all who had worked to wrest the Manifesto from the tsar. These charges cannot be dismissed out of hand. The reports that the police looked the other way during pogroms and helped to organize patriotic processions are simply too numerous. In several localities, investigations made shortly after the unrest confirmed that the police had indeed helped to foment them. Moreover, the Bureau of Investigation of the Jewish Pogroms (apparently set up by the government itself) conducted a general inquiry and concluded that "in almost every pogrom local authorities participated actively."

But this still leaves open the question of the culpability of the government in St. Petersburg. On the one hand, it was widely known that Tsar Nicholas viewed the violence against Jews as a natural reaction of loval citizens to the excesses of the left. And in February 1906 some highly damaging evidence of complicity by the authorities in St. Petersburg came to light, A. A. Lopukhin, director of police in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, informed Prime Minister Witte that in October and November 1905 a secret press in police headquarters in the capital had printed "thousands of proclamations" urging "all true Russians to rise and exterminate all foreigners, Jews, Armenians, etc. and all those who were advocates of reform and talked of restricting the autocratic power of the Sovereign." It also emerged that General Trepov had personally made corrections on the proofs of some of the proclamations. After an investigation confirmed the accuracy of Lopukhin's allegations, Witte ordered that the press and the remaining proclamations be destroyed. Apparently, Witte also wanted to press charges against Captain M. S. Kommisarov, the officer directly responsible for the printing and distribution of the inflammatory material, but the tsar made it clear that he would not allow Kommisarov to be punished because the officer had done valuable espionage during the war with Japan.

Nevertheless, it seems highly unlikely that the pogroms began in response to a signal from St. Petersburg or that they would not have taken place at all without official inspiration or approval. Their randomness and the failure of local officials to follow one clearly defined policy argue against the proposition that the pogroms were planned in the capital. Moreover, Witte himself, determined to maintain order and to enlist the support of liberals, not only put an end to Kommisarov's activities but publicly condemned the violence and vowed to take the "most decisive steps" to curb it. Two high officials who had brazenly shown their sympathy for the pogroms, P. G. Kurlov, governor of Minsk, and D. M. Neidhardt, the prefect of Odessa, were actually dismissed and brought to trial (both were cleared by the Senate in March 1906). It is also important to note that some higher officials in local areas did not approve of the pogroms and, in fact, made it clear that they would not tolerate the violence. These areas remained calm. One such official was the governor of Saratov, P. A. Stolypin, who ordered an immediate halt to attacks on Jews that had begun in his province. It seems highly unlikely that he would have been promoted to head the government six months later had he contravened directives from the government.

An explanation of the mass violence is not easy. Much of the reckless plundering and beatings of innocent civilians were the work of ruffians motivated by prejudice and by a craving for loot. But peasants, shopkeepers, coachmen, janitors, and even some workers (though apparently not any who belonged to trade unions) lent a hand, for the same reasons. For these people, however, another factor may also have played a role. They found unbearable the sight of multitudes of ordinary Russians, among them many Jews and rowdy students, celebrating their victory over the revered tsar, often by defiling his portrait. For nine months the "upstarts" had defied authority more or less with impunity; now they had apparently succeeded in bringing down the entire political system, and with it the hierarchical structure on which Russian society had been based, a structure in which the perpetrators of pogroms enjoyed a certain status they wished to preserve. As one observer noted, ordinary people who had until October at least been able to take refuge in their superiority to Jews and other social outcasts "must undoubtedly have felt miserable [in seeing] the streets captured by new people, precisely those people who up to this time had stood outside the law, people against whom everything had been permissible. There are [such] malcontents even among the more solid elements of the population." And if the autocracy could no longer restrain the upstarts, those who yearned to maintain the old order because they felt secure within it would have to take the law into their own hands. To some vigilantes, such conduct may not even have seemed to be a violation of legal norms, for the tsar's capitulation signified to them that their revered leader—in their view the only legitimate source of authority—had been undermined by evil forces, and that they must therefore come to his rescue at all costs.

The prominence of Jews among the upstarts was especially galling to the *pogromshchiki*. For religious, social, and economic reasons, hatred of the Jews was deeply rooted among many sectors of the Russian population. Until 1905, the Jewish minority had been denied most of the few rights enjoyed by other subjects of the empire. Now, not only was there talk of granting rights of citizenship to Jews, but also they had even assumed positions of responsibility in movements that had dealt the tsar a crushing blow. Many people, including foreign observers, were convinced that "Jewish money had been a major mainspring" of the revolutionary movement. The government was said to possess incontrovertible evidence that Russian banks had disbursed huge amounts of money received from abroad in small sums to members of the Social Democratic and Socialist Revolutionary parties.

In addition to mob violence in urban centers, Witte also was confronted with a new wave of disturbances in the countryside and a rash of mutinies in the army and navy.

The relative calm in the villages in the late summer and early fall of

1905 came to an end with the large-scale disorders that broke out in Chernigov (Northern Ukraine) on October 23, when about two thousand peasants plundered several landlords' estates. The unrest spread quickly, reaching its climax in November (when there were 796 major and minor incidents), by which time the turbulence in the cities had already receded. It has been estimated that during the last months of 1905, three times as many regions suffered major disturbances as in the spring and early summer; altogether, 478 districts in the forty-seven provinces of European Russia were affected, as well as parts of Caucasia, the Baltic provinces, and Poland.

The basic pattern was similar to that of the earlier period of unrest: peasants cut down timber, refused to pay taxes, and took grain from estates; and agricultural workers staged strikes. Now, however, the peasant movement assumed a more violent stance: in Tambov alone, 130 estates had buildings burned down. It was also more common for peasants to seize land for "temporary use"—that is, until the State Duma, expected to meet soon, approved the seizures. Although violence against individuals increased, it still was not widespread, in part because landlords made their escape before the arrival of the marauding peasants. The unrest subsided late in 1905, only to resume with renewed vigor in the period from May to August 1906. By the time the revolution ended in 1907, the empire had endured the most intense wave of agrarian upheaval since the Pugachev peasant rebellion of 1773–75. Total losses in European Russia alone amounted to 29 million rubles.

A major reason for the new wave of agrarian disturbances was the deterioration of economic conditions in the countryside. In two-thirds of the European provinces, the 1905 harvest was poorer than that of 1904. But the impact on the peasants of the overall political situation should not be minimized. Although even this renewed peasant unrest can probably not be attributed primarily to agitators from the cities—as government spokesmen were fond of insisting—the news that the tsar had capitulated to the opposition and issued the October Manifesto did inflame the peasants, who placed their own interpretation on the document. For example, the peasants in Tambov, whose conduct was particularly ferocious, were convinced that "the Tsar had long ago ordered the landlords to give the land to the peasants, but they delayed, and now the Tsar gave a secret order to the peasants to take the land themselves." The landlords' abandonment of their estates before the unrest only confirmed the peasants in their view of the ruler's intentions.

In many villages, it took some time for peasants to receive detailed information about the Manifesto, partly because of the poor system of communications and partly because the clergy deliberately held back the news. When rumors about the Manifesto reached the peasants anyway, they assumed that they had been kept in the dark by the reactionary bureaucrats and landlords, who did not want them to know that the tsar had granted "freedom" to the people. Freedom, as interpreted by the peasants, meant the right to attack landlords' estates.

Many peasants had simply lost faith in the government, which throughout 1905 had paid little attention to them. Nor was the October Manifesto addressed to their immediate concerns. To be sure, in a manifesto of November 3, the government reduced by one-half the redemption dues for almost all peasants as of January 1, 1906, and promised total elimination of such dues by January 1, 1907. The government also announced that the Peasants' Bank would soon provide more assistance to those with small holdings who wished to buy land. But these modest concessions did not meet the peasants' expectations.

In official documents of the time, one theme was frequently sounded: that unrest in so many localities could not be stopped because the authorities did not have adequate military force at their disposal. A sizable portion of the army continued to be bogged down in the Far East, and "disquieting ferment" was noticeable among the lower ranks of various military units, making it hazardous to entrust even those troops that were available with duty against troublesome villagers. Unable to send sufficient troops to the provinces with the greatest ferment, Witte sent aidesde-camp of the tsar instead, in the hope that the presence of these personal emissaries of the highest authority would have a calming effect and would also encourage local officials to take sterner measures to quell the unrest. It was a desperate gamble that did not pay off. The unrest subsided late in 1905, in part because of the punitive expeditions and in part because the villagers seem simply to have run out of steam.

In the meantime, Witte had to cope with extensive disaffection in the army and navy. Many soldiers and sailors also chose to interpret the October Manifesto according to their own lights. They persuaded themselves that the tsar's concession gave them license to overturn the rules and regulations that they found burdensome. Of course, the Manifesto itself made no reference at all to civil liberties for men in uniform, but that was immaterial. The tsar had yielded to the opposition, authority in the civilian sector had collapsed, and to men in the military it seemed as though they, too, were no longer bound by the old restraints. They were convinced that they would not be punished for breaking the codes of military discipline. In short, the October Manifesto produced a profound change in the psychology of men who had been indoctrinated to accept discipline as the prime virtue. With that psychological change, the dikes were opened for a veritable flood of mutinies.

The first occurred in Kronstadt, the city whose great naval base guarded the approaches to St. Petersburg at the head of the Gulf of Finland, on October 26–27, when three to four thousand soldiers and sailors armed with rifles staged a riot. They plundered businesses throughout the city, destroying some 120 establishments and a few private houses; the damage to property came to about 1 million rubles. The mutineers also attacked units that had not joined the riot. Revolutionaries tried to direct the rioters into what they considered to be disciplined political action, but their influence was negligible. Alarmed by the persistent rioting, the commander of the fleet and ports of the Baltic Sea warned St. Petersburg that Kronstadt was "in a dangerous situation" and asked for a "large force to pacify the city."

The mutineers' demands, most of which dealt with conditions in the services, indicate clearly that recent political developments had had an impact on the soldiers and sailors, who based their first demand, that they be granted the rights of citizenship (including specifically the rights of association and of free speech), on the Manifesto, which, they claimed, accorded such rights to all the people. But on the whole, broader political issues were of secondary importance to them. Most of the mutineers' demands focused on such matters as reduction in their term of service, a minimum salary of six rubles a month, and better food and clothing. They also asked to be allowed to attend meetings, to spend their free time as they chose, to buy alcoholic drinks without restrictions, "for . . . [we] are not children." The authorities wasted no time in dispatching loyal troops from St. Petersburg and Pskov, and by late October 27 they restored order, but only after much blood was shed (twenty-four killed and seventy-two wounded).

But this did not prevent the spread of disorder in the military. The most dramatic and clearly politically motivated mutiny took place in Sevastopol, a naval base in the Crimea, where a thirty-eight-year-old lieutenant, P. P. Schmidt, attracted a sizable following among disaffected sailors and radical workers. As a student at the Petersburg Naval School, Schmidt had come under the influence of the radical doctrines of N. K. Mikhailovsky and N. V. Shelgunov, which apparently prompted him to abandon the military for the merchant marines. Mobilized when the war broke out with Japan, he became a commander of a torpedo boat that was stationed at Sevastopol at the time of the general strike, an event that drove him to political action. He began to deliver fiery speeches denouncing the authorities at demonstrations and in the city council, and this turned him into a local hero. By November, the cruisers *Svirepy* and *Ochakov* as well as several smaller boats had fallen under the control of mutineers, who called on Schmidt to assume command of the rebellion.

Doubtful about the likely success of such a venture, he hesitated but then an old revolutionary, I. P. Voronitsyn, prevailed on him to accept the challenge.

Schmidt now acted boldly. He proclaimed himself commander of the fleet, raised the red flag on all ships under his command, sent a telegram to the tsar demanding the immediate convocation of a constituent assembly, and formulated a grand plan to seize control of the entire fleet at Sevastopol and to secure the isthmus leading to the Crimea against outside forces. Schmidt also ordered the arrest of officers opposed to his rebellion and threatened to hang them if the government tried to quell the rising.

Admiral G. P. Chukhnin, commander of the fleet in Sevastopol, now unleashed an attack on the ships supporting Schmidt, and after artillery fire put the *Ochakov* out of commission the mutiny collapsed within a matter of hours. Chukhnin's forces arrested sixteen hundred men together with Schmidt and then freed twenty officers held by the rebels. Early in 1906, Schmidt and three of his accomplices were court-martialed. Schmidt's eloquent defense, which included an elaborate attack on the tsarist regime, attracted a great deal of sympathetic attention from the press but did not sway the tribunal, which sentenced all four defendants to death; on March 6, 1906, they were shot. Many liberals were shocked, in part because Schmidt was the first officer to be executed in decades and in part because it was widely believed that he had merely wished to defend the principles of the October Manifesto but had been carried away by the tensions of the moment into leading a mutiny.

All told, 211 separate mutinies were recorded in the Russian army alone between late October and mid-December 1905, though relatively few were accompanied by serious violence. In most of them, the men simply refused to obey orders, left their barracks, held meetings to discuss current affairs, and talked back to officers. The elite corps, the Cavalry and Cossacks, were virtually untouched by mutiny, but one-third of all infantry units experienced some form of disturbance, and the navy was so riddled with unrest that the government feared that it could no longer be relied on to carry out its mission. Moreover, late in November there were indications that quite a large group of officers (mainly in the Far East and Siberia) were openly supporting the opposition.

On December 6, the government decided on a series of military reforms. It increased pay and meat rations, provided servicemen for the first time with tea and sugar, and promised to abolish forced labor by soldiers in the civilian economy. The government also reduced the term of service, from four to three years for infantrymen, five to four years for cavalrymen, and seven to five years for sailors. Finally, the government

removed a major source of discontent by speeding up the demobilization of reservists.

These concessions helped to calm the soldiers and sailors, but probably a more crucial factor in restoring discipline was the decision by the government in mid-December to move forcefully against the civilians who had been defying its authority. Once the government embarked on that course, it became clear that the October Manifesto did not signify the dissolution of the old order after all. The psychology of the soldiers and sailors now changed as suddenly and dramatically as it had in mid-October. With the restoration of authority in the civilian sector, the men in uniform, most of them unsympathetic to political radicalism, again submitted to the orders of their superiors. In thus desisting from their own "revolution," the soldiers and sailors removed a serious threat to governmental stability.

Of course, the government was never totally bereft of loyal troops. Even among the infantry, the branch most deeply affected by mutinies, two-thirds of the units were not affected by such serious unrest as mutinies. The thirteen regiments of the Guard Corps, elite soldiers who received special privileges, remained almost completely immune to disorder. Moreover, in late 1905 and early 1906, the government activated some one hundred thousand Cossacks, who were given generous grants of money and whose privileges were confirmed by special charters issued in the tsar's name. Relatively small, well-armed detachments of such loyal soldiers could be used with great effectiveness against poorly armed bands of workers and peasants. It was these loyal troops that the government began to unleash in mid-December, a move that proved to be instrumental in turning back the tide of revolution.

The Days of Liberty and Armed Uprising

During the period immediately following the issuance of the October Manifesto Russia endured intense unrest and governmental impotence, but it also enjoyed a remarkable degree of freedom. Some foreign observers were actually alarmed, because they feared that extremists would now be able to increase their following among the masses. To the German ambassador in St. Petersburg, it almost seemed as though "the government wants to facilitate the work of revolutionaries."

During these Days of Liberty, as the ten weeks from October 18 until early December came to be known, antigovernment publications "increased like mushrooms." Newspapers and journals of all political movements—liberal, Marxist, Socialist Revolutionary, Anarchist—were sold freely on the streets of St. Petersburg and elsewhere, and the attacks on the authorities in these publications were often merciless. One of the more famous cartoons in a popular journal depicted the tsar on the throne whose legs were being chewed up by mice. Some of the caricatures were beyond the comprehension of the minister of internal affairs, Durnovo, who relied on A. V. Gerasimov, chief of the St. Petersburg Okhrana, for enlightenment: "This is Count Witte and here (represented as a pig or toad) is you, Your Excellency." Durnovo asked what could be done to "restore order." "If I were permitted to close down all revolutionary presses and to arrest 700 to 800 people," Gerasimov replied, "then I guarantee that I could bring calm to St. Petersburg." Durnovo, however, refused to authorize such harsh measures on the ground that the new constitutional order forbade it.

Although on occasion the police closed down some papers, these were usually temporary inconveniences to the public, since the publications soon reappeared without being bothered. On November 24, the government, yielding to reality, formally abolished preliminary censorship of periodicals. Some important, though vaguely defined, restrictions on freedom of the press remained, but no publication was to be suppressed without

juridical proceedings. The government also announced that the State Duma would be charged with adopting comprehensive legislation on freedom of the press.

Attendance at public meetings became even more common than it had been after the granting of autonomy to institutions of higher learning in late August. At the same time, the number of labor unions increased dramatically throughout the country. Political parties of all persuasions stepped up their organizational activities and increased their membership numbers. Even the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks came out into the open and succeeded in substantially raising their membership, though they did not abandon clandestine operations completely.

But politically the most dramatic development during the Days of Liberty was the vast expansion of operations by the soviets. They established regular contact with city councils and often secured access to public halls for their meetings; in some regions, local organs of government even honored the soviet's request that they give financial aid to unemployed workers. The pacesetter was the St. Petersburg Soviet, which did not hesitate to send directives to government agencies such as the postal service and the railroads; on several occasions, it entered into negotiations with the St. Petersburg City Council—and once even with the prime minister himself. It sent numerous inquiries to government offices, and the latter were sufficiently impressed by the soviet's authority to go to the trouble of answering. The soviet also sponsored collections for unemployed workers and distributed 30 kopeks a day to needy adults and 10 to 15 kopeks to children. Moreover, it set up several inexpensive dining halls for the unemployed and their families.

The boldest undertaking of the St. Petersburg Soviet was the establishment of its own militia, whose members, identified by special armbands, "interfered in the affairs of the police, gave . . . [them] orders and made demands of them." It was not uncommon for "confused [police] officers" to give in to the requests of militiamen. On one occasion, a militiaman demanded that a policeman clean out a pit in a garbage-strewn yard because the odor was unbearable. The policeman meekly carried out the order.

By mid-November, the soviet's militia numbered about six thousand men, who had at their disposal revolvers, hunting guns, knives, and heavy spades. In addition, about three hundred workers belonged to a special militia of "self-defense," small groups of which patrolled the streets every night from 8 PM to 6 AM to protect merchants and residents. Some armed militiamen were posted outside the soviet's meeting place, the Free Economic Society, where deputies gathered almost daily to discuss political developments and to adopt resolutions on current issues. The soviet took it upon itself to demand that the government issue a general amnesty for all categories of political prisoners, send the army out of the city, end the

state of siege everywhere in the empire, and hold a democratic election for a constituent assembly. It also sent delegates to other cities and regions of the country to establish contact with local soviets and various workers' organizations, and it maintained close relations with the All-Russian Peasants' Union.

Many workers in the capital considered the soviet to be their legitimate representative and saw it as a vehicle for the attainment of further social and political concessions from the government. Even some members of the middle classes turned to it for help on specific issues. Not surprisingly, the growing power of the soviet aroused fear in non-working-class groups, especially among conservatives. The newspaper *Novoe vremia* complained that there were really two governments, one led by Count Witte and one by Krustalev-Nosar (chairman of the St. Petersburg Soviet), and no one knew who would arrest whom first.

Flush with success, the St. Petersburg Soviet succumbed to hubris and overplayed its hand. Instead of consolidating its achievements, which were already impressive, it became increasingly militant, even reckless. When workers in several large enterprises in the capital decided on their own initiative to introduce the eight-hour workday, the soviet supported them despite the warnings of some supporters that this would be a major political blunder. "We are not yet done with absolutism," said V. M. Chernov, leader of the Socialist Revolutionary Party, "and you want to take on the bourgeoisie." Most deputies in the soviet, however, either out of conviction or fear that the workers would proceed on their own, voted for the following resolution: "On October 31, the eight-hour day is to be introduced by revolutionary means in all factories." Both wings of the Social Democratic movement supported the decision.

The government and many employers responded with a massive lockout, and early in November more than one hundred thousand workers were affected. The lockout was an unprecedented instance of collaboration by the employers, the result of their conviction that defense of their interests now required a unified stand. Within short order, the Association of Manufacturers and Factory Owners, representing 150 companies that together employed more than one hundred thousand people, was formed. The association decided not to pay workers for days lost during strikes and to close down their plants if workers tried to introduce the eight-hour workday on their own. The employers' tactics had a moderating effect on workers, many of whom were in desperate economic straits because of the numerous strikes in preceding months.

In the meantime, relations between the soviet and the government began to turn sour as a result of a feud over the court-martial of several hundred soldiers and sailors who had mutinied in Kronstadt and over the

government's decision to impose martial law on Poland, then racked by disorder. In the hope of reviving the solidarity of antigovernment forces, the soviet decided to shift its agitation from economic to political issues, and on November 1, it voted in favor of a general political strike to protest the government's actions. Few workers outside the capital heeded the call to leave their jobs. In the capital itself, some one hundred thousand people are said to have participated in the strike, but within a few days, even they began drifting back to their jobs. Moreover, large sectors of the liberal intelligentsia refused to support the new strike, which they considered unwarranted. In their view, the opposition should now devote its energies to preparing for the elections to the State Duma. By November 4, a majority of the Executive Committee of the soviet realized that the strike was a failure and voted, nine to six, to end it as of November 7. This was the soviet's first major defeat.

At about the same time, it became clear that the campaign for the eight-hour workday had also backfired. For one thing, it drew employers closer to the government, which supported resistance to the workers' demands by enforcing a lockout at its own plants and by making troops available to protect privately owned factories. Moreover, the campaign prompted even so militant a liberal as Paul Miliukov to reconsider the advisability of basing his political strategy on an alliance with revolutionaries. On November 12, the soviet announced a temporary halt to the campaign, an acknowledgment that it had misjudged the public mood.

In yet another strike, this one by white-collar employees of the postal service, who had called for a nationwide stoppage in mid-November to protest the government's dismissal of three of their leaders, the left suffered a further defeat. A fair number of employees refused to heed the call for a strike, and the government was able to maintain communications by assigning firemen and others to fill in for the absentees. By late November that strike, too, fizzled out. This defeat of the postal strike marked a turning point in the Days of Liberty. Until then, the government had mostly taken a defensive stand in the face of work stoppages and unrest. But it could not tolerate ruptured communications between St. Petersburg and the rest of the empire. Once the government's measures to break the postal workers' strike had succeeded, the authorities went on a general offensive against the opposition.

In a ukase of November 29, Tsar Nicholas decreed that in the event of a breakdown of telegraphic services or railway communications in any region of the country, provincial officials would be authorized to place such areas under Reinforced Security or Extraordinary Security. Previously, the first measure could be enacted only with the approval of the minister of internal affairs, and the second with the approval of the tsar.

On December 12, Nicholas issued another ukase in which he specified the punishments, all very severe, of strikers at enterprises of "public or state importance" where a work stoppage could produce "ruinous consequences for the population."

AGITATION FOR ARMED STRUGGLE

The strike movement in November was only one aspect of the growing militancy by radical activists. Increasingly, the soviets and publications of various socialist parties advocated another general political strike or, more ominously, an armed struggle against the tsarist regime. And several Menshevik leaders as well as many lower-ranking Menshevik activists threw caution to the wind and abandoned the Marxist dogma that a bourgeois revolution must precede a socialist seizure of power. In fact, the rhetoric and political conduct of a sizable number of Mensheviks was now hardly distinguishable from that of the more militant Bolsheviks. In October and November 1905, the two factions actually formed federal councils in various towns, which generally consisted of an equal number of Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.

In Nachalo, a Menshevik paper that appeared legally in Russia, Leon Trotsky advocated the theory of permanent revolution—first advanced in that paper by his colleague and "mentor," Parvus (A. L. Helfand)—in which he explicitly abandoned the traditional Marxist notion that backward Russia must undergo a more or less prolonged period of bourgeois domination before the socialist revolution could be staged. The Russian proletariat, according to Trotsky, had demonstrated greater energy and determination than its counterpart in Western Europe and would therefore be the pathfinder in the struggle for socialism. "There is no stage," he wrote, "in the bourgeois revolution at which this force [the Russian proletariat] could become satiated, for it is driven forward by the iron logic of class interest. The law of self-preservation dictates to the proletariat a program of permanent revolution. The proletariat accomplishes the fundamental tasks of democracy and then, at a certain moment, the logic of its struggle to consolidate its power confronts it with problems that are purely socialist. Revolutionary permanency is established between our minimum and maximum programs."

Although some Bolsheviks shared Trotsky's optimism about the imminence of a socialist revolution, their leader, Lenin, who arrived in Russian on November 8, was more restrained. He hailed the October Manifesto as a "great victory for the revolution," but he also warned that the tsar had

by no means capitulated and that an armed insurrection and the formation of a provisional revolutionary government were necessary to eradicate the old order. However, the revolutionary forces were not yet strong enough to crush tsarism. The proletariat, Lenin contended, must establish an alliance with the peasantry to stage a successful revolution, but he left unanswered the question of how long a provisional government, representing both the workers and peasants, would then remain in power. He insisted that such a government would introduce democratic reforms as well as arrange for the election of a constituent assembly. But would it give up power at that point, paving the way for the proletariat to prepare for the next revolution, the socialist revolution? The thrust of many statements by Lenin in 1905 seemed to be that this was the most likely option. Yet the notion that the masses would shed their blood in a revolution against the autocracy and then voluntarily make way for other classes to take power is one of the less convincing tenets of Russian Marxism.

Be that as it may, late in October 1905 the Moscow Committee of Social Democrats adopted a resolution calling for the "immediate preparation for a new decisive battle." The Socialist Revolutionaries, the largest radical party, found the views and tactics of the most militant Marxists congenial. Indeed, the SRs had actually been the first to expound a theory of permanent revolution, and since the beginning of 1905 had favored an armed assault on the autocracy. Thus, despite lingering differences between various sectors of the revolutionary left, they found it possible to cooperate in the campaign against the old order. The mounting reports in November and December from various parts of the empire—Chita in southeastern Siberia, Novorossiisk, Irkutsk, Krasnoiarsk, the Baltic provinces—that soviets or other oppositional groups were assuming the authority of local organs of government further emboldened the militants.

The deepening conflict between the government and the revolutionary left placed the liberals in a precarious position. A growing number of them became alarmed at the prospect of an armed uprising, yet they could not bring themselves to rally behind the government. They feared that support of Witte might encourage the government to turn back the clock, but they were equally afraid that if they supported the radicals they might provoke more repression. A congress of Zemstvo and City Council Representatives decided early in November, after much wrangling, to appeal to the prime minister to revoke the emergency decrees and to grant autonomy to the Polish kingdom, in return for which the liberals promised to support the government. Witte promised to study the offer, and on November 29 he announced that although the government remained committed to the Manifesto, it would not accede to the liberals'

wishes because the widespread "disturbances and revolutionary activities directed against... authority in general" were undermining the state, which could therefore not abandon exceptional decrees and states of emergency. The liberal newspaper *Russkie vedomosti* interpreted Witte's response as evidence that the government was determined to follow "its former policies." Several actions by the government late in November lent credence to that somber assessment.

At noon on November 26, infantrymen and Cossacks surrounded the headquarters of the Free Economic Society and arrested the president of the soviet, G. S. Khrustalev-Nosar, together with several deputies. The soviet immediately elected a new presidium of three men, among them Trotsky. The presidium wasted no time in launching a counterattack. On November 27, it passed a resolution calling on its followers to prepare for an uprising. In addition, the presidium decided to strike at the government's soft underbelly, the precarious financial system. The country was on the verge of financial collapse, partly as a result of the enormous expense of the war and partly because the rich, panicky over the continuing internal turmoil, were sending substantial amounts of capital abroad. During the second week in November, delegates at a meeting of the All-Russian Peasants' Union had for the first time discussed possible measures that might be taken by the population at large to undermine the state's financial system. Parvus was familiar with the discussions and now became one of the moving spirits behind the drafting of the Financial Manifesto, which was published on December 2 in eight newspapers in St. Petersburg.

Signed by the soviet, the All-Russian Peasants' Union, the RSDWP, the Socialist Revolutionary Party, and the Polish Socialist Party, the manifesto sought to "cut the government off from the last resource of its existence: financial revenue." It called on the people not to make any further redemption payments or other payments to the Treasury and to demand all wages in "gold, and in the case of sums less than five rubles, full-weight coin." The manifesto also urged the populace to withdraw all deposits from banks and to accept only gold. The authors of the manifesto assumed that the government, deprived of an adequate supply of gold, would lose its credit rating and would therefore not be able to secure vitally needed loans.

It was an original and imaginative ploy, but it was not likely that the Financial Manifesto could achieve its purpose. First, many people had already begun withdrawing funds from their accounts even before the events of late November. Moreover, the police prevented wide distribution of the manifesto by confiscating copies of the eight newspapers immediately after their appearance. The police also made clear their determination to

punish anyone who advocated the tactics set forth in the manifesto. They arrested the chief editors of the eight newspapers, who remained in custody pending the payment of bail in the amount of ten thousand rubles. Then, on December 3, the soviet's Executive Committee and two hundred deputies were also taken into custody.

It is still not clear why Witte took these measures. He knew that the police action would trigger an all-out war between the government and the revolutionary left, which he had wanted to avoid. It may be that late in 1905 he was in such a state of acute anxiety that he acted on instinct. There are reports that at times he blindly lashed out at longtime collaborators and even at his few loyal friends. On December 14, he told Kokovtsov, the minister of finance, "I wish you knew in what a blind alley I find myself. There are moments when I am ready to commit suicide." At an important official meeting nine days earlier, he publicly confessed that the "whole revolution" had been a "nightmare for him." His political failures since the October strike had brought him to a breaking point.

Although severely weakened by the arrests, the revolutionary movement was not completely crushed. The deputies of the soviet who escaped arrest formed a second soviet and elected a new Executive Committee, headed by Parvus, that called for a general political strike to begin on December 8. "Citizens," the committee declared in a ringing appeal, "freedom or slavery. A Russia ruled by the people or a Russia plundered by a gang of robbers, that is the question. . . . It is better to die in the struggle than to live in slavery." The workers did not respond in very large numbers. Although the Union of Unions endorsed the strike, relatively few members of the intelligentsia did so. Neither the banks nor the zemstvo and municipal institutions stopped functioning. On December 19, the Executive Committee called off the strike. In the meantime, the center of gravity of the revolution had shifted from St. Petersburg to Moscow, where the final drama of the first and most turbulent phase of the revolution reached its climax.

UPRISING IN MOSCOW

At first glance, Moscow was an unlikely site for such a test of strength, for it had lagged behind St. Petersburg in revolutionary fervor. For example, the reaction to Bloody Sunday was not nearly as intense there as in the capital. About three and half times as many people went on strike in St. Petersburg as in Moscow, whose population of 1.1 million was only

340,000 less than that of the capital. To be sure, the general strike of October began on the Moscow railway lines, but no soviet was formed in the city until November 21, some five weeks after the appearance of the St. Petersburg Soviet. This is not to suggest that Moscow in 1905 was free of turmoil. The universities and high schools were centers of unrest. Workers made a fair amount of progress in organizing unions, and both liberals and peasants held numerous illegal meetings to express their discontent. Nor was Moscow spared a breakdown in civil order. An English journalist reported that during the Days of Liberty violent crimes occurred with such frequency that when he walked in the streets after dark passers-by would skirt "around me in a kind of arc, and if they came upon me they suddenly ran. . . . All were living in that haggard element of fear."

Still, political radicalism did not emerge as a powerful force in Moscow until the late summer and early fall, and then within a few weeks the city surpassed St. Petersburg as the focal point of the revolution as well as the center of the bloodiest strife of the upheaval. The reasons for this shift are probably to be found in the differences in the economy and in the composition of the working class and the oppositional movement in the two cities.

Heavy, large-scale industry was much more prevalent in St. Petersburg than in Moscow. As a result, steelworkers far outnumbered textile workers in the capital, whereas in Moscow the opposite was the case. Relatively well paid, and more likely to be literate and settled urban dwellers, steelworkers were especially inclined toward direct action against their employers rather than against the political authorities. In 1905, they played a prominent role in initiating strikes and in persuading workers in other industries to join them.

Also, a significantly higher percentage of the plants in St. Petersburg than in Moscow employed at least five hundred workers. Workers in such plants were more easily organized and tended to be more disciplined. By contrast, the workers in the clothing, textile, and food industries, the dominant sectors in Moscow's industrial economy, were, as one historian noted, "unhappy and volatile, but culturally and politically unsophisticated."

Much more so in Moscow than in St. Petersburg, the labor movement received its "organizational guidance" from the white-collar workers in the nonmanufacturing sector of the economy. These workers were instrumental in organizing employees at the railroads and municipal institutions, without whose support the radical left in Moscow would have remained relatively insignificant. The differences in the development of the labor movement in the two cities were reflected in the leadership of the general strike in October. Laura Engelstein has pointed out that in

Moscow a "mixed committee of liberal professionals, white-collar employees, and representatives of industrial and craft trades" directed the strike, whereas in the St. Petersburg Soviet, workers from metal and machine factories predominated. The alliance in Moscow between "bourgeois" elements of the working population and the industrial workers held fast during the armed uprising in December. Two groups thus appear to have served as the cannon fodder of the insurrectionary movement: white-collar workers, who because of their greater exposure to radical ideas were more easily captivated by the slogans of extremists than skilled workers, and unsophisticated laborers, who felt that they had little to lose.

When the general strike in October 1905 ended, some radical activists concluded that work stoppages were a spent bullet and therefore began to talk of preparing for the next phase, an armed struggle. As early as mid-November of 1905, the German consul in Moscow, a close observer of the political scene, wrote to the Foreign Office in Berlin that there was the likelihood of "serious disturbances with an anticapitalist thrust" in the near future. Moscow appeared to be tranquil, but "a simple glance at the newspapers here suggests that beneath the apparent calm of the city there is concealed a feverish movement that is gradually affecting ever more strata of the population. . . . Every week, new publications appear that openly preach violent revolution, and every day one can read about the emergence of new groups of employees or workers, who for the most part immediately join socialist organizations." Moreover, workers were staging an increasing number of strikes over "purely political" issues. Frequently, strikers made threats or used force against their employers as well as against workers who crossed the picket line. The authorities' failure to halt the violence, according to the German consul, only encouraged lawlessness.

Many ordinary Russians also sensed that some sort of cataclysm was imminent. The U.S. ambassador to St. Petersburg learned on a brief visit to Berlin that "Russians with their families are moving to Germany in great numbers: 2,500 refugees in Königsberg alone, Berlin also crowded." The ambassador also learned that the Russian government had mobilized a large number of Cossacks, "who can be absolutely depended upon," and he believed that the tsar would try to "reconquer the country."

In light of these developments and the theoretical pronouncements of the revolutionary left, the question often raised by contemporaries and historians of who provoked the violent clash, the government or the revolutionaries, seems pointless. As V. M. Zenzinov, a prominent Socialist Revolutionary, put it many years later, "The revolution and the government were like two persons who had already taken aim at each other with pistols. The only question was, who would be the first to pull the trigger."

The Moscow Committee, the main organization of the Bolsheviks in the city, was the driving force behind the uprising. About fifteen people nominally belonged to the committee, but the principal decisions were made by three intellectuals, M. N. Liadov, M. I. Vasilev-Iuzhin, and V. L. Shantser (Marat). The immediate background to the determination of these men to engage the government in armed conflict is still somewhat hazy. The left was certainly perturbed by the police crackdown. Not only had the St. Petersburg Soviet been wiped out, but in addition, on November 28 the police rounded up the leaders of the Union of Ticket Collectors of the Moscow-Brest-Litovsk Railway, and two days later they invaded the Museum for Assistance to Labor, an important meeting place for workers, and confiscated publications as well as money. Enraged activists on the left wanted to retaliate, but, as it turned out, they were inadequately prepared, both politically and organizationally, for an armed uprising.

Most significantly, there was no assurance that if the proletariat of Moscow took the initiative that either workers elsewhere or the peasants would follow suit. On December 4, a messenger from the St. Petersburg Soviet appeared before the soviet in Moscow to report on the workers' mood in the capital. Remarkably, there are three divergent accounts, all by Bolsheviks, of how the messenger assessed the chances of a strike by the Petersburg workers. People seemed to hear whatever they wanted.

At local gatherings in Moscow where tactics were discussed, a few activists voiced serious reservations about launching an attack. The principal fear was that peasants would not join the uprising, and it was generally assumed that without them the insurrection would not succeed. Most of the revolutionary leaders in Moscow, however, would not listen to the warnings because they were intoxicated with their own rhetoric, which had stressed the need for violent revolution. As one of them put it, the peasants might be quiescent, "but we have no choice," and, in any case, "the thunder of the present struggle will perhaps awaken them." He realized, as did several colleagues, that they faced a real possibility of death, but they were prepared to "make this sacrifice, convinced that it was necessary for the final triumph of our cause."

Military preparations were as unimpressive as political ones. Although revolutionaries had been collecting weapons for about a year, their supplies hardly sufficed for a prolonged battle with the army. Early in December, no more than one thousand militiamen were armed and only a few had been exposed to more than the most rudimentary military training. Moreover, their leaders had not developed any tactics appropriate for street fighting.

In the last analysis, the revolutionaries knew that the outcome of an insurrection would hinge on the conduct of the army. And on December 2

they were greatly encouraged by reports of a mutiny in Moscow. Between two and three hundred soldiers of the Rostov Grenadier Regiment had held an unauthorized meeting and had elected a committee to lead what amounted to a mutiny. They prepared a list of thirty-seven demands, most of which dealt with conditions in the army, and a day later there were reports that three other units of the Rostov Grenadiers were about to join the mutiny. The authorities immediately acted to stem the unrest, ordering the arrest of a few officers and calling for the dispatch to Moscow of two regiments of infantry guards and one brigade of artillery.

The leaders of the revolutionary parties were jubilant, but it soon turned out that the men in the Rostov regiment were not interested in joining civilians in an attack on the government. Moreover, on December 4, loyal soldiers arrested fifty-seven leaders of the military revolt, which quickly fizzled out. But clutching at straws, the revolutionaries refused to accept the possibility that the soldiers' insubordination could be traced primarily to a desire for better conditions for themselves. On the contrary, on December 5 A. N. Vasilev, the Bolsheviks' military expert, told a meeting of four hundred comrades that the revolutionaries could dispose of roughly one thousand armed men and that not more than four thousand of the fourteen thousand troops presumed to be in the city would follow orders to crush a workers' uprising. At this meeting as well as at several others, activists of diverse political persuasion voted for an uprising. On December 6, the Moscow Soviet, attended by about 120 deputies, issued an official appeal to all workers to begin a "general political strike" at noon the following day. "With our joint efforts we will finally overthrow the criminal tsarist government, convoke a constituent assembly on the basis of universal, equal, direct, and secret suffrage, and proclaim a democratic republic, which alone can safeguard our freedom and the inviolability of our persons."

For several days it actually seemed as though the advocates of an armed uprising had accurately gauged the government's fragility in Moscow. Local authorities failed to move forcefully against the insurrection and thus gave the impression of being helpless. It seemed that Admiral F. V. Dubasov, the recently appointed governor-general of Moscow, was not up to handling the growing unrest.

The admiral had under his command about six thousand soldiers, two thousand policemen, and a division of gendarmes, a force large enough to quell an insurrection quickly in open battle. But apparently out of fear that his men might not be reliable, Dubasov withdrew them from the streets, which provided the rebels with an opportunity to roam large parts of the city at will. Had they been better organized and had their leaders planned their moves ahead of time, the radicals most probably

could have seized the centers of government authority. At this early stage, Dubasov did take some measures to contain the uprising: he placed Moscow under a state of Extraordinary Security, and he arrested two important Bolshevik leaders, Vasilev and Shantser (as well as the heads of the Menshevik printers' union), a severe blow to the insurrection. Other than that, the governor-general confined himself to repeated and urgent pleas for reinforcements from St. Petersburg. The men at court were reluctant to accede to Dubasov's wishes because they feared that removing troops from St. Petersburg would make the capital vulnerable to insurrection. Only at Witte's insistence that no such danger existed and his warning that the fall of Moscow "would be such a blow to the government of His Majesty that it could have incalculably harmful consequences" did the tsar order the reinforcement of the garrison in Moscow. However, the new forces did not arrive until December 15.

In the meantime, the economy of Moscow ground to a virtual standstill. By the second day of the strike, more than eighty thousand workers had left their jobs, which made this the largest work stoppage by far in the city's history. Shopkeepers also closed their doors, either voluntarily or under pressure. On December 7, parties of deputies from the Moscow Soviet traversed the city, street by street, asking proprietors, "very politely" but with threats of violence, to lock up their stores. By the evening of December 7, public transportation had stopped, and there was no electricity.

A majority of public institutions, including the city government and the provincial and district zemstvo boards, were also closed. "The mood is especially anxious," a weekly journal reported, "bordering on panic, to a degree not observed in previous strikes. . . . All over the city agitated people are running about, fussing, buying food, kerosene, candles." On December 8, private banks, theaters, schools, and most shops were closed. "Life in the city seemed to be extinct."

During the first two days of the strike only scattered violence broke out. Then, on December 9, the first major clash occurred at the Fiedler Academy, where some five hundred people and one hundred armed militiamen were attending a meeting of the railway union. At 10 PM troops surrounded the building and ordered those present to surrender and give up their weapons. The officer in charge promised that if the militiamen obeyed within two hours, they would be freed after being disarmed, but no one believed him.

At the expiration of the grace period, the infantrymen opened fire and advanced to storm the academy; for the first time, they made use of light artillery, causing a considerable amount of damage and quite a few casualties. After initially refusing to give up, the militiamen decided to yield to the superior forces, but the soldiers showed no interest in ending the

confrontation peacefully. They killed at least five revolutionaries, wounded sixteen, and arrested one hundred and twenty as they emerged from the academy.

The use of artillery, highly unusual in a domestic disturbance, aroused profound anger even among people unsympathetic to the insurgents and marked the beginning of the bloody phase of the crisis. In many parts of the city, Muscovites now came to the aid of the militia by erecting barricades, which consisted of whatever was found at hand: telegraph poles, placards, stones, garden fences, doors ripped from private homes, lampposts, and odd pieces of wood. Tensions mounted further on the evening of December 10, when a group of Socialist Revolutionaries threw two bombs at the headquarters of the Moscow Security Police, which slightly damaged the building. At a meeting that same evening, Dubasov decided to apply the "most severe measures to put down the uprising."

The partisan tactics of the insurgents, which consisted of guerilla warfare, baffled and confused the authorities as well as soldiers, who were being disarmed and manhandled by people not easily recognizable as insurgents. Not wishing to take any chances, soldiers became trigger-happy, placing innocent civilians at risk. The series of unconnected brushes between rebels and the army, many of them on the outskirts of town, were troublesome but so long as the rebels did not launch a concerted attack on government troops they could not gain the upper hand.

In the political arena, the revolutionary left was more adroit and more successful. The soviets—both the all-city soviet and the local ones in the districts—exercised a remarkable degree of authority over the civilian population, issuing orders on which shops might open and at what hours, and they also laid down rules on prices of goods as well as on the granting of credit to impecunious strikers. The Executive Committee of the soviet even attended to affairs that in themselves would appear to have been trivial but evidently carried symbolic significance. For example, bakers were prohibited from producing "white bread, since the proletariat needs only black bread." On December 10 no white bread could be found in Moscow.

In the Presnia District, the center of the textile industry and of an especially militant sector of the working class, the local soviet assumed full powers of government and kept the insurrection going longer than anywhere else. Policemen in the district were so intimidated by the militiamen that they donned civilian clothes (on orders of their superiors) to avoid being recognized. The District Combat Committee, which commanded all the militiamen in the area (estimated at between two hundred and six hundred), had perforce to act on its own because contact with the other districts was cut off after December 11. In any case, because of the

arrest of two of the three leaders and poor overall planning and organization, there was little centralized direction of the rising.

In the meantime, Dubasov began to use artillery fire against the Presnia insurgents with deadly effect. As soon as rebels fired one shot from a building, artillerymen trained their guns on the building and blasted it. In keeping with orders issued by the governor-general on December 12, troops fired their rifles on any group of more than three people who gathered in the streets. Casualties among the insurrectionists began to mount alarmingly, but their leaders continued to exude confidence and to make unrealistic predictions about the spread of the revolution in other parts of the empire.

On December 15 the tide began to turn decisively against the insurgents. The long-awaited help from St. Petersburg arrived in the form of the Semenovskii Regiment, commanded by Colonel G. A. Min, a soldier made to order for Tsar Nicholas. Min had no scruples about shelling revolutionaries. By the time he arrived, Presnia was the primary center of resistance; the unrest in much of the rest of Moscow had subsided.

Late in the day on December 15, Min's troops (about fifteen hundred), supported by sixteen artillery pieces, surrounded a large area of the Presnia District that included the Prokhorov cotton mill and the Schmidt furniture factory, two major centers of the insurrection. (The owners of the two enterprises sympathized with the radicals and supplied them with shelter and food.) On the morning of December 16, Min sent Schmidt an ultimatum: the militiamen must surrender in fifteen minutes or his factory would be destroyed. When the militiamen failed to give up, the artillery continued to pound the factories for more than two days, causing an enormous amount of damage and many casualties. Resistance was light, for the insurgents quickly realized that a full-scale battle would be futile. Moreover, they had been ordered by the local soviet to disperse into the central parts of the city, and most managed to escape.

On December 15, even before the bombardment of Presnia, the Moscow Soviet had met to consider ending what was clearly a hopeless struggle. After considerable debate the soviet voted on December 16 to call on their followers to stop fighting in three days. The resolution of the Executive Committee exuded defiance: "Our duty was to show that the working class guards its own political interests, that it can stand up for itself with weapons in its hands, if necessary. We have fulfilled our duty." Now the task would be to "prepare more actively for an all-Russian political strike and a national armed uprising."

The December uprising was a costly affair. According to the Medical Union, 1,059 Muscovites, most of them civilians not involved in the fighting, were killed. Of these, 137 were women and 86 were children.

Twenty-five policemen and nine soldiers lost their lives. But this was only the beginning of the carnage in Moscow, for the authorities unleashed a brutal crackdown. There were numerous executions, without any judicial proceedings, of workers and students on the mere suspicion of their having taken part in the rising. Hundreds of others were arrested, and many of them were brutally beaten by their captors. Even people who had opposed the excesses of the revolutionaries were appalled.

Military as well as political miscalculations by the militants go far to account for the failure of the Moscow uprising. The revolutionaries, despite their talk of the inevitability of military action, had formed only a small militia, and it was inadequately armed and poorly trained. Perhaps even more significant, the revolutionaries' political assumptions proved to be utterly wrong. They had counted on a mass rising of workers throughout the country, but the events in St. Petersburg in November had demonstrated that the workers were becoming increasingly isolated politically and that their revolutionary zeal was waning. They had suffered one defeat after another during the strikes, and the arrest of the soviet had deprived them of leadership. Exhausted, demoralized, leaderless, the workers in the capital could not realistically be expected to make the ultimate effort, a military attack on the government. Elsewhere in the empire, workers staged disturbances in some two dozen cities, but none posed a serious threat to local authorities.

Ironically, the spread of unrest after the outbreak of the Moscow insurrection was impeded by an action that the workers themselves had taken. Because many of the postal and telegraph employees were on strike early in December, communication between cities was extremely difficult. On December 7, a telegram that reached Rostov-on-Don announcing that the soviets in Moscow and St. Petersburg had called for a general political strike caused great excitement. But how could the local revolutionaries be sure that the news was accurate? The infeasibility of speedy consultation among leaders in various localities prevented the radicals from developing a common strategy. By the same token, the inability of revolutionaries in Moscow to obtain a reliable and steady flow of information from provincial towns helps to explain their unrealistic appraisals of their own situation.

REPRESSION

The impact of the Moscow uprising on the course of the revolution can hardly be exaggerated. It sharpened divisions within the opposition and stiffened the government's resolve to crush the left. The liberal movement, which until October had played a decisive role in undermining the autocracy, became politically more cautious and increasingly distanced itself from the radical left. A case in point is the Moscow City Council, which met several times during the fighting. A motion on December 13 that placed responsibility for the uprising on the government and urged the immediate convocation of a constituent assembly elected by universal suffrage was defeated by a vote of forty-two to sixteen. Instead, the council adopted a much more moderate resolution that amounted to a muted expression of support for Witte's overall program. From now on, the liberals, who until the uprising had enjoyed a majority in the city council, could count on no more than twenty to twenty-five votes out of a total of one hundred.

Most prominent liberals and moderates expressed some degree of criticism of the uprising. The Octobrist N. I. Guchkov (brother of A. I. Guchkov) went so far as to offer a toast of gratitude to Governor-General Dubasov for having crushed the rebellion. Some Kadets, who stood to the left of the Octobrists, now abandoned the tactic of solidarity with the radical leftists on the ground that the latter had demonstrated that they were interested not in national liberation but in social as well as political revolution. These Kadets denounced both revolution and reaction. The Kadet Central Committee took a similar position, though it placed most of the blame for the outbreak of violence on the authorities. Paul Miliukov, the leader of the Kadets, immediately recognized that the uprising would play into the hands of the government. "Witte," he wrote in January 1906, "found unexpected support in the Russian revolutionary movement which, by its childish goals of 'armed uprising' and 'a democratic republic,' made that frightening impact on the average citizen on which Count Witte relied."

Ever since he had assumed the office of prime minister, Witte had insisted that order would have to be restored before he could proceed with reform, but for two and a half months he had been relatively restrained in seeking to rein in the militant opposition. But on December 15 he informed the tsar that the Council of Ministers had decided that the state was in grave danger and hence a new approach was needed. Whenever the army was called on to pacify an unruly crowd, it must deal "decisively and mercilessly" with "all who resist with weapons in their hand." He told General V. U. Sollogub in Riga that the radicals in his region were so bloodthirsty that "there is no way to suppress the revolution except by ruthless means." He also suggested to the tsar that it might be advisable to resort to "a radical solution": the placing of a military man at the head of the government and entrusting him with the coordination of all its operations. Even Nicholas was startled by Witte's new determination to

move forcefully against the left. On January 12, the tsar told his mother that the prime minister "now . . . wants to hang and shoot everybody. I have never seen such a chameleon of a man."

The crackdown began soon after the start of the Moscow uprising with some police actions that at the time were considered quite mild. In one day, a special squad organized by Gerasimov, head of the okhrana in the capital, conducted three hundred fifty searches and arrests, closed down three "laboratories" for the production of dynamite and several printing presses, and confiscated four hundred bombs. The police also carried out four hundred searches and arrested dozens of political activists, among them A. F. Kerensky, who twelve years later, as the minister of justice in the provisional government, signed the order for Gerasimov's arrest. At about the same time, the government saw to the dismissal of hundreds of people who worked for local organs of government on the ground that they were "politically unreliable."

The government's most devastating and brutal weapon against the insurgents and revolutionaries was the punitive expedition, an organized attack by small groups of specially selected troops in regions either controlled by radicals or in a state of unrest. The idea behind the punitive expedition was not only to root out disorder but to intimidate the population by publicly, quickly, and ruthlessly punishing participants in disturbances or people suspected of having participated in them. It was, in short, a form of state terror directed at the state's own citizens.

How the expeditions originated and who bore responsibility for them is still not quite clear. In his memoirs, Witte conceded that he had advocated the use of force "without any sentimentality," but he insisted that he had favored such a course only if a revolt had actually broken out. Once order was restored, there were to be no acts of revenge and local authorities were then to govern in accordance with the law. He claimed to have been stunned when, late in 1905, he was blamed for the government's repressive policies.

Witte was not as innocent as he pretended. Apparently, the initial decision to resort to punitive expeditions was taken in great secrecy by senior officials at court in consultation with several army generals who were concerned with putting down the agrarian unrest that had erupted in the fall of 1905. Even the minister of internal affairs seems not to have played a significant role in the deliberations. Moreover, military commanders were given full control over the expeditions, and the tsar made clear that he approved summary executions of suspected rebels. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that Witte or any other member of the Council of Ministers argued against them after they had begun, and there is some evidence that the prime minister defended some of the punitive expeditions. Only in

January and February 1906, when most of the country had already been pacified, did Witte try to put a halt to the worst excesses.

At least ten punitive expeditionary forces, ranging widely in size and firepower, were dispatched to various parts of the empire. Major General A. A. Orlov's force in the Baltic provinces appears to have been the largest, consisting of three infantry regiments, fourteen cavalry squadrons, four heavy guns, and twenty machine guns. Colonel A. K. Riman, whose task was to wrest control of the Moscow-Riazan railroad from the rebels, commanded the smallest force, a single infantry detachment. The orders to each commanding officer were simply to apply "measures he considers necessary to restore order"; the commanders understood that these words granted them carte blanche and that they would not have to answer for any excesses committed by their men.

In mid-December 1905, a major expeditionary force began to operate in Siberia, which was in effect cut off from European Russia (the telegraph system did not work, and the railways were controlled by strike committees that decided which trains could move westward). On December 13, Tsar Nicholas sent a ciphered telegram to General M. N. Danilov in Nagasaki, Japan, for transmission to General N. P. Linevich in Siberia (this was the only way the ruler could communicate on sensitive matters with his generals in Asiatic Russia), ordering General Rennenkampf to begin forcing workers on the Siberian and Trans-Baikal railway lines to obey local authorities. Rennenkampf was to start out in Harbin and move his troops westward on the railway line, making sure, wherever necessary, "to break the spirit of resistance and rebellion . . . quickly and with merciless severity, with every kind of measure."

Meanwhile, on December 21, Lieutenant General A. N. Meller-Zakolemskii left Moscow for Siberia with a detachment of about one hundred infantrymen, six cavalrymen, and two machine guns, with orders to march eastward, restoring order on the way, until he met Rennenkampf. On January 31, 1906, Meller-Zakomelskii sent word to the tsar that in four days he would reach Cheliabinsk and that he had accomplished his mission: "The revolutionary elements on [the railway] lines have been eliminated, arrested, dismissed; a portion of them have fled. The line is protected by reliable troops of the 4th Siberian Corps." By all accounts a sadist, Meller-Zakolemskii achieved his success by shooting or hanging dozens of people, flogging hundreds, and arresting thousands.

Punitive expeditions wreaked the greatest amount of havoc in the Baltic provinces, large portions of which had been taken over by rebels. Under the leadership of Lieutenant General V. U. Sollogub, an army of nineteen thousand men unleashed an unspeakable reign of terror. In their sweep through the Baltic region, troops summarily executed numerous

citizens and mercilessly flogged peasants and workers, men, women, children, and even the elderly. It has been estimated that 1,170 people were killed in the Baltic region between December 1905 and late May 1906. Property damage amounted to two million rubles. Tsar Nicholas, believing that "terror must be met by terror," did not flinch; on the contrary, he praised one of the generals who had been especially ruthless for "acting splendidly."

Punitive expeditions also operated in the Ukraine and the Caucasus, and although these were not on the same scale as in Siberia and the Baltic provinces, the brutality was comparable. Perhaps the most explicit instructions on the application of terror were issued by the minister of internal affairs himself on January 6, 1906. Durnovo had learned that unrest had broken out in the small town of Kagarluka in Kiev Province, where, it was feared, the local police would not be able to protect nearby landed estates. Durnovo therefore issued the following directive to the governor-general of Kiev, V. A. Sukhomlinov: "I earnestly request, in this and in all similar cases, that you order the use of armed force without the slightest leniency and that insurgents be annihilated and their homes burned in the event of resistance. It is necessary once and for all to stop, with the most severe measures, the spreading willfulness that threatens to destroy the entire state. Under the present circumstance, the restoration of the authority of the government is possible only by these means." Arrests, Durnovo asserted, were useless, for it was impossible to bring hundreds of people to justice in small, remote regions of the empire. "The army must be inspired with such orders [as Durnovo issued]."

Two other aspects of the government's policy of repression should be noted. First, the authorities vastly increased the number of regions placed under exceptional laws. By the spring of 1906 about 69 percent of the provinces and regions of the Russian Empire were either completely or partially subjected to one of the various emergency codes. This development stood in stark contrast to Witte public declaration of October 17 that he would seek to eliminate the exceptional laws.

Second, on December 6, 1905, the tsar signed a ukase that granted governors and commanders in any region not under exceptional laws the right to issue permits to wealthy landowners to form militias with their own funds. How many landlords actually availed themselves of this opportunity to provide for their own defense is not known, but a large number of semi-independent armed forces sprang up in the countryside early in 1906 and played a significant role in the campaign against agrarian unrest.

The government's repressive policies proved to be highly effective. Within about four months, the revolutionary movement was in retreat everywhere, incapable of holding the line against the authorities. This

quick victory was achieved by relatively few troops, somewhere between thirty and forty thousand men. Some of the units operating in specific regions consisted of fewer than two hundred soldiers. The point is that by indiscriminately applying brute force, small contingents of soldiers succeeded in intimidating multitudes of people, many of whom had grown weary of the fifteen-month-old struggle with the autocracy. Needless to say, the fickleness of formerly disgruntled soldiers played into the hand of the government. As soon as the authorities demonstrated their determination to crush the civilian revolution, many mutineers turned into their loyal tools.

There are no precise figures on the number of victims during the campaign of repression, but there can be no doubt that the government's victory exacted a heavy toll. Thousands of people were killed and the damage to property ran to millions of rubles. The jails overflowed with political prisoners, estimates ranging from twenty to one hundred thousand. Whatever the exact count, the repression clearly cast a pall over the lives of huge numbers of people.

Public opinion was shocked by the cold-blooded repression. The chances for a reconciliation between society and the government, slight in the fall of 1905, virtually evaporated in the winter and spring of 1906. A large sector of the liberal movement, never convinced that the government had been sincere in granting the October Manifesto, now claimed that the autocratic regime had indeed not undergone any fundamental change.

Although this pessimistic assessment is understandable, it cannot be accepted as an accurate assessment of conditions in Russia early in 1906. The revolutionary turbulence of the preceding eighteen months had changed the political landscape of the empire in some fundamental ways. True, the government still controlled the levers of power and had regained much of its self-confidence and authority, but the opposition remained vibrant enough to continue the struggle, for it had forced the tsar to yield on the principle of autocracy. Indeed, the revolution actually entered a new phase in which politics would be the most characteristic, though by no means the only, mode of struggle.

The government itself had seen to that early in December 1905, when it held a series of meetings, under the chairmanship of Tsar Nicholas, on a new electoral law that was to replace the Bulygin Project of August 6. Issued on December 11, at the very time of the Moscow uprising, the new law was more liberal than Bulygin's, although it did not meet the demands of the opposition for a four-tail suffrage. But it vastly increased the number of eligible voters, so that somewhere between twenty and twenty-five million male citizens over the age of twenty-four could cast

ballots. Eligibility depended on the ownership of property or the payment of taxes, and the population was divided into four curiae: landowners, peasants, town dwellers, and workers. The landowners' curia chose electors to provincial electoral assemblies in two stages; the peasants chose them in three stages; town dwellers in two stages; and workers voting in designated industrial enterprises employing more than fifty workers in two stages. At the provincial electoral assemblies, where the final choice of Duma deputies was to be made, electoral power was distributed unequally: peasants represented 42.3 percent of the electors, landowners 32.7 percent, town dwellers 22.5 percent, and workers 2.5 percent. This worked out to one elector for every two thousand landowners, four thousand urban dwellers, thirty thousand peasants, and ninety thousand workers. Thus, the vote of one landowner "was equal to that of three and one-half town dwellers, of fifteen peasants, and of forty-five workers." Women, some seven million agricultural workers, three and a half million servants, two million day laborers, one million construction workers, one million employees in commerce, students and persons in active military service, and a few other small groups were not represented at all. Under this arrangement, peasants were bound to elect a very substantial portion of the Duma, since they constituted well over 70 percent of the total population.

With this elaborate electoral procedure, the government thought it had achieved two seemingly incompatible goals: it had remained faithful to its promise in the October Manifesto to extend the suffrage to all classes and it had made inevitable the election of a conservative Duma that would defend the interests of the old order. Within four months it became evident that once again the government had thoroughly misread the mood of the nation. Even under the restrictive electoral law of December II, the population elected a Duma overwhelmingly hostile to the old order. That set the stage for the fierce political conflicts that dominated the final fifteen months or so of the revolution.

Implementing Reform

THE SEARCH FOR STABILITY

The implementation of the reforms promised during the October strike in 1905 could hardly have taken place under less auspicious circumstances. Although the government had regained the upper hand over the opposition and although mass protest movements and mass violence were not nearly as pervasive throughout 1906 and 1907 as they had been in 1905, lawlessness and political terror were more widespread. This surely reflected the government's inability to reassert fully its authority and the continuing, deep hostility that many people felt toward the existing order. Seen in this light, lawlessness may be said to have been political protest by other means, though there is little doubt that many criminals claimed to be acting out of political motives merely as a pretext.

Equally important, the authorities in St. Petersburg were still incapable of pursuing a steady course. They were unreconciled to the new political dispensation, but they feared that repudiation of earlier concessions risked reigniting the revolution. As a result, in the first months of 1906 the tsar and Witte made so many contradictory statements on major public issues and adopted so many conflicting policies that the government's direction was not discernible. They could not even settle on a consistent definition of the tsar's powers, the most fundamental political question confronting the country.

Most surprisingly, Prime Minister Witte, the author of the October Manifesto, offered a baffling interpretation of the document. On December 29, 1905, the newspaper *Novoe vremie* reported him as having said that the Manifesto had been promulgated by the tsar "on his free will," and that what the ruler promised, he could annul with a stroke of the pen. In other words, Nicholas continued to exercise power as an autocrat

with unlimited authority. When a storm of protest erupted, Witte denied having made the remark, but the denial was neither forceful nor convincing.

Nicholas himself was equally duplicitous. In response to a delegation from the Autocratic-Monarchist Party of the City of Invanovo-Voznesensk, which on February 16 expressed its loyalty to him, the tsar initially said that he intended to uphold the October Manifesto of 1905, in which he had vowed not to enact any law without the approval of an elected legislature. But he immediately undermined that statement by declaring, "The autocracy will remain as it was formerly. Thank you for your devotion to me." According to a different account of the meeting, the tsar also promised that he would serve as an autocrat with "unlimited" authority.

To add to the confusion, Witte's authority as prime minister was so shaky that many questioned whether he could be accepted as the authentic spokesman of the government. Durnovo, acting head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and General Trepov, the commandant of the court, were enormously influential with the tsar and regularly undermined Witte's authority. "No secret is made of the fact," a foreign observer noted, "that the prime minister gives orders and makes promises which his subordinate [Durnovo] refuses to carry into effect." Much of the time, in fact, the tsar and his senior advisers ignored the cabinet altogether and relied on the advice of a "Star Chamber," which met regularly under the chairmanship of Trepov.

By mid-March there were indications that Witte was no longer capable of coping with the burdens of office. A man of sharp swings in mood, he again seemed to be in a deep depression. For several days he worked sluggishly and paid no attention at all to many items that came to his desk. He said little at cabinet meetings, and for several days he did not even bother to attend meetings of the State Council. According to a newspaper report, Witte's physicians had informed him that he was suffering from heart trouble and had advised him to resign. In despair, the prime minister told an acquaintance that

no kind of human energy suffices to enable [me] to bear up under the present situation. Nowhere is there any support for me, everyone criticizes me, no one wants to do any work. Moreover, [all] classes of society are hostile to me, and I can count on no one for support. It is impossible that people will not at last heed the wishes of a sick man who is worn out and whose nerves are frayed to the point of causing heart trouble.

Witte insisted that he had to quit because he needed a rest; rumors circulated in St. Petersburg about his imminent departure from office, this time without the usual denials in the official press. Somehow, Witte mustered

up enough energy to remain in his post for a few more weeks, mainly because he wanted to conclude negotiations with foreign governments for a desperately needed loan for Russia.

The government's most pressing concern early in 1906 was a rash of terrorist acts. Assassinations of officials were not a new phenomenon in Russian history, dating back at least to the 1870s, but in both scope and form they now assumed a new character. They occurred in many parts of the country, and the targets were not only high officials but ordinary policemen as well as individuals working in government offices, banks, and in armored cars and railway trains transporting money. Moreover, it was now common for political activists facing arrest to offer armed resistance; in the ensuing shootouts, both sides frequently suffered casualties.

Much of the terror was carried out by Socialist Revolutionaries, who at their first party congress, held in late 1905 and early 1906, voted to initiate a "partisan war," defined as peasant attacks on policemen, government officials, and jails holding political prisoners, as well as the destruction of government institutions, official documents, and military barracks. The SR Party had at its disposal a sizable group of men and women who were idealists with an "almost reverential" attitude toward terror. Led by E. F. Azef (exposed in 1909 as a police provocateur), the SR terrorists often embarked on their missions in a "state of intoxication," fully aware that they would probably not survive. They claimed to be motivated not by a desire for revenge on their selected targets but by the hope and expectation that their example of self-sacrifice would stimulate the masses to rebel. In additions to the SRs, there were numerous small groups of various political persuasions, most notably anarchists, who engaged in terror. Officially, Marxists rejected individual terror as ineffective and a diversion from the all-important task of preparing the masses for the revolutionary struggle. Nevertheless, the Bolsheviks did sponsor "partisan actions" or "expropriations"—armed robberies of banks or government institutions for the purpose of procuring funds for the revolution.

Reliable data on the success of these diverse actions during 1906 are hard to come by, but the available evidence suggests that the militants could boast of some impressive accomplishments. In February, for example, several men entered the State Bank in Helsingfors (Helsinki), fired several shots, killing one employee and wounding another, and then made off with more than 175,000 rubles. In late March a band of twenty armed revolutionaries executed a successful bank robbery in Moscow, which netted them 875,000 rubles, a sum that could procure substantial caches of weapons. The SRs claimed that throughout 1906 they assassinated eightytwo officials, which seems to be a rather low figure. The government

claimed that in that year 1,588 people were killed by terrorists. This number included civilians who were accidentally killed when bombs were hurled at officials or during gun battles between terrorists and policemen and soldiers. Judging from the many reports in the press and by foreign observers, the safest conclusion seems to be that the truth lies somewhere between the two statistics, that is, hundreds were killed by militants in 1906.

The police, hard pressed to contain political unrest, also faced a rise in plain and simple criminality. In fact, it became increasingly difficult to differentiate between acts of political violence and acts of sheer thuggery. Gangs of ruffians, claiming to be motivated by the highest political motives, would rob offices, shops, and private homes. In the month of March 1906 alone, thirty-four cases of armed robbery were reported in the Odessa press, which was known to exercise a certain amount of selfcensorship on this subject. In Kiev there were many more robberies than one year earlier. In one city after another, senior officials appealed to St. Petersburg for financial help to strengthen police forces, but the government itself was short of funds and provided assistance to only a few localities where the problems of lawlessness was especially acute. For the most part, local authorities were left to their own devices, and in quite a few regions civilians took initiatives to reinforce the police. Thus, in Saratov, Voronezh, Kharkov, Simbirsk, and Poltava provinces, conditions had deteriorated to such an extent that landlords hired their own guards to protect their estates.

In cases of severe unrest, the government was inclined to call on the army to deal with the unruly, but this policy frequently encountered resistance from Rediger, the minister of war, and some senior officers, who feared that soldiers would become "executioners" and "plunderers." The people would then come to hate the army and would refuse to support it. The minister was no doubt thinking of the upcoming Duma, which would vote on military budgets. Rediger was overruled, but he continued to raise objections to the use of the military to suppress disorder.

Although a fervent advocate of force, Durnovo also made use of other weapons. In February 1906, he directed local officials to dismiss civil servants who "by their actions disturb state and public order." What followed was an orgy of dismissals that led to an alarming decline in some critical services. Many doctors who refused to renounce all political activities were let go, leaving hospitals seriously understaffed. A similar purge was conducted among teachers suspected of having exerted a pernicious influence on their students. Some districts suffered losses so large that entire schools had to be closed.

Durnovo also launched a campaign against the press, which assumed various forms. On March 18 and April 26 the tsar approved new, compli-

cated rules on freedom of the press, which tightened government control over periodicals by requiring that publications eighty pages or longer be presented to committees on press affairs or to official censors. In addition, the police conducted searches of bookstores, schools, and private homes and confiscated literature considered subversive. Frequently the police, not the most sophisticated or knowledgeable members of society, made some rather amusing decisions. In Nizhnee, Ekaterinoslav Province, they removed the October Manifesto from the shelves of a bookstore because it had been published without a censor's approval.

The authorities' main weapon against the press was Article 129 of the Criminal Code. Formulated in sweeping language, the article stated that anyone guilty of publicly inciting people, by word of mouth or in print, to rebel, to commit treason, or to overthrow the existing system of government was to be punished by exile; anyone guilty of inciting people to disobey or oppose the law or to commit a serious crime was subject to imprisonment for up to three years; anyone guilty of publicly encouraging men in military service to disregard their obligations would be exiled or imprisoned; and, anyone guilty of fomenting discord between classes, estates (soslovie), or employers and workers would be imprisoned. Since a very large proportion of the newspapers published at the time were to some degree opposed to the autocracy, it was relatively easy for officials to take action against editors and writers on the basis of this vague article in the Criminal Code.

Few areas of the country escaped the crackdown on the press, and all told, during the first four months of 1906 officials throughout the empire initiated more than 450 actions of one kind or another against the press. This harassment certainly created a serious hardship for newspapers and journals, but the government failed to silence the opposition completely. Many newspapers hired "responsible" or "sitting" editors, whose only job was to answer the call of the police and to accept whatever punishment was imposed on the publication. One liberal paper employed "as responsible editor a long-bearded, impecunious peasant at a salary of five pounds a month while at liberty, and half as much again while in gaol." Very often publications that were shut down reappeared within a few days under a new name. Confiscating a specific issue of a newspaper did not do much good either. Since editors generally put their publications into circulation while the censorship committees were still reading them, by the time the censors decided to confiscate an issue, 80 percent of the copies were already in the hands of vendors. And then there was the usual incompetence of bureaucrats, who appear not to have paid attention to some of the most revolutionary journals: the Bolshevik paper Vpered continued until March 1907 to publish appeals to people to prepare for an armed uprising.

THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN

For most of the political parties and political associations that could now operate more or less freely, the government's ambivalent policy of reform and repression posed a serious challenge, making it difficult for them to adopt clearly defined programs at precisely the time—the beginning of the campaign for the Duma—when there was an urgent need for them. Only the ultraconservatives, embracing a variety of small monarchist parties, seemed to be free of any doubt whatsoever about the proper direction for the Russian polity: they unequivocally urged the renunciation of the October Manifesto and the restoration of unlimited autocracy so as to put an end to the unrest that had been endemic in Russia for the preceding year and a half. By contrast, the landed gentry, which during the winter of 1905–6 turned sharply to the right in reaction to the violence in the countryside and elsewhere, assumed a political posture that can best be characterized as ambiguous. This emerged at the All-Russian Congress of Marshals of the Nobility early in January 1906, which voiced strong support for the reorganization of the political system as proclaimed by the October Manifesto but at the same time called for stern measures by the government to restore order. Essentially, then, the landed gentry favored Witte's policies, though they also expressed criticisms of his inconsistency in clamping down on unrest.

The leaders of the Union of October 17, on the other hand, who were also strong believers in law and order, had misgivings about the harsh measures Witte was taking to pacify the country. And they were shocked at Witte's declaration that the Manifesto had not changed the political system of Russia and that the tsar remained an autocrat with unlimited authority. The dismay in Octobrist ranks was so profound that the central committees of the union in St. Petersburg and in Moscow actually met to discuss whether the movement should continue to support the government. One of the Octobrist leaders, Count P. A. Geiden, went so far as to declare that "it is impossible to believe in Count Witte's policies." Only the fear that someone far to the right of Witte—Durnovo, for example—would replace him prevented the Octobrists from openly calling for the prime minister's dismissal.

Beyond that, the Octobrists were too divided among themselves to formulate a clearly defined program. In early 1906, the union was made up of seventy-eight organizations in thirty-six provinces, about one-third of them in the two capitals. The total membership is not known, but some notion of its size can be gleaned from the enrollment figure for twenty-one of the provinces—about twenty-four thousand people. The

principal division was between the rank-and-file members, especially those in the provinces, and the leaders in St. Petersburg and Moscow: the former tended on most issues—such as the repeal of the emergency regulations, the agrarian and nationality questions—to favor positions considerably to the right of those advocated by the union's spokesmen in the two capitals. Moreover, there were five very small groups that shared many of the views of the Octobrists but continued to maintain separate organizations. The Octobrist leaders wanted to adopt policies that would enable them to form electoral alliances with these groups, and this inevitably disposed them to water down the movement's program. In short, the Octobrists never settled on a program that provided them with a recognizable "physiognomy," and the union thus embarked on the electoral campaign for the Duma without an unmistakable message to potential supporters.

The Kadets, the principal spokesmen of Russian liberalism, fared only slightly better than the Octobrists in forging a united movement with a program acceptable to the bulk of the party membership and with well-defined tactics. To some extent, the divisions within the party can be attributed to the fact that a large number of the intelligentsia sympathetic to Kadet goals were individualists, who tended to form small political clubs that had too narrow a focus to attract a large following.

But profound ideological divisions also continued to weaken the Kadet Party. The right wing considered monarchy virtually a "sacred foundation" of the Russian polity, whereas it was an article of faith for the left wing that Russia must be transformed into a republic. The latter were especially strong in the provinces, where participation in elections under conditions of martial law or other emergency regulations did not seem to be promising or worthwhile. In any case, many left-wingers in the provinces were reluctant to take part in the elections so long as universal suffrage had not been introduced. Finally, the Kadet Party was split over the vexing agrarian issue, some members favoring extensive nationalization of the land and others advocating the retention of private-property rights.

On overall strategy, the Kadets engaged in a careful balancing act, which many people found confusing. The Kadets decided that they would participate in the upcoming elections because this would provide them with invaluable practical experience and because a boycott would give the authorities an easy political victory. Yet the Kadets were not prepared to sever their ties entirely with the revolutionary left. They preferred the path of legality, but, in the words of one of their leaders, the party "did not deny the necessity and inevitability of revolutionary methods of struggle in exceptional moments of political life." Nonetheless, the Kadets did drop the demand for a constituent assembly and spoke instead of a "Duma with constituent functions." They still refused to come out unequivocally for

constructive legislative work in the Duma ("organic work," as it was then called), and yet they indicated that in order to pacify the country they would seek to deal with the agrarian question and would attempt to extend and guarantee political freedom. Finally, the Kadets now dropped the demand for a "democratic republic" in favor of the more moderate demand for a "constitutional and parliamentary monarchy."

Organizations to the left of the Kadets tended to gravitate toward boycotting the Duma elections. Since their basic premise was that the revolution was temporarily stalled and would soon erupt again, any action
that suggested satisfaction with the government's concessions was seen as
a serious mistake, if not a betrayal of the masses. Nevertheless, there were
important differences between the Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries,
and Bolsheviks on the Duma. Lenin and his Bolshevik followers argued
that the Duma would be dominated by reactionaries or by liberals who
would enter into compromises with the autocracy, and thus the legislature would serve the cause of the counterrevolution. Hence, the only acceptable policy was one of "active boycott," which meant "not simply
keeping aloof from the elections but an extensive utilization of electoral
meetings for Social Democratic agitation and organization."

The Mensheviks, rejecting Lenin's approach as "nonsense without parallel," favored participation in the first two stages of the electoral process (the voting here was direct) and abstaining from the last stage, at which point Duma deputies were to be selected. Such involvement in the electoral process, the Mensheviks contended, would give Social Democrats an opportunity to establish links with the masses, which would be helpful in accelerating the revolutionary process.

The third major revolutionary movement, the Socialist Revolutionary Party, adopted a position that was in some ways more militant than Lenin's. Totally disregarding the defeat the revolutionaries had suffered in Moscow, the SRs contended that the revolution, as one historian has put it, "does not need to accept crumbs from the table of the old order." The party should not even agitate against the Duma because even that would amount to timid submission to the authorities and a betrayal of party principles. The position of the SRs was best summed up by O. S. Minor, a delegate to the party's congress early in January 1906: "Let [the Duma] be dominated by brazen Black Hundreds, let it be composed of scoundrels only; that would be better for us, because then there will be no illusions."

All the predictions by political parties and government officials about how events would unfold as the election campaign moved into high gear proved to be incorrect. First, the apprehensions in liberal circles that the elections to the Duma might never be allowed to take place dissipated in February 1906 as it became clear that the government did not intend to call them off. Moreover, it turned out that the masses were neither conservative nor revolutionary. Nor were they indifferent to politics. They yearned for far-reaching reform and were prepared to put their trust in the electoral process. In short, developments since October 1905 had changed the political landscape in more basic and subtle ways than anyone recognized. The revolution had not ended, but had instead entered a new phase. By no means completely but to a remarkable degree, the word replaced the sword as the main weapon in the struggle between the opposition and the autocracy. This became abundantly clear as the country embarked on the electoral campaign for the Duma, and the authorities proceeded to draft a constitution.

The elections for the 524 deputies, in accordance with the procedures outlined on December 11, began at the end of February and in most regions of the empire ended in mid-April. They dragged on in some outlying regions and in a few the process was not completed even in July. By the time the Duma convened on April 27, only 436 deputies had been selected, mainly in the central provinces and partly in the Polish provinces. For more than two months, deputies continued to trickle into St. Petersburg, but at no time did the Duma number more than 499.

Although the government tried in various ways to interfere in the electoral process and church officials sought to influence the outcome by advising their parishioners how to vote, opposition candidates were able to conduct far-reaching campaigns and voters managed to cast their ballots in sizable numbers. All things considered, this first election in Russia involving millions of citizens, many of them still illiterate, went off with surprisingly few hitches. Initially, it seemed as though the people would take little interest in the elections, either out of indifference or out of fear of reprisals. But once the campaign swung into high gear, masses of people, excited by the opportunity to participate in the political process, ignored the entreaties of the church and the repressive measures of the authorities. "You know," remarked one elderly, sick Muscovite after he had voted, "all my life I dreamed of this day, dreamed of living until then." According to one reliable estimate, between 50 and 55 percent of the eligible voters in thirty-six of the provinces of European Russia cast ballots. In the empire as a whole, participation ranged between 30 and 40 percent.

Of all the parties, the Kadets waged the most extensive and thorough campaign. They could draw on a large number of professors, junior university lecturers, doctors, and lawyers to give lectures and address meetings either in public halls or in private apartments. *Russkie vedomosti*, a paper widely read by the better-educated groups in society, devoted many

columns to the Kadets' goals and activities, as did the legal journal *Pravo*. In February 1906, several prominent Kadets launched *Rech*, a daily newspaper that attracted a wide readership. By April the Kadets published between forty and fifty newspapers in the forty-eight provinces of European Russia in which the party had established an organized presence. In those same provinces, there may have been as many as two hundred local party committees. The more active members saw to the distribution of hundreds of thousands of copies of the party program, electoral appeals, brochures, and leaflets, most of them printed in various languages. They also pasted proclamations and leaflets on trees and walls. Well-to-do sympathizers contributed generously to party coffers to cover the cost of these activities.

The Octobrists also formed a national network of organizations for the election, though in the forty-six European provinces and seven other regions in which they operated they enlisted a membership only about one-fourth as large as that of the Kadets. Still, they distributed a large quantity of campaign literature and one of their leaflets, "On the State Duma," had a run of more than 1.1 million copies. In order to maximize their chances in the election, the Octobrists formed blocs with the eighteen or so small middle-class groups that fielded candidates, and in a few local areas Octobrists went so far as to form alliances with groups that were not even sympathetic to constitutionalism.

Despite the contempt that extremists on the right and left displayed for the elections, not all of them acted according to their convictions. In fact, the elections placed the ultraconservatives and in particular the Union of the Russian People (URP) in a quandary. As firm upholders of the principle of autocracy, they opposed the very idea of a legislature with real powers. Nevertheless, the tsar himself had authorized the creation of a Duma; how could monarchists oppose his will? After some soul-searching, the URP decided to form a bloc with other monarchist groups and to take part in the elections in the hope that the Duma would prove to be loyal to the autocrat. The URP and its allies conducted their campaign pretty much the way the other parties did, but they were not sufficiently well organized to exert a strong influence on the outcome.

The Bolsheviks, and in particular Lenin, campaigned on a simple platform: anyone who supported revolution must be against the Duma, and anyone who favored the Duma must be against revolution. The success of the boycott that they advocated depended generally on the strength of revolutionary groups in a particular city, but on the whole it was quite effective. In Warsaw, for example, virtually all workers stayed away from the polls. In 49 percent of all industrial enterprises in St. Petersburg and in 70 percent of the enterprises in the suburbs, workers did not vote at

all. A Soviet historian contended that the strategy of "active boycott" proved to be of "enormous general political and psychological significance for the proletariat in the capital." Tired and depressed over the defeats of late 1905, the proletariat were invigorated by the Bolshevik campaign. But that campaign also influenced the outcome of the election in a direction neither foreseen nor desired by the Bolsheviks. The absence of viable working-class candidates facilitated victories by the Kadets.

During the first two weeks or so of the electoral campaign, the government exuded great confidence about the outcome. The Duma, it was believed, would be predominantly peasant and loyal to the old order. The Kadets, by contrast, were thoroughly pessimistic and ascribed the poor showing of the opposition to government repression. But by mid-March the mood of both groups suddenly changed. Returns from St. Petersburg and Moscow showed remarkable strength by the Kadets, and soon results from other urban centers indicated that this trend would continue. The final result was a victory beyond the dreams of any Kadet leader. And then another shock awaited the authorities: it became evident that the deputies elected by the peasants would not be conservative at all. Now V. I. Gurko, an ultraconservative senior official, contemptuously referred to them as "a herd led by a few Kadet intellectuals." Equally disappointing to the government, the rightists did poorly, receiving only about 5 percent of all the votes. The Octobrists did somewhat better, but the few victories they scored seem to have been personal triumphs of individual leaders rather than expressions of support for Octobrism as such. The elections demonstrated beyond doubt, as one observer put it, "the deep feeling of resentment ag[ainst] the Govt, which seems to pervade all classes."

The most reliable breakdown of the political affiliation of the deputies (at the time when 478 had been elected) is:

| Political affiliation | No. |
|---|-----|
| Kadets (with adherents) | 185 |
| Nonpartisans | 112 |
| Socialists (SD, SR, PSP) | 17 |
| Other left (incl. Trudoviks) ¹ | 94 |
| Progressives (incl. Peaceful Renewal) | 25 |
| Polish National Democrats | 32 |
| Octobrists (with other moderates) | 13 |
| Extreme right | 0 |

The deputies represented a wide range of social groups. The largest

1. On the Trudoviks, see below, p. 133.

contingents came from the peasantry (231) and the nobility (180), with most of the rest divided among Cossacks (14), merchants (16), and lower middle class (24). About one hundred of the noble deputies were landowners, some of whom were also engaged in other occupations, and about one hundred of the peasant deputies worked on the land. Sixty-seven deputies earned their living in trade and industry, forty-five as salaried employees, and twenty-five as workers; seventeen of them were clergymen. Slightly more than one-fifth (108) of the deputies belonged to one or another of the intelligentsia professions, and this group not surprisingly came to play a major role in the Duma's debates and parliamentary maneuvers. Wags, fearing that the intelligentsia's penchant for taking doctrinaire positions would paralyze the assembly, recalled Heinrich Heine's quip about the Frankfurt Assembly in 1848: "140 Professoren—armes Vaterland, Du bist verloren" (140 professors—wretched fatherland, you are lost).

Elated by their victory, the Kadets expected the Duma to bring about fundamental changes in the political system. Miliukov, their preeminent leader, predicted that the parliament would quickly succeed in turning Russia into a constitutional monarchy in which the Duma would be the dominant political force. The Kadets were deluding themselves. Impressive as their victory had been, the Kadets' popular support was not as extensive and deep as many party activists assumed. If the electoral system had been more democratic—for example, had suffrage been universal and direct—and if the process of political mobilization had been further advanced, the Kadets would almost certainly not have fared as well as they did.

More to the point, the Kadets did not reckon with the resourcefulness of the authorities and their determination to hold the line against the demands of the opposition. The government and its supporters were stunned by the outcome, and Witte was so distressed that he "again began to show signs of extreme nervousness and irritability." But the tsar, who seems to have taken little interest in the election, still believed that the peasant deputies would support him. When someone suggested that these deputies would demand the expropriation of large tracts of land, he responded, "Then we will have to thumb our nose at them."

Witte was more realistic than Nicholas and despite ill health devoted himself to two challenging projects designed to bolster the old order: procurement of a foreign loan and the formulation of rules under which the government and the Duma would operate once the legislature met. Each was a Herculean task and in view of Witte's precarious tenure it is astonishing that he accomplished as much as he did.

Largely because of the war with Japan, Russia's financial situation had deteriorated drastically. Within two years, from January 1904 to January 1906, what had been a surplus of some 381 million rubles had turned

into a deficit of 158 million rubles. The projections for 1906 was a deficit of more than 481 million rubles. By February that year, it was widely feared in St. Petersburg that the government would not be able to meet its payroll; inevitably, the authorities were concerned about the reliability of an army whose men were not receiving their allowances. The business community panicked, and many affluent citizens continued to send gold and other forms of capital abroad. Witte used every form of persuasion at his command, including large bribes to the French press in return for articles favorable to Russia, as well as various diplomatic maneuvers, to obtain help from abroad. In the end, the French government concluded that, however risky, a loan was justified: it would bolster the alliance with Russia and prevent a rapprochement between Russia and Germany.

The contract for the loan, the largest ever for Russia, was signed in Paris on April 16, 1906 (Western calendar). A consortium of French, British, Austrian, Dutch, and Russian banks advanced a total of 2.25 billion francs at 5 percent interest. The French banks assumed the largest share of the loan, almost one-half. For Witte, this was a great personal triumph, as even Tsar Nicholas grudgingly acknowledged. The loan stabilized the country's finances and made it possible for Russia to remain on the gold standard. It also provided the government with the wherewithal to carry out its functions for about a year without regard to the wishes of the Duma. It was for this reason that Witte was determined to secure the funds before the legislature met.

The opposition deeply resented the government's action, which amounted to a cavalier disregard of the Duma at the very moment of its election. The Kadets went so far as to denounce the financial agreement as "unconstitutional" because it had been concluded before the Duma met, even though they realized that the reforms they wished to institute would require financial assistance from abroad. Thus, Witte's action further poisoned the political atmosphere, but he also paid a personal price for his success. Once he had procured the loan, he was no longer perceived by the tsar to be indispensable as prime minister.

DRAFTING A "CONSTITUTION"

Ironically, the one other achievement of Witte during his last weeks in office, the full implementation of the promise in the October Manifesto to establish a national legislature, also proved to be politically counterproductive. The election itself satisfied only one part of the promise. The government also had to define the powers and rules of the legislature and determine the role of other institutions in the legislative process. Late in 1905, senior officials began to discuss transforming the State Council, a purely advisory body established by Tsar Alexander in 1810, into a second chamber with real powers, a possibility not even hinted at in the Manifesto. On February 14 and 16, the Crown Council, chaired by the tsar himself, discussed the proposal for a reformed State Council as well as regulations governing the conduct of affairs by the Duma. Thirty-nine dignitaries, some of them from outside the government, participated, and the tsar always made the final decision on specific issues. The minutes of the meetings are fascinating, for they reveal the extraordinary reluctance of many notables even at this stage of the revolution to accept basic changes in the political system. And some, most notably Witte, who had appeared to have made their peace with fundamental political reform, sought to minimize the significance of the changes by using obscurantist language to describe the new, emerging polity.

The project for the reformed State Council was thoroughly conservative. It transformed the State Council into a legislative body with powers eaual to those of the Duma. A measure introduced in the Duma would be sent to the tsar for his consideration only if both houses had voted in its favor. Then, to avoid placing on the tsar the "entire burden of resolving differences" between the legislative chambers the authors of the project devised rules for the selection of the upper chamber that would yield a membership compliant to the wishes of the sovereign. Half the one hundred ninety-eight members were to be appointed by the tsar and, of course, they could be relied on to do his bidding. The remaining ninetyeight members of the new council were to be elected by various social groups according to the following formula: the *dvorianstvo* (nobility) would elect eighteen; the provincial zemstvo assemblies, thirty-four; large landowners in provinces without zemstvo assemblies, twenty-two; the Orthodox clergy, six; the Academy of Sciences and universities, six; the commercial and industrial class, twelve. The councilors served for nine years, which meant that they enjoyed less independence than their predecessors, who used to be appointed for life.

On February 20 the tsar signed the documents enacting into law these proposals, but only after making a change of his own. He added one word to the description of his "supreme authority"; it became "supreme autocratic authority," a stark reminder to the country that Nicholas did not believe that he had yielded any of his prerogatives.

The public reaction to the documents was predictable. The conservative press hailed them because they appeared to leave the basis of the Russian state system intact. The Octobrists, by contrast, were split. At a meeting of the central committee in late February, Shipov and most of the

representatives from Moscow spoke out strongly against the reformed State Council, but the Kadets, as expected, vehemently condemned the government for having staged what, in their view, amounted to a coup d'état. Miliukov repudiated the government's action as an "insult" to the Duma and warned that "there can be no doubt that the struggle against the very existence of the [State] Council has become a new slogan of the liberation movement, and thus does not facilitate but complicates the task of pacifying the country." The men in authority were not intimidated. Within two months, they issued a new compilation of the Fundamental Laws—essentially a codification of all laws of the empire—that further demonstrated their determination to renege on certain basic commitments they had made in October 1905.

Apparently, discussion of a revision of the Fundamental Laws began late in 1905, when Trepov, the commandant of the court and a malicious intriguer, suggested that a new code, which would be regarded as a constitution, should be issued and should have a liberal thrust. As Witte tells it, Trepov knew that this would prove to be disastrous for the country, and that the prime minister—whom the commandant of the court despised—would receive most of the blame. There is evidence to support these charges against Trepov. The first draft of the new Fundamental Laws was fairly liberal, and Trepov had made strenuous efforts to exclude both Witte and the Council of Ministers from the work of revision. Only after Witte protested vehemently were he and the cabinet included in the deliberations.

Witte quickly saw to it that the draft was purged of its liberalism. Now a strong supporter of repression, he was also eager to demonstrate to the tsar and to ultraconservatives that he was loval to the throne. By mid-March Witte, through wily maneuvers at court, actually gained control over the process of revision, and at four meetings on April 7 and April 12 of another Crown Council, also chaired by the tsar, a new draft was approved. It seemed to be exactly what Nicholas would have wanted, but when Trepov submitted to Nicholas a memorandum he had received from several Kadets proposing some changes in a more liberal direction, the tsar began to waver. Alarmed, Witte telephoned Trepov and warned him of "a great disaster" if the Fundamental Laws were not adopted before the Duma met on April 27. The legislature would surely act on its own to provide the country with new Fundamental Laws, and they would not be to the monarch's liking. Witte's argument persuaded the tsar, who on April 23 sent a ukase to the Ruling Senate ordering the publication of the Fundamental Laws, making them the law of the land. Although the authorities rigorously avoided the use of the word "constitution" because of its Western overtones, the Fundamental Laws amounted to nothing less. They provided a detailed framework for the operation of the government and for the enactment of laws. But the new "constitution" had a special feature: unlike all other laws it could be revised only on the tsar's initiative.

This was not its only conservative feature. It also stipulated that the tsar retained a veto power over all legislative measures as well as control of the state's administration, of foreign policy, of the military forces, and of the appointment of all ministers. Moreover, the monarch had the right to impose martial law or states of emergency on regions beset by unrest; he alone could pardon convicts and commute penalties handed down by courts; he alone could issue a "general forgiveness" to criminals; and he remained the "Head of the Church," which he administered through the Most Holy Ruling Synod. Finally, the tsar retained the authority to dissolve the Duma at his discretion; the only condition was that the ukase of dissolution must indicate when new elections would be held and when the new Duma would be convoked.

Several other features of the Fundamental Laws are worth noting. The decrees of February 20 were incorporated into them, making it impossible for the Duma to revoke those measures. If the legislatures failed to adopt a budget at the beginning of the fiscal year, the previous budget would remain in force. The list of civil rights was quite modest: the Fundamental Laws provided for due process, the inviolability of private property, freedom of the assembly, freedom of expression ("within the limits fixed by law"), freedom of association ("for purposes not contrary to laws"), and freedom of religion, although "the conditions under which [the people] may avail themselves of this freedom are determined by law." When the Duma was in recess, the government could govern by decree, which would become a dead letter if not passed by both houses of the legislature within two months after they reconvened.

If the constitution of 1906 marked a liberalization of the political order that had existed at the beginning of the revolution in 1904, it was a far cry from the aspirations of liberal society. Even more important, it met few of the expectations that had been aroused in October 1905, when the revolution seemed to have triumphed. Had it not been for the fact that the elections had produced a Duma overwhelmingly hostile to the old order, the opposition might well have concluded that the autocracy had inflicted a fatal blow on the revolution.

Before the Duma met, however, the court on April 22 announced the departure of Witte as prime minister. This was not surprising and did not evoke much public distress. It was known that Witte and the tsar could not abide each other, and Witte's political twists and turns since October 1905 had thoroughly discredited him. But he had been such a powerful

presence at the pinnacle of the bureaucracy for almost a decade and a half that his departure posed a serious challenge to the court: Would it be able to come up with a person capable of dealing with the many intractable problems facing the nation?

Amazingly, despite the court's eagerness to see the last of Witte, it had no plans for the succession. The minister of justice from 1906 to 1915, I. G. Shcheglovitov, revealed in 1917 that the new cabinet was "formed entirely accidentally," in a haphazard way. It appears that Shcheglovitov's predecessor, M. G. Akimov, had been asked if he would serve as prime minister, but he "categorically refused" on the ground that he felt "completely unprepared" for that position. Asked to make a recommendation, Akimov proposed I. L. Goremykin. For two days the tsar and his advisers mulled over their possibilities while all the ministers remained in ignorance about their future. Then, on April 24 the tsar announced the selection of a new government whose only distinguishing feature was its lack of distinction.

To be fair, several men in the new government were competent bureaucrats, but the prime minister, Goremykin, was so obviously a hasbeen that society was taken by surprise by his appointment, and virtually no one could be found to say a good word about him. Kokovtsov, an intelligent and experienced civil servant, actually refused Goremykin's offer of the post of minister of finance because of his doubts about the man's abilities. The tsar then invited Kokovtsov for an audience to persuade him to change his mind. "I frankly expressed to the tsar all my fears about Ivan Logginovich's [Goremykin's] personality, his great indifference toward everything, his utter inability to compromise, and his outspoken unwillingness to meet the new elements of our state life, which would not only fail to help us get acquainted with them but would serve to increase the opposition." Nicholas granted that Kokovtsov might be right, but he also indicated that nothing could be done, since Goremykin had already accepted the post. In any case, the tsar was confident that the new prime minister "will not act behind my back" and would not do anything to "damage my authority"; clearly, Nicholas was determined not to be saddled with a prime minister who would be as independent as Witte. Still, if Kokovtsov had made up his mind not to serve in the cabinet, the tsar assured him that he would honor his wishes. Nonetheless, late in the evening of April 25, Kokovtsov received a package announcing his appointment as minister of finance. Goremykin, it turned out, insisted on the appointment, and Nicholas simply signed a ukase to that effect without first informing Kokovtsov. Not prepared to disobey a directive from the tsar, Kokovtsov agreed to serve.

Goremykin had begun his career in government service in 1866 at the

age of twenty-seven and had held several high positions before he became minister of internal affairs in 1895. In that post, he acquired the reputation of being a "red," but as Miliukov put it somewhat unkindly, only because he served in the position between two unyielding reactionaries. Actually, as minister of internal affairs he did advocate the extension of self-government to the western provinces, a major reason for his dismissal in 1899. He had become considerably more conservative by 1906, but that was not the main reason why he was universally considered a bad choice. He was a colorless man without firm convictions or any strong urge to exercise leadership. One senior official dismissed Goremykin as "an indolent person who is not at all interested in politics. He asked for only one thing, that he be bothered as little as possible." Clearly, he was not a suitable head of government under the new and difficult conditions prevailing in Russia in 1906.

Except for Kokovtsov, P. Kh. Schwanebach was the only person in the cabinet with experience in national domestic affairs, and he was more interested in gaining support for ultra-right-wing causes and intrigues than in running the Office of the State Comptroller. Witte described him as a man whose only merit lay in the fact "that he had fallen in with a Montenegrin princess." The minister of internal affairs, P. A. Stolypin, who will loom large later in this study, was without question a highly competent person and a vast improvement over the hard-line and highly unpopular Durnovo, but he had no experience in national politics. The new minister for foreign affairs, A. P. Izvolskii, was an able and sensible diplomat who did not want to accept the cabinet position because he felt "inadequately prepared," having been "out of active diplomatic service for three years." He finally accepted the appointment, "quite against my will," only because the man he had recommended, D. A. Nedilov, refused to be considered. Most of the other cabinet members were mediocre and unimaginative bureaucrats, hardly the type of people capable of finding common ground with a Duma that was overwhelmingly hostile to the tsarist regime.

By the same token, the mood of liberal leaders was hardly conducive to cooperation with the government. Reinvigorated by their victory in the election and their fury over the last steps of the outgoing government, many liberals were resolved to go on the offensive. If in January the watchwords had been caution and ambiguity, now in April they were militancy and maximalism. For example, A. A. Kizevetter made a menacing prediction: "If . . . the Duma is dissolved, that will be the government's last act, after which it will cease to exist." At the Third Congress of the Kadet Party, which ended its deliberation on April 25, just two days before the Duma met, Miliukov's denunciation of the government

for having enacted the Fundamental Laws was warmly applauded: "Like thieves in the dead of night," Miliukov thundered, "all the specialists on state law organized, [and] ... staged a conspiracy against the people. ... That which we read in the newspapers today is a *fraud*, a fraud against the people, and we must immediately answer this fraud." Also at the congress, the Kadets formally adopted four theses that called for the following reforms: universal, equal, direct, and secret suffrage, including the extension of the vote to women; agrarian reform; legislation on the workers and nationalities question; full amnesty for political prisoners and an end to capital punishment; and a "parliamentary inquiry of all illegal actions taken by the administration in its struggle with the social movement since October 17." The Kadets acknowledged that the pursuit of their goals could lead to a clash with Goremykin, but they insisted that if a rupture became inevitable, they would see to it that the onus would fall on the government. By the standards of the time and under the circumstances then prevailing in Russia, the Kadet program was so far-reaching and radical that cooperation between the Duma and the government was out of the question. The struggle over Russia's political system was far from over.

THE FIRST STEPS OF THE LEGISLATURE

The government was very apprehensive about the convocation of the Duma. Although officials permitted citizens of St. Petersburg to celebrate the event by decorating their homes with flags and to manifest their support by peaceful gatherings, their fear of "stormy meetings, processions, and demonstrations with criminal speeches and revolutionary songs" was so strong that they ordered the police and army to maintain a large presence on the streets of the capital. According to a newspaper account, St. Petersburg did not have the appearance of a city eager to welcome the people's representatives. "It resembled, rather, a city prepared to meet an enemy. Everywhere in all the streets soldiers were parading with all kinds of weapons, and so were policemen, some on horse and some on foot, [all] armed with rifles."

After much bickering with each other over whether the tsar should have any contact with Duma deputies, senior officials decided to invite the legislators to the Winter Palace, where Nicholas would open the Duma sessions with an "Address from the Throne." Once that decision had been reached, the court spared no effort in arranging a grand and "wonderful display." In a vivid description of the event, the American ambassador to St. Petersburg noted, "In the throne room of the Winter Palace there was an assemblage of people different from any that has ever taken place in the history of Russia. On the left of the throne, taking up an entire left side of the hall, were the members of the Duma, in every conceivable costume, the peasants in rough clothes and long boots, merchants and trades people in frock coats, lawyers in dress suits, priests in long garb and almost equally long hair, and even a Catholic bishop in violet robes. On the opposite side of the hall were officers in braided uniforms,

courtiers covered with decorations, Generals, members of the Staff and members of the Imperial Council." The ambassador further noted that "the contrast between those on the left and those on the right was the greatest one that one could possibly imagine, one being a real representation of different classes of this great Empire, and the other of what the autocracy and bureaucracy has been." Within half an hour, Nicholas and his courtiers appeared in the hall and after a religious ceremony, he proceeded to the throne. To the ambassador's surprise, many of the deputies "did not even return the bows of His Majesty, some giving an awkward nod, others staring at him coldly in the face, showing no enthusiasm, and even almost sullen indifference. As he rose again from the throne, there was absolute stillness. He then proceeded in a firm voice to read his address. When he finished there was a tremendous outbreak of applause, but limited almost entirely to the right side of the hall, the deputies on the other side remaining quiet."

In truth, the tsar's speech was inappropriate for the occasion. Although not explicitly provocative, the address was so vague as to suggest a lack of serious interest in the work of the Duma. It did not include a single proposal for reform, and this was bound to offend even the moderate deputies. After all, the legal and peaceful reform of Russia's political, economic, and social institutions was a primary reason for the establishment of the Duma in the first place. In urging the deputies to "justify in a worthy manner the confidence of the tsar and the nation," Nicholas confined himself to words that appeared to be gracious and generous but in fact did not in any way meet the concerns of the liberals and moderate left, not to mention the radicals. Far from promoting goodwill and harmony, the encounter in the Winter Palace between the privileged and the elected representatives only demonstrated, and deepened, the distrust with which the two sides eyed each other.

Popular support for the Duma was high throughout Russia, and deputies were greeted very warmly as they made their way from the Winter Palace to the Tauride Palace, a two-story, white building erected late in the eighteenth century. An imposing structure on a large plot of land in an angle of the Neva River, it could be protected fairly easily, since it was isolated from the main parts of the city and was within easy reach of several military barracks. When the deputies approached the palace, they were startled to discover the streets surrounding the building filled with five to six thousand "ordinary people," who hugged them, kissed them, squeezed their arms, and cried out "amnesty." The cordial reception made a deep impression on the deputies, several of whom delivered short speeches calling for calm and promising to implement the wishes of the people. Once inside the hall, the deputies wasted no time in taking up a critical and highly sensitive issue.

Many deputies, in fact, wanted the Duma immediately to pass a resolution demanding complete amnesty for political prisoners, but the Kadet leaders did not wish to initiate the proceedings with a move that would be regarded as provocative by the tsar, who, according to the Fundamental Laws, retained the right to grant amnesties. As a compromise, the Kadets arranged to have I. I. Petrunkevich deliver, at the very start of the deliberations, a short and eloquent address, the theme of which was that "we cannot now refrain from expressing all our accumulated feelings, our cries from the heart, and say that free Russia demands the liberation of all victims." The speech marked the start of a pattern of conduct of the Duma necessitated by the ideological makeup of the membership: the adoption by the Kadet leadership of procedures that would enable the legislature to express the wishes of the more militant deputies without trying to enact legislation that the government would consider provocative.

So long as the Kadet leaders sought to shape the Duma's agenda, they had no choice but to opt for such a two-pronged strategy. Only about 37 percent of the deputies belonged to the Kadet Party, and even they were sharply divided. Much of the time but not always, the Kadets could count on the support of the Trudoviks (or Labor Group), whose strength ranged from 94 to 135 deputies. About 80 percent of the latter were of peasant origin, though most were now intellectuals. More militant on ideological issues and on tactics than the Kadets, the Trudoviks did not subscribe to a clearly defined doctrine and did not act as a well-disciplined fraction. In their midst were SRs, nonparty socialists, SDs, Left Kadets, and about twenty-five of them described themselves as "nonparty" deputies and twenty-six remained "undefined."

Another group in the Duma, numbering slightly more than one hundred, never joined any party, apparently because of fear of punishment by the authorities in the localities where they had been elected. Many of them sympathized with the Kadets or other opposition parties, but some, generally Russian landowners and nobles, tended to be conservative, though not reactionary. Finally, about sixty deputies aligned themselves with the Autonomous group, which strove to advance the interests of the national minorities. The Polish Circle (Kolo) composed the largest number (thirty-two) within this fraction. To add to the complexity, a fair number of deputies moved from one group to another during the seventy-two days the Duma remained in session, and the arrival of newly elected representatives from the outlying parts of the empire not only changed the numerical makeup of the parties but led to the formation (in mid-June) of a Social Democratic fraction composed of seventeen members.

By virtue of their relative cohesiveness, political experience, and native talents, the Kadets quickly secured a predominant position in the Duma.

They occupied a large number of the leading posts in the legislature and their leader, Miliukov, was the outstanding strategist and tactician not only of his party but of the Duma as a whole, even though he was barred from serving as a deputy because the paper he edited had published the Financial Manifesto. A man of great intelligence and energy, Miliukov would sit in the press gallery during most of the Duma's sessions and maintain contact with the deputies. He was the key person in all the negotiations the Kadets conducted, whether with other parties, with the court, or with government officials. Probably the second most important man in the Duma was the Kadet S. A. Muromtsey, who was elected president, a position roughly comparable to the post of Speaker in the U.S. House of Representatives. A professor of law at Moscow University, Muromtsev had the ideal training for one of his major tasks, the formulation of the rules under which the Duma would operate (these rules remained essentially unchanged during the next three Dumas, which functioned until 1917).

One of the Duma's first tasks was to prepare an "Answer to the Throne" in response to the tsar's address. Miliukov wanted to adopt the custom of the British parliament, which responds formally to the monarch's address to the first session of a new parliament. It appeared to be an astute strategy, for it would suggest that the Duma was assuming prerogatives similar to that of the British counterpart. But in Britain the monarch's address is in fact composed by the prime minister and represents the basic principles of his or her party, which commands a majority in parliament. In Russia, the address was written in secret by the tsar's assistants (and edited by the ruler himself), who repudiated the goals of the dominant parties in the legislature. Thus, any "Answer to the Throne" drafted by the Duma was bound to be unlike Parliament's response to the monarch. The "Answer" in Russia necessarily amounted to a statement of the opposition's program, which was thoroughly hostile to the prevailing order and was therefore bound to provoke resentment in government circles.

That is precisely what happened when the Duma's Committee of 33 produced a draft on May 2. The document called for political changes of the most fundamental kind, changes that would transform the country's political system into a liberal constitutional monarchy with paramount authority vested in the Duma. It also called for agrarian reform that included the compulsory alienation of private land. At least three demands—radical changes in the authority of the State Council, the establishment of ministerial responsibility, and amnesty to all political prisoners—clearly went beyond the bounds of the Duma's authority as defined in the Fundamental Laws; only the tsar had the right to take the

initiative in proposing such changes. The text was nevertheless greeted with prolonged applause, and after three days of debate it was unanimously adopted (eight deputies left the chamber before the balloting so that the measure could pass without any negative votes).

Predictably, this action evoked great consternation within the government. Apparently, only General Rediger's plea that more attempts be made to cooperate with the Duma persuaded the cabinet not to denounce, and possibly dissolve, the legislature. But then Nicholas, determined to assert his prerogatives, made a point of rebuffing the Duma by refusing to allow a delegation of deputies led by Muromtsev to deliver the "Answer" to him in person. To add insult to injury, the court did not even communicate directly with President Muromtsev; the prime minister informed Muromtsev of the tsar's decision and asked that the "Answer" be sent to him. He would then pass it on to Nicholas. Many people and virtually all Duma deputies were stunned, and the cry rang out, "The Government is defying us." Eager to avoid an open clash, a Kadet deputy, P. I. Nogorodtsey, declared in the chamber that the importance of the "Answer" lay in its content, not in the manner in which it was communicated to the authorities. His proposal that the body simply pass on to the next item of business was readily adopted.

Neither the tsarist authorities nor the Duma emerged unscathed from this first skirmish. The Duma leaders, and especially the Kadets, who had promised to limit their demands within the confines of the Fundamental Laws, now appeared to be more interested in a power struggle than in implementing reforms on specific issues. Meanwhile, the tsar's gratuitous rebuff of the Duma's delegation only served to embitter the legislators, making cooperation even more unlikely. "From this day on," Kokovtsov noted, "the conflict between the Duma and the tsar himself, was definitely declared—a conflict which every day intensified."

After extensive discussions lasting several days, the cabinet decided that the prime minister should deliver an official response to the "Answer" in the Duma. When he appeared in the chamber on May 13, everyone sensed that the government's statement would be a momentous event. Goremykin's hands "were shaking with agitation" as he read the speech in a voice "hardly audible." After a few conciliatory comments about the government's readiness to work with the Duma, he displayed utter inflexibility and arrogance. He announced that the deputies' proposal on the agrarian question was "absolutely inadmissible" because it would violate the principle of the inviolability of property. Nor could the cabinet agree to the establishment of a ministry enjoying the confidence of a majority of the Duma, the abolition of the State Council, the elimination of various legal limitations placed on the Duma, or the granting of

amnesty to political prisoners. The government would not even consider these measures.

Goremykin ended his address on a positive note, listing the projects for reform—such as colonization of Asiatic Russia, facilitating peasant withdrawal from communes, granting peasants full legal equality, reorganization of the system of public schools—that the government planned to bring to the Duma for its consideration. But he offered no specifics on these projects. He then called on the deputies to help restore calm to the country.

No sooner had the prime minister completed his remarks than one deputy after another rose to denounce his speech and his policies. The deputies reacted to these attacks on the government with prolonged applause. Moreover, no one came to Goremykin's defense and no one repudiated the thinly disguised threat by the Trudovik A. F. Aladin to unleash a revolution. Even the Octobrist Count P. A. Geiden, always a cautious man, urged the government to resign.

The declamations in the Duma—one can hardly call the proceedings a debate—continued for several hours, after which the president read the resolution that had been submitted to the chamber for adoption. It was a remarkably blunt statement: because the government had refused to meet the demands of the people enumerated in the "Answer to the Throne" and had shown contempt for the interests of the people, the legislature declared its complete lack of confidence in the government and demanded its immediate resignation and replacement by a cabinet enjoying the confidence of the State Duma. Four hundred and forty deputies voted for the resolution; only eleven voted against it, and ten of them subsequently indicated that they had done so only because they questioned its legality, not because they wished to support the government. The Duma had thrown down another gauntlet.

The comments by several deputies on the likelihood of violence from below if the government did not yield to the Duma caused a considerable amount of "nervousness" among senior officials, who ordered all troops in St. Petersburg to be kept under standing orders. But when it became clear that there would be no unrest, the prime minister regained his composure and adopted a stance toward the legislature that astonished even some of those who were hostile to it. He decided to treat the Duma with utmost contempt. He would ignore it; he would not bother to attend its sessions and urged his ministers also to stay away. If government officials were summoned by deputies to answer queries, ministers should send subordinates to speak in their behalf. Goremykin also indicated that he would act, as his minister of foreign affairs put it, "as if [the deputies] did not exist."

Stolypin was now the only minister who regularly attended the Duma debates, and the government did not bother to introduce any significant legislative proposals. It was not until May 15 that it submitted two bills, both of them trivial: one called for the establishment of a local school, and the other for the building of a steam laundry and a greenhouse for the University of Iuriev.

Instead of preparing legislative proposals, the authorities—even before the prime minister's defiant speech—directed their energies on a campaign against the Duma. On May 5 and for several days thereafter, *Pravitelstvennyi vestnik*, a government daily, printed a series of telegrams that the tsar had received from right-wing groups reviling the legislature and demanding its dissolution. Among other things, the groups charged that the Duma had acted "in a revolutionary spirit," was bent on destroying the state, sought to seize power, and had even cooperated with foreigners who planned to "encroach upon the unity and integrity of the state." Taken aback, thirty-six deputies proposed an interpellation; after the legislature gave its approval, the prime minister was asked to appear for questioning.

According to the rules of the Duma, deputies could conduct an interpellation whenever any government department was suspected of wrongdoing. The minister of that department was expected to answer the deputies' queries in person. In this instance, deputies wished to know who had authorized the publication of the telegrams and why they had been published. They intended to compel the prime minister to state explicitly whether he and the tsar agreed with the contents of the telegrams.

Goremykin refused even to respond to the request, on the ground that the telegrams to the monarch had nothing to do with the work of the Duma, which, he insisted, had the right to interpellate the government only on issues that bore directly on legislative proposals.

In part, Goremykin's behavior can be explained by his conviction that the revolutionary tide had been turned back, making accommodation with the opposition unnecessary. But his conduct also stemmed from a deep contempt for the deputies that was widespread in conservative circles. A few hours after the opening ceremonies at the Winter Palace, Count V. B. Frederiks, who occupied the powerful position of minister of the court, was quoted as having said: "The deputies? They give one the impression of a gang of criminals who are only waiting for the signal to throw themselves upon the Ministers and cut their throats. What wicked faces! I will never set foot among those people." According to S. F. Kryzhanovskii, an influential assistant minister of internal affairs, two-thirds of the peasant deputies were "completely untutored" and could act only on the basis of instinct, not reasoning. Moreover, the

government considered many of them to be debauched. Deputies, Kryzhanovskii recalled with considerable relish, regularly drank to excess at inns and then would become rowdy and unruly; when other citizens tried to calm them down, the troublemakers would claim that as legislators they enjoyed immunity, giving them right to do as they pleased. Kryzhanovskii also claimed that a number of deputies conducted revolutionary propaganda in factories, organized street demonstrations, and incited crowds against the police. During one demonstration, the Ekaterinoslav deputy M. I. Mikhailichenko became involved in a brawl and was badly beaten by policemen. The next day he took part in an interpellation on this incident with his face so covered in bandages that only his nose and eves were visible. There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of Kryzhanovskii's account of misbehavior by Duma deputies; a fair number of them were uneducated and unruly. But most deputies were serious, though politically immature, and dedicated to the reform and renewal of Russia. The point is that the men in authority who could not abide the idea of sharing power with any elected institution seized on the misdeeds of miscreants as yet another reason for ignoring the Duma.

The court and the government made a serious political mistake in viewing the Duma deputies as one undifferentiated mass, all of them, or virtually all of them, committed to a revolutionary upheaval. In fact, on several occasions, the Kadets successfully reined in the more radical and volatile Trudoviks. An astute and politically agile prime minister might have been able to exploit the differences between the two largest oppositional parties. But a crude posture of hostility toward the Duma suited Goremykin's temperament perfectly and fitted in with his notion of how the government should be run. Not only did he not want the Duma to meddle in affairs of state; he did not think that the Council of Ministers ought to trouble itself about domestic or international affairs either. He regularly held meetings of the cabinet, but "merely for the sake of form." He presided in "a tired and absentminded fashion," allowed each minister to have his say so long as he was brief, and would announce, "in a fatherly and polite tone," that he would reach his own decisions, which he intended to submit to the tsar for final action. Gurko, who attended the meetings, recalled that Goremykin assumed "an air which seemed to say: 'Babble as you will, for I shall act as I see fit.'" If anyone dared to suggest that the conflict between the government and the Duma might provoke unrest among the masses, Goremykin dismissed the warning as "childishness" and pointed out that the telegrams from the people printed in the press proved that they strongly supported the tsar. However, the prime minister conducted the cabinet meetings in such a calm and goodnatured way that no one was offended.

Society was aware of the incompetence in the highest circles of the administration. On June 6 a major newspaper, *Russkie vedomosti*, stated bluntly in an editorial that the government was once again in disarray. Official communications issued one day were retracted the next morning. Ministers constantly altered their decisions, moving from one course of action to another without explaining their changes. The paper saw only one way out of the morass, a replacement of the government by one that enjoyed the confidence of the Duma.

The government, however, had reached a different conclusion. On May 14, one day after the Duma's vote of no confidence, a large majority in the Council of Ministers agreed that the legislature would have to be dissolved. The only question regarded timing. Goremykin apparently did not reveal his own views on the subject. He merely asked that the deliberations be kept confidential, and that all the ministers should be prepared for an emergency. But news of the deliberations leaked out and for the next few weeks newspapers carried numerous articles on the impending dissolution and on a likely shakeup of the government. By early June, the court had in fact lost confidence in Goremykin and only a last-ditch effort by the tsar's advisors to work out some sort of accord between the monarchy and moderates in the Duma postponed a final decision on the Duma for about a month. In both camps, many hesitated to initiate an ultimate confrontation out of fear of the consequences of such a leap in the dark.

STIRRINGS FROM BELOW

The debates in the Duma proceeded against a background of unrest that erupted in various regions of the empire, a rude reminder that the government's program of pacification was only partially effective. Serious disorders began early in May, and when they subsided in July, they had left their mark in the countryside, in several cities, and in the army. The authorities believed or perhaps simply hoped that the stirrings from below marked the last gasp of the revolution; for many leaders of the opposition, they appeared to be the start of a new upheaval that would undermine the foundations of the old order. Inevitably, the different perceptions of the disturbances influenced the strategy of the contending forces.

In scope and intent the agrarian unrest that began in May 1906 and lasted for three months was comparable to the turbulence in the countryside during the last three months of 1905. Close to 1,600 episodes of disorder broke out in both periods, and the primary goal of the rebellious

peasants remained constant—to obtain more land. But there were significant differences in the two waves of protest. The unrest of 1906 tended to be less violent, although some looting and arson did take place. Most notably, only in 1906 did the peasant question become a central issue in the unfolding of the revolution. The dramatic confrontations of the previous year—Bloody Sunday, the general strike in October, the December uprising in Moscow—and the political reforms, such as the October Manifesto, resulted from the actions of workers or liberals. This is not to suggest that the agrarian unrest of 1905 was a minor event. It caused much consternation and frightened a sizable number of the landed gentry, impelling them to turn to the right politically in the winter of 1905–6. But it was only in the spring of 1906 that the agrarian issue moved to center stage in the conflict between the government and the opposition.

The peasant movement was enormously complex, since the behavior of peasants depended to a very large extent on local conditions. But a few generalizations may be hazarded. The movement was most intense in the black-earth regions of the central Russian provinces, where serfdom had been most highly developed prior to 1861. The unrest was also intense in the Baltic provinces, where the nobility of German extraction owned a vast proportion of the arable land. But it would be a mistake to assume that all the peasants in any specific locale joined in the disturbances: the level of participation in the more destructive actions ranged from 10 to 50 percent and was probably higher in strikes by agricultural workers. Nor did the peasants who took part in the unrest necessarily agree on all the measures to be taken to improve their lot. In the Gorodiansk District in Chernigov Province, for example, landless peasants and small landholders collaborated in the unrest, but only so long as they were directed against "landlords or Jews." But when the violence was directed at prosperous peasants, ghastly conflicts occasionally broke out. "It was an inexpressibly horrible, wild, and repulsive scene," according to one report. "People suspected of burning or destroying peasant farmsteads were immediately sentenced to death by their fellow villagers and were killed on the spot by rifles or pickets or torn to pieces by pitchforks."

Few issues have produced more conflicting claims than the role of revolutionaries, the rural intelligentsia, or local agitators in instigating the peasant movement. Generally, observers unsympathetic to the unrest blamed outsiders; radicals, eager to take credit for the upheaval, made excessive claims about their influence in the villages. Thus, most governors, late in 1905 contended that "revolutionary propaganda was the main cause of rural disturbances," which is not surprising because these officials viewed peasants as naive children who were easily influenced by outsiders. Also, the governors found it easier to repress revolutionary propagandists than to put down large masses of rebellious peasants.

Actually, there is considerable evidence that peasants took the initiative in launching unrest and showed increasing interest in organizing themselves for both economic and political action without outside prompting. It was not uncommon for peasants to hold meetings in their villages to discuss their grievances and the demands they wished to submit to the authorities. Quite often, peasants refused to pay taxes, and more often still, they joined unions formed in response to the appeals of the All-Russian Peasants' Union, an organization that had been created in July and that pushed a radical economic and political program. By the end of 1905, the union had some 470 local branches, with an estimated membership of two hundred thousand, operating under twelve provincial committees and four interprovincial committees. Its influence, however, is hard to discern. Part of the problem is that the government dealt harshly with the union's leaders, many of whom were arrested in late 1905. In addition, the union's opposition to participation in the election to the Duma cost it the support of many peasants, who voted for nonpartisan candidates, subsequently the core of the Trudovik fraction in the legislature.

The most dramatic form of political action by peasants was the creation of local institutions of self-government, or "peasant republics." There were not many such republics and they generally did not last more than a few weeks, but they still merit some attention because they are an indication of the emerging politicization of the peasant movement and because they provide additional evidence of the tsarist regime's loss of authority. They sprang up in various parts of the country, but the one most frequently mentioned by historians is the Markovo Republic in Volokalamsk District only one hundred miles from Moscow. This republic seems to have lasted longer than most, from October 31, 1905, till July 18, 1906. The information on it is rather meager. Apparently, it incorporated six villages, and the local peasants refused to pay taxes and rents or report for army service. Generally, the republics came to an end as soon as army units appeared to repress them.

The immediate background to the upsurge of agrarian unrest in May 1906 was another poor harvest, the second in a row. Because food reserves were extremely low, a serious famine struck the Volga region—with a population of approximately twenty million—with particular ferocity, and without the emergency aid of the Red Cross and zemstvo activists a very large number of peasants would have perished. In the spring of 1906 there was a new element in the situation in many parts of the country: disgruntled peasants in the villages had been reinforced by a new and angry group—soldiers who had returned from the battlefields in Manchuria. Numerous observers noted that the former soldiers now played a significant role in the unrest. These men were, of course, young people, a group that was regularly in the forefront of the peasant movement. Older people

were more cautious, but many sympathized with the activists and joined them in their forays. In Tula Province, even seventy-five-year-old women were noticed among the militants. Women, it is worth noting, generally participated in large numbers, and occasionally they showed greater fervor than young people. Teachers, doctors' assistants (*feldshers*), and even sextons also took part, as did workers in the cities who had returned to their villages.

The convocation of the Duma served in various ways to stimulate unrest in the countryside. For one thing, it aroused peasant interest in national affairs. Before the Russo-Japanese War and the revolutionary events of 1905, relatively few newspapers reached the villages. By 1906, however, newspapers and journals were available in 79 percent of them, and many now regularly received two to three journals. Newspapers, moreover, would be passed from one person to another, and from one village to another, and often literate villagers would read the papers to several peasants who were illiterate, usually at "political clubs" that met in village tearooms. Thus, despite the government's attempts to reduce the flow of information, peasants were remarkably well informed about the debates in the Duma, and although the Law of February 20, 1906, prohibited the sending of petitions to the legislature, villagers throughout the country bombarded deputies with cahiers. Some petitions had been sent to the capital by peasants in 1905, but the practice became widespread only 1906, when, it has been estimated, several thousand were received by officials in St. Petersburg.

The cahiers were often written by local intelligentsia, but there is little doubt that the cahiers represented the views of the people, who would gather at meetings to give their approval to the documents, which provide much accurate information on the mood and attitudes of the countryside. By and large, the peasants placed great hopes in the Duma, certain that it would meet their demands, the most numerous and urgent of which was for land. The peasants also asked for political and social reforms, but there were some differences among villagers on these issues. Not all the cahiers were grounded in humane and liberal principles.

It is worth describing at length two petitions from different parts of the country, for they reveal not only the peasants' concerns but also their deep feelings of despair. The first, sent to the Duma on February 8, 1906, by the peasants and townsmen of Sviatii Krest, Stavropol Province, read as follows:

The land, like air, water, and sunshine is a gift of God, and no one may dispose of it at will or exploit it. God created the world and gave human beings full control [of the land]; [but] God created neither nobles nor peasants; we are all God's children, and we have a right to demand our father's inheritance, and God is the

father of all of us. Are we peasants really only his stepsons, and the nobles his sons? This is gross injustice. Whoever works the land should have as much of it as he and his family cultivate.

The second petition is striking because it demonstrates the peasants' hope that the Duma would promote their interests. Written on May 28, 1906, by the peasants of the village of Vtory Birki, Kiev Province, that petition appealed

to you, deputies of Kiev Province who are unknown to us, to propose to you that you firmly defend the interests of the people, that you protect us from further arbitrary rule. Here in our country, we are not sure that tomorrow we will not be plundered and that our property will not be burned, we are not confident that tomorrow our wives and children will not be violated by ferocious Cossacks and their commanders. . . . We hear the moans of villages that are starving in 150 districts. We hear the weeping of fathers and children who have lost their kin. Our hearts are lacerated from these moans and tears; we are in no condition to endure this any longer. . . . We suggest that you join the Trudovik group and fight for a Constituent Assembly, for full freedom, for all the land. . . . We for our part will keep an eye on your activities, and in case of need we will support you, even if this will cost us our lives.

Other cahiers were less emotional, but an overwhelming majority focused on similar issues. A few urged the Duma not to grant amnesty to political prisoners and not to press for the elimination of the emergency legislation or the State Council. These demands were in the resolution adopted by a meeting of 840 people in Nogutsk (a village of nine hundred households), Stavropol Province, which also urged that "under no circumstances" should Jews be given equal rights, "since these people seek to gain power over us; they wish to destroy the existing state system in Russia and to arrange things so that Jews will govern Russia in place of God's anointed." Moreover, "all non-Russians and persons of Jewish nationality who have been converted from Judaism to our faith" should be excluded from the State Duma. The bureaucracy and the military services "should be composed of Orthodox Russian men—not foreigners, or non-Orthodox people, or people of Jewish origin who converted to Christianity, or of Poles." Yet, inexplicably, the petition from Nogutsk ended with a request that contradicted these prejudices: "Publish a law on the equality of all citizens."

Two further generalizations about the extensive peasant participation in the cahiers campaign are noteworthy. In the first place, the intelligentsia's role in drafting the petitions produced a change, even if on a modest scale, in the relations between the villagers and outsiders. The political and cultural isolation of the countryside, deeply rooted in Russian history, began to break down. Second, the peasants' attitude toward their

ruler had visibly changed. In composing their petitions in 1905, the peasants had tended to pour out their hearts to their Little Father and to ask him to redress their grievances. Now, a year later, the Duma had emerged as a new center of political power and the politicization of the peasantry had produced a distinctly different attitude: many villagers were no longer content to rest their hopes for "land and liberty" or for the satisfaction of other demands on the magnanimity of the tsar; they had decided to appeal to their representatives to take control of affairs and to do their bidding.

Some Duma representatives regularly visited the countryside and did their best to heighten the peasants' political awareness. On occasion they went so far as to encourage them to engage in armed actions against the authorities. This only reinforced the conviction of officials at all levels of government that the Duma was determined to drive the masses toward violence.

To be sure, there was less destruction and burning of landlords' estates, which had been a distinctive feature of the unrest in 1905. Now, in 1906, peasants focused more on such actions as carting off of hay, illegal felling of timber, unlawful grazing on meadows, and the refusal to pay taxes. In addition, a major form of unrest in 1906 was the agricultural strike, a weapon whose effective use requires a considerable degree of restraint, political sophistication, and organization. Apparently, peasants resorted to strikes in 1906 to avoid the severe repression they had endured in the late 1905. Fearful that the new weapon would pose a "serious danger" to the national economy, the Council of Ministers on April 17, 1906, issued "Regulations Against the Rise of Strikes by Agricultural Workers." Anyone instigating a strike would be subject to imprisonment for a period ranging from six months to one year; anyone guilty of damaging property during a strike would face imprisonment for three to six months; and anyone who took the initiative in organizing agricultural workers for collective action would be subject to a prison term ranging from sixteen months to four years. These were harsh measures, but their deterrent effect was slight.

There are no statistics on the total number of agricultural workers who participated in strikes—for a shorter workday, raises in pay, reduction of rents, and sometimes also for the removal of the Goremkin government—but the seriousness of the form of unrest is beyond dispute. In Belorussia, for instance, work stoppages in the villages, easily the single most frequent form of disorder, accounted for close to one-fourth of all the unrest in the spring of 1906. In midsummer, the government warned local officials that although such "acts of violence" were initially inspired by economic considerations, they "quickly assumed a social character and cannot be tolerated," lest "order and calm" be undermined. People

on strike should be prosecuted, and strike leaders quickly exiled. "In every case, suppress [strikes] at the very beginning so as to keep them from developing and eliminate the possibility of their being repeated."

Applying the same repressive measure it had used so effectively in 1905 was not an option for the government. Soldiers and policemen could stop peasants from looting, but it was much more difficult for them to force peasants to work. The events in the village of Turii in southwest Russia are a case in point. After a strike that lasted three weeks, the authorities summoned a squadron of Ingush soldiers, who immediately arrested strikers and beat them mercilessly. But still no one went to work and the village came to a standstill. To escape the beatings, many peasants fled to the woods. When the managers of the estates realized that the use of soldiers did not work, they accepted the conditions of the workers and the strike ended. In a fair number of regions, agricultural strikes ended peacefully, and it was not uncommon for workers in the villages to score at least partial victories.

By midsummer of 1906, the second wave of the peasant movement had pretty much run its course, though this does not mean that the peasants were now content. Indeed, isolated disturbances broke out in the second half of that year and flared up again in the spring and summer of 1907, but in fury, intensity, and scope these incidents did not approach the turbulence of the two previous waves of agrarian turbulence.

INDUSTRIAL UNREST

The industrial proletariat, which had been a critical force in the protest movement during the last three months of 1905, played a secondary, though not insignificant, role in 1906. The strike movement declined in the face of government repression, economic privation, and sheer exhaustion. From a high of well over two million people on strike in October 1905, the movement by February and March had declined to roughly 27,000 and 51,000 respectively. In April 1906, the number of strikers in industrial establishments rose to 220,000 and the figure stayed high for the next three months: 157,000; 101,000; and 169,000. According to one scholar, workers emphasized political demands in over 40 percent of the strikes during the months from May through August, and economic demands in the rest, a clear indication that the spirit of activism among urban worker had not been extinguished in 1906.

Although workers initially disdained the Duma and many refused to participate in the elections, once it had assembled, they tended to take a

1. This figure included a good many white-collar employees.

more favorable view of it. Meetings of workers in numerous towns and cities sent messages to deputies urging them to adopt measures for the improvement of working conditions. At the Fourth (Unification) Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Party in Stockholm in April 1906, even Lenin indicated a shift of attitude toward the Duma, and five months later he came out for participation in future elections on the ground that the Duma could be useful, not as a legislative body but as a platform for Social Democratic agitation.

Workers quickly took advantage of the law of March 4 on trade unions that, for all its limitations, legalized a range of union activities and thus enabled workers to channel their energies—previously devoted largely to protest—into organizational work to an extent unknown in Russia. During the next fifteen months fifty-nine unions were legally recognized in St. Petersburg, and another seventeen remained unregistered; in Moscow, sixty-four were officially sanctioned, and eleven remained unregistered. The forty-two unions in the capital on which figures are available attained a peak total membership of fifty-five thousand; in Moscow the high (also for forty-two unions) was fifty-two thousand. True, the movement incorporated only a small share of the workforce—9 percent in St. Petersburg, and 10 percent in Moscow but these are nevertheless impressive statistics; in Germany in 1907 only about 22 percent of all industrial laborers belonged to unions. In the Russian Empire as a whole in 1907, the membership of the 273 registered unions came to over one hundred six thousand. There is no hard information on the size of the remaining 631 unions, but it is likely that by early 1907 the membership of all the unions exceeded three hundred thousand.

Even though unions continued to be harassed in myriad ways—searches, confiscations, prohibitions of meetings, and arrests of officers were common—they made distinct progress in defending worker interests in collective negotiations with employers. They also became important as cultural institutions: they organized lectures, concerts, and meetings to discuss issues of concern to the rank and file. Many unions established their own libraries and reading rooms, and quite a few published newspapers. The aim of union officials, a large number of whom were Social Democrats or Socialist Revolutionaries (at least in the two largest cities of the empire), was to instill a sense of class solidarity in the workers and to reduce the likelihood of their acting on whim.

On one issue that affected workers with special force in 1906—unemployment—they exhibited a notable degree of activism: they launched the first campaign ever in Russia to secure relief from the authorities. The rapid rise of unemployment was pervasive in the cities in 1906. The precise numbers are in dispute: the highest estimate for St. Petersburg is forty

thousand, the lowest fifteen thousand. The estimates for Moscow range from twenty to twenty-three thousand; in Odessa more than twelve thousand were without work. Statistics for other cities are hard to come by, but there is no doubt that the number of unemployed had risen sharply in many of them. The estimate of the total number without work in the entire empire ranges from one hundred twenty-nine thousand to three hundred thousand—out of a total industrial force of at most three million. Because of widespread famine in the countryside, a return to the villages was for many of the unemployed not a realistic option.

A recession and the addition to the labor market of soldiers returning from the Far East were primary causes of unemployment, but there was another factor: the dismissal of many workers for having taken part in political strikes or for participating in political activities generally. Whatever the reason, the plight of the unemployed was dreadful. Many of them went hungry and turned to begging, as it became increasingly difficult to obtain food on credit. And the canteens, supported by unions, private charities, and contributions from city councils or zemstvos, could not cope with the growing number of indigent people who appeared for free meals. The authorities in the capital showed little sympathy and often treated the unemployed contemptuously, as potential troublemakers.

Anarchists and terrorists tried to enroll the unemployed into their movements, but despite the widespread despair their success was very limited. Most men without jobs preferred to place their hopes in more constructive action, which began to take shape in early 1906 at the various canteens in the capital—twenty-four in all—that provided free dinners to more than nine thousand people. During mealtime, informal meetings would be held to discuss actions that might be taken to deal with the crisis. Two ideas emerged—to form a soviet of the unemployed, and to ask the City Council to set up a public-works program—but no one knew how to proceed. An item in the daily press provided an opening for an approach to the St. Petersburg City Council. The newspapers reported that the council had voted to award a contract worth several million rubles to the Westinghouse Company to build an electrical tram system for St. Petersburg. Industrialists were outraged that such a lucrative contract had been awarded to foreigners, and many unemployed workers at the canteens contended that if that much money was available, it should be used to create jobs for them.

After several meetings, men and women at some canteens elected representatives to a "Soviet of the Unemployed" to apply pressure on local officials in their behalf. The soviet wasted no time in drafting a petition for submission to the City Council. "We are not asking for charity," the petition stated, "but for our rights, and we will not be satisfied with crumbs. The public works that we demand should begin immediately. All

unemployed in Petersburg should be given work. Everyone must receive adequate pay." If the demands were not met, the petition continued, the people themselves would appear at the City Council to press their case. The soviet then distributed ten thousand copies of the petition to drum up support; both unemployed and employed workers responded enthusiastically. More extensive and more formal elections for delegates to the soviet were now held; workers with jobs chose one delegate for every five hundred employees at their factories, and the jobless chose one for every one hundred fifty of their number. Between ninety and one hundred thousand participated in the elections.

On March 28 a delegation from the soviet of fifteen people appeared at the building of the City Council to lobby for the petition, and it succeeded quickly in securing a meeting with members of the council, in large part because the plight of the unemployed had gained considerable publicity in newspapers and sympathy from middle-class groups as well as from several Kadets alarmed at the large number of people without jobs. Before the meeting, the City Council decided in executive session to adopt a conciliatory stance. After the soviet's delegates outlined their demands in rather strong, even provocative, language, the spokesperson for the council announced that the city soon expected to employ four to five thousand people to construct and repair canals, bridges, and the harbor. Moreover, shortly after the meeting, the City Council unanimously voted to form a commission, to include some workers' representatives, and to implement a public-works program. It assigned five hundred thousand rubles to the program and allocated additional funds for public relief. During the next few weeks, endless conflicts arose over who qualified for jobs and relief, but by mid-July some public-works programs began to operate, though not on the scale demanded by the Soviet of the Unemployed. By October close to four thousand people had obtained work. In addition, the City Council provided funds that enabled the soviet to administer a total of thirty-two canteens, at which more than sixteen thousand people were given free meals each day. Furthermore, rent subsidies were given to several thousand families; in all, about thirty-six thousand people benefited from the council's aid. In the fall of 1906, however, the program declined precipitately, in large measure because of a drift to the right by the authorities, who approved ever smaller amounts of money for public works and aid to the needy. To make matters worse, bitter quarrels between leaders of the soviet over the mishandling or misappropriation of funds weakened the organization, which continued to function until late 1907 but was never again as influential as in the spring of 1906.

Organized movements of unemployed workers made their appearance in at least ten other cities, including Moscow, Kharkov, Tiflis, Baku, and

Saratov, and each made demands similar to those of the Soviet of the Unemployed in the capital. Invariably, city councils pleaded insolvency and delayed as long as possible before granting any aid to the indigent. Still, in Moscow, Tiflis, and Saratov and in a few other cities modest publicworks programs were established, and some help was given to canteens to provide free meals to the unemployed.

LAWLESSNESS

General lawlessness—political terrorism, ordinary criminality, and rightwing hooliganism—remained at a high pitch in the spring and summer of 1906. Hardly a day passed without a newspaper report on the murder of a policeman, senior official, or innocent citizen. In such an atmosphere of hatred, incitement to murder, and official tolerance of lawlessness, an explosion of mass violence was almost inevitable. The explosion erupted on June 1 in the form of an anti-Jewish pogrom in Bialystok, a city of about forty-four thousand Jews and twenty-one thousand gentiles in Grodno Province, probably the single most ghastly incident of ethnic violence to date. Eighty-eight people were killed (six of them non-Jews) and about seven hundred were wounded, and 169 shops and houses were plundered, among them the largest stores in the city. Duma deputies, stunned by the initial reports from the city, immediately formed a committee to investigate the incident.

It turned out that the violence broke out during a religious procession of Catholics and Orthodox, the former to celebrate Corpus Christi and the latter to mark the founding of the Orthodox cathedral. Suddenly, revolver shots were heard and shouts resounded: "Beat the Jews!" The melee began immediately and spread quickly: "First of all," one newspaper reported, "the thugs flung themselves at Jewish hardware and armory stores, pillaged them, beat everyone with axes, crowbars, [and] slabs of iron, and right away set out for the jewelry stores." On one street, "they entered and pillaged virtually all the stores and private homes." Not a single policeman could be seen, and all the soldiers who had a few minutes earlier filled the streets had vanished. Members of the Jewish self-defense units with revolvers and knives in their hands moved against the thugs, initiating a struggle "for life and death." At this point dragoons appeared and fired ten to fifteen shots at Jews. "The entire city looked like a battlefield." The carnage continued for three days, though the first day was by far the most violent.

On the third day of violence the minister of internal affairs Stolypin

sent a telegram to all governors and city governors reminding them of their duty to suppress pogroms, whether directed at landlords or at Jews. Inaction or official connivance with the marauders, he warned, would have the "most serious consequences." By then Bialystok had been placed under martial law, and substantial military reinforcements had been sent to the city to maintain order.

Newspapers now began to carry articles indicating that local officials and respected citizens in Bialystok had either inflamed the population against the Jews or actually participated in the looting. And the senior official from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, E. V. Frish, who had been sent to Bialystok to conduct an investigation, confirmed that administrators and soldiers had indeed taken part in the rampage. Outraged by this news, the Duma devoted several sessions to the events in Bialystok, and the deliberations were among the stormiest in the history of the legislature. On June 8, Stolypin himself felt compelled to present the government's views on the pogrom. He assured the deputies that he would not tolerate illegal violence of any kind, and he conceded that mistakes had been by officials and policemen, who, he noted insensitively, had been the target of many terrorist attacks. The deputies were not impressed and interrupted the minister with shouts of "Enough!" and with so much noise that at one point the president called for order in the chamber.

The most dramatic point in the debate was the appearance of Prince S. D. Urusov, assistant minister of internal affairs for a few months in late 1905 and early 1906 and now a deputy who belonged to the moderately liberal Party of Democratic Reform. Urusov, who spoke from firsthand experience, asserted flatly that senior officials, though not necessarily the government itself, played a decisive role in fomenting pogroms throughout 1905 and in the early months of 1906. He went so far as to describe the pattern of the outbreaks, which buttressed his contention that they were the work of "some kind of uniform and widely planned organization." Then he referred to the revelation that had come to light the previous February, that a certain Captain M. S. Kommisarov had been in charge of a printing press, located in an out-of-the-way room in the Department of Police in St. Petersburg, that had been used to produce anti-Jewish proclamations. When someone stumbled on the press and asked Kommisarov what kind of work he did, he replied: "We can arrange any massacre you like; a massacre of ten or a massacre of ten thousand." Urusov warned that even a government responsible to the Duma could not prevent outbreaks of mass violence unless it purged the entire administration of the "dark forces" that would stop at nothing to maintain the old order. "Herein lies a great danger, and this danger will not disappear so long as in the direction of affairs and in the fortunes of

our country we continue to feel the influence of men who have the education of policemen and sergeants, and are *pogromshchiki* on principle."

Urusov's speech was received with "endless and thunderous applause" and, according to one observer, "had a greater effect than any other in the First Duma." The Kadets introduced a resolution, adopted on July 7, demanding that everyone responsible for the violence in Bialystok be brought to justice and that the government resign. The government ignored the second part of the resolution and took two years before preferring charges against thirty-six rioters in Bialystok. Several of the accused failed to show up in court, and fifteen were acquitted. Of the rest, one received a jail sentence of three years, and thirteen were handed lighter jail sentences, ranging from six months to one year.

For about three months in 1906 it seemed as though the authorities might confront a series of challenges within the military services comparable to those it had faced in the fall of 1905. There were twenty-four mutinies in May, eighty-four in June, and forty-one in July. Apparently, the deliberations in the Duma had an effect on many soldiers and sailors similar to that of the promulgation of the October Manifesto. Just as the Manifesto appeared to signal a collapse of the old order, so the actions of the Duma seemed to suggest that the government was incapable of quelling political challenges to its authority. Under the circumstances, men in uniform assumed that the military authorities too could be defied with impunity.

Moreover, there was evidence of mounting revolutionary propaganda in the army and navy in the first six months of 1906. At least seventy-two Social Democratic and forty-five Socialist Revolutionary military organizations were active in early summer. Somewhere between one thousand and thirteen hundred civilians worked in these organizations, distributing leaflets and conducting discussions of political issues. They published thirty newspapers addressed specifically to soldiers. It has been estimated that at least twenty thousand and perhaps as many as thirty thousand men in uniform belonged to military organizations under the control of one or another revolutionary movement. Although the unrest in the military was not as extensive as in 1905, in one respect it was more troublesome for the authorities: the uniformed men who now joined the protest movement tended to place greater emphasis on political issues.

The minister of internal affairs, Stolypin, sent frequent and alarming reports to General Rediger on the success of revolutionary agitators. Rediger himself, it was rumored at the time, warned the tsar that because of the ferment in the army it might be unsafe to use soldiers to dissolve

the Duma, should that become necessary. Indeed, many soldiers closely followed the debates in the Duma and sent messages of support to the deputies. "Do your work, for which you were sent by our fathers," men in the Vladikavkaz garrison told the deputies in late May: "Obtain everything that our fathers have bid you—may Providence aid you in this—and we, their sons, will endeavor here not to allow into our weak heads the shameful thoughts the government is developing."

In the 149 mutinies that broke out between May and July, political demands figured prominently in at least 43, though very few involved violence. Among other things, the men demanded an end to the use of troops in police actions, the granting of freedom of assembly to civilians and soldiers, and the "implementation of all demands brought forth by the State Duma." As in 1905, the mutineers called for improvements in their conditions—they wanted higher pay and better food, better clothing and medical treatment, and free transportation while on leave, to mention only a few. Rediger did his best to isolate the military men from agitators and in June he ordered army officers to reduce as much as possible the number of soldiers used in the suppression of civilian unrest. In this regard, the civilian and military authorities faced a dilemma. They knew that assigning the army to police duties was undermining morale among the troops and that this could eventually pose a threat to the state. Nevertheless, the disturbances in the countryside and the unrest in the cities posed an immediate threat to the prevailing system of rule. True, the government might have enlarged the police forces, but the army was both a cheaper and a more efficient tool. A soldier was paid between six and twelve rubles a year, compared to two hundred to three hundred sixty earned by policeman. Moreover, a young, well-trained, and wellarmed soldier was more effective in crushing rural and urban unrest than a middle-aged policeman, who was usually supplied with outdated weapons.

As it turned out, the authorities in 1906 had no reason to question their decision to rely primarily on the army to quash disorder. The unrest in the army in June 1906 was serious, and it became even more serious in the month of July, but it did not undermine the tsarist regime. The mutinies were for the most part isolated incidents, and the mutineers failed to establish links with each other or with rebellious peasants and workers. At no time did a national leadership emerge that could provide direction to the protest movement in the army. Moreover, a substantial majority of soldiers remained loyal to tsarism in the sense that they obeyed orders to put down the few armed mutinies that occurred, and that was crucial in enabling the old order to weather the storm in the spring and summer of 1906.

DISSOLUTION OF THE FIRST DUMA

Throughout June and during the first week of July the political leadership of the country—at the court as well as within the government and in the Duma—was paralyzed. The authorities undertook very few legislative initiatives, and the Duma accomplished virtually nothing of importance. The temptation in official circles to deliver a decisive blow against the Duma was strong, but in view of the widespread unrest, the court decided on a more prudent course, to wait and see if some accommodation could be reached with the opposition.

The Duma's ineffectiveness cannot be ascribed to indolence. During the seventy-two days of its existence, it held forty sessions, most of them lasting at least five hours. The Stenographic Reports on its deliberations runs to more than two thousand pages. In addition, many deputies spent long hours at meetings of special committees discussing drafts of legislative proposals. And when deputies were not formally engaged in legislative work, they could be seen huddled in corridors debating tactics and evaluating the latest rumors about the next moves of the authorities. Frequently, party leaders met late into the night to map out strategy, and party fractions met regularly to decide how to vote on particular measures. Yet, the Duma's record of achievement was negligible. Of the twenty-nine legislative proposals introduced in the chamber, only two were ultimately approved, and only one of those actually became law. Its greatest success was to vote fifteen million rubles for relief for many thousands of citizens who faced a devastating famine, and in this instance both the State Council and the tsar gave their approval. Of the remaining twenty-seven proposals, not one was reported out of committee. Of the various bills submitted by the government, only one was discussed by the Duma. The rest were not even placed on the agenda. The Duma simply noted the receipt of the bills and then took no further action.

But the Duma did make extensive use of its authority to summon ministers or heads of departments to the chamber for questioning about allegations of illegal actions and abuses of power by officials. All told, more than four hundred such summonses, known as interpellations, were passed by the chamber, which comes to almost six a day. Virtually all of them touched on highly charged issues, and although the interpellations did not lead to legislation, they did give deputies an opportunity to attack the government where it was most vulnerable and to demonstrate their determination to defend the civil rights of the people.

In the end, however, Goremykin's government came to grief over the agrarian question. Still, it would be a mistake to dismiss the debates over

other issues—amnesty, capital punishment, the emergency regulations, and, above all, ministerial responsibility—as merely a cover for the only significant struggle, the struggle over the disposition of the nobility's land. An overwhelming majority of the deputies felt deeply about civil liberties and human rights, as is clear from the passionate and frequent debates on these topics. Moreover, it is arguable that the Kadets placed greater weight on transforming the legislature into a body with sovereign powers than on instituting specific reforms, including agrarian reforms. In any case, for the Kadets the achievement of such a transformation was intimately linked with the achievement of economic and social reforms. One would inevitably lead to the other. By the same token, there is little evidence to suggest that Tsar Nicholas and his senior advisers were any less concerned about retaining the upper hand politically than they were about protecting the property rights of the nobility. There is no reason to assume that if the Duma and the government had feuded only over political power and human rights, the conflict between them would have been markedly less acrid.

Nonetheless, the Duma did devote far more time to the agrarian issue than to any other, and conflict over it was the immediate cause of the final rupture between the tsarist authorities and the legislature. The proceedings were extremely complicated, in part because the agrarian question was highly complex, and in part because several projects were introduced, none of them enjoying the support of a majority of the deputies. For the purposes of this study, it will suffice to consider only some of the major proposals.

The central premise of the Kadet proposal was to provide land for the landless and to increase the allotments of "land-starved peasants." This was to be accomplished by distributing state udel (holdings of the imperial family), cabinet (private imperial property), and monastic and church land, as well as privately owned land, which was to be confiscated "at state expense, to the extent necessary, with compensation of the present owners at just price." But some lands were to be exempt: for example, estates that possessed a "generally useful significance" and public lands that served a "social, sanitary, [or] educational" purpose. The Trudoviks introduced a "Land Socialization Bill" that stipulated that ultimately all land (including its minerals and waters) was to be handed over to the people, but only to those who worked the land with their own labor. The Trudoviks differed among themselves over the questions of compensation to landowners and in the end settled on a compromise, according to which the state, not the peasants, would compensate the owners, who would be deprived of all land that they could not farm on their own.

On May 19, the government reiterated its opposition to compulsory

expropriation, which it claimed would be harmful to the nation's economy. In an address to the Duma, the deputy minister of internal affairs, Gurko, argued that of the total amount of land available in European Russia, some 318 million desiatinas, only 43 million could be expropriated because the rest was already being cultivated by peasants or owned by them, or was in provinces where agriculture did not thrive. In fact, Gurko argued, it was likely that if the 43 million desiatinas of land were expropriated, the peasants' lot would worsen since such a drastic change in landownership would "undermine the most solvent forces in the country," the large landowners. Moreover, the low productivity of the peasants on the expropriated land would result in a reduction of the purchasing power of the country at large and thus would have the consequence of severely harming industry. Although Gurko's arguments were delivered in strident language, they were not entirely without merit. But he was known as a dogmatic reactionary and the deputies took delight in greeting his comments with shouts of "Resign! Resign!" Gurko had his revenge at the start of another appearance in the Duma by telling a minister sitting next to him in a voice loud enough so that several deputies could hear him, "Let us listen to the ravings of these hooligans."

On June 20, the authorities went over the heads of the deputies by issuing a declaration assuring the peasants that the tsar and his officials were deeply concerned for their well-being and that they intended to improve their conditions, but they also stated categorically that they would not do so by alienating privately owned lands. Instead, the government would buy land from private owners and make it available for purchase by peasants with the help of the Peasants' Land Bank, which was administered by the government. The government would also facilitate peasant migration to regions where land was readily available and give advice and help to peasants to improve their productivity.

As the angry deputies were preparing a response to the declaration, the court acted as though a peaceful resolution of the conflict between the government and the Duma might be possible. It indicated willingness to consider the formation of a new government acceptable to the opposition. It was assumed at the time that the court took this action because it had concluded that the legislature could not be dissolved "without risking an enormous convulsion." Whatever the reason, for about two weeks senior officials at court and several ministers were engaged in feverish negotiations with liberals and Octobrists about the appointment of a new ministry. The result was a deluge of clandestine meetings and rumors, implausible assertions, and misunderstandings by officials and liberals, not to mention the endless behind-the-scenes intrigues. To what extent the tsar was informed about these maneuvers and gave his approval to the

quest for an accord with the liberals is not clear. There is no doubt that he knew about some of the negotiations, and it is certain that he himself entered into a discussion with one leading member of the Union of October 17. Most likely, the tsar encouraged the negotiations to see where they would lead. Subjected to a barrage of contradictory advice, unable to choose among alternate policies, Nicholas probably decided to exhaust all possibilities. At the very least, he would be able to delay a final decision on how to deal with the Duma. Shilly-shallying on the issue was certainly in keeping with this conduct of affairs of state.

In the end, after the involvement of such major figures as the tsar himself, Miliukov, D. F. Trepov, Stolypin, Ermolov, Shipov, Muromtsev, and Izvolskii, the negotiations came to naught. The differences over such fundamental issues as the powers of the Duma, amnesty for political prisoners, and the expropriation of private property were simply too great. That the chasm between the tsar and Duma was also unbridgeable became clear beyond any question when the Duma, late in June, resumed debate of the agrarian question. The deputies drafted an "Appeal to the People," which amounted to an attempt to bypass the government. After charging the authorities with having undermined "the faith of the people in a solution of the agrarian question by legislative means," the appeal assured the people that the Duma was working on an agrarian proposal calling for some expropriation of private property. The appeal ended with a statement that on the surface appeared to be moderate but struck the authorities as a veiled incitement to unrest: "The State Duma hopes that the population will calmly and peacefully await the completion of the work on the promulgation of such a law." The implication seemed to be that if the Duma's measure did not become law, the people need no longer restrain themselves. The comments of several deputies confirmed that this was a correct reading of the appeal.

The appeal passed in the Duma by a vote of 124 to 53; 101 deputies abstained and many others remained outside the hall during the vote because they considered the statement insufficiently militant. Since a measure had legal standing only if it received at least 164 votes, the government could not legitimately claim that the appeal had actually been adopted. But this was beside the point for Goremykin and Stolypin, who now advised the tsar to dissolve the legislature. Nicholas agreed and also agreed with Goremykin's recommendation that he step aside as prime minister, to be succeeded by Stolypin.

The authorities took elaborate measures to prevent resistance to the dissolution. The ministers were directed to go about their business as usual so as to deflect any suspicion. And to further lull suspicions, Stolypin informed Muromtsev that he would appear at the Duma on July

10 to respond to the interpellation on the Bialystok pogrom. Then, when Muromtsev at the urging of his colleagues requested an audience with the tsar to head off dissolution, the prime minister informed him that he would be received at the Winter Palace on July 9.

Astonishingly, the deceptions worked despite the fact that the preparations undertaken by the government were extensive and little disguised. On July 8 fresh troops from various cities arrived in the capital, raising the number to twenty-two thousand. The railway stations were occupied by armed guards, and on July 7 a patrol boat and a cruiser could be seen on the Neva. On the same day, the police in St. Petersburg began to close down radical newspapers and to arrest leading Social Democrats and Socialist Revolutionaries.

Early Sunday morning of July 9 policemen and soldiers surrounded the Tauride Palace with instructions not to permit anyone to enter the building, not even to pick up personal belongings. At the same time, the government distributed two documents throughout St. Petersburg: a ukase ordering the dissolution and setting February 20 as the date for convoking a new Duma as well as a manifesto explaining the action. St. Petersburg was placed under Extraordinary Security, which meant that anyone offering resistance to the authorities would be subject to trial by a military court. The city governor of St. Petersburg prohibited all meetings, processions, displays of flags, and public singing, as well as the distribution of unauthorized appeals or proclamations. To a British correspondent, it seemed as though "the palmy days of autocracy have been revived."

The deputies were in a quandary. They could not prevent the closing of the legislature, and, in fact, several of them (including Miliukov) even acknowledged that the government was within its rights in dissolving it. Nonetheless, some militant response seemed to be called for, and after agonizing for a few hours the Kadet leadership summoned a meeting of legislators in Vyborg, Finland, where the Russian police had no jurisdiction and where the local authorities tended to be less repressive. At about 9:00 PM of the day of dissolution 185 deputies, slightly more than onethird of the chamber's total membership, arrived at the Hotel Belvedere, a second-class provincial hotel. After hours of rancorous debate, the deputies adopted a manifesto entitled "To the People from the People's Representatives," which denounced the government's action and called on citizens to offer passive resistance by refusing to pay taxes or to serve in the military. "No force," the manifesto predicted, "can withstand the united and unwavering will of the people." It was a militant call to action. True, the rump Duma did not advocate an armed uprising, as the soviet had done eight months earlier, but the Vyborg Manifesto was nevertheless

a radical step in that it urged the people to defy the law and to oppose an official action that could not be regarded as illegal.

It was in several respects an ill-considered move. Although the opposition succeeded in quickly distributing the manifesto, there were no large-scale protests or widespread civil disobedience and only a few public protests. Exhausted from a year and a half of turbulence, confronted in the cities with the threat of unemployment, the masses in 1906 were much more reluctant than they had been in 1905 to defy the authorities. Moreover, an effective campaign of passive resistance requires extensive preparation and organization. Surprisingly, the Kadets did not seem to realize this, for they had done virtually nothing to prepare the ground for an organized response to the dissolution. They simply assumed that the masses were still in a militant and activist mood.

Less than a week after the meeting in Vyborg, the Kadets themselves in effect conceded that they had misjudged the national mood and began to back away from the manifesto. On July 15 the central committee met at Miliukov's dacha in Terioki and voted not to adopt the manifesto as official policy and not to continue distributing it to the population. Then, at a series of "more or less conspiratorial" meetings of party activists it became ever more evident to the Kadet leaders that the masses were not prepared to engage in passive resistance on a large scale. One activist after another spoke evasively about the attitude of the peasants in their regions or stated categorically that the people showed no interest in openly opposing the authorities. According to Miliukov, the party had no choice but to abandon the tactic adopted at Vyborg. But a formal renunciation of the tactic was embarrassing. The Kadets extricated themselves from the dilemma by announcing that the Vyborg Manifesto was legitimate under the conditions prevailing immediately after the dissolution and that if no new elections were held the tactic of passive resistance would be implemented.

Not surprisingly, the conservatives welcomed the news of the dissolution and gloated in unseemly fashion. The lead article of *Moskovskie vedomosti*, a reactionary paper, on July 11 was captioned GOOD NEWS, and the first lines read as follows:

There is no Duma!
The Duma no longer exists!
The two-month disgrace that has burdened Russia has ended!

Another article on the same page began with the words: "The seditious Duma remained seditious to the end." The Monarchist Party in numerous cities sent telegrams to the tsar congratulating him and expressing the hope that the electoral law would be revised to ensure the election of a more trustworthy Duma.

The liberal press went to the other extreme, arguing first that the dissolution would eventually unleash a new wave of disturbances, and second that the people had serious doubts about the government's promise that a new Duma would actually be elected. In fact, the new prime minister, though a conservative who was infuriated by the Vyborg Manifesto, had no intention of calling off the elections.

A New Government Takes Command

When Stolypin arrived in St. Petersburg in April 1906 to join Goremykin's cabinet as minister of internal affairs, no one expected him to emerge as the leader of the government, as the most resonant voice of the old order and as one of the most imposing statesmen of imperial Russia. Although he had occupied important positions in the bureaucracy as a marshal of the nobility and governor of Grodno and Saratov, he had never served in the capital, and he knew little about the workings of the central administration. By all accounts, during the first weeks of his residence in the capital, he maintained a low profile and rarely took part in the cabinet's deliberations. No one could be sure whether he was timid or simply reluctant to speak out until he felt sure of his ground.

Stolypin began to come into his own early in June with his first speeches in the Duma. He proved to be a man with strong convictions and a clear vision for Russia's future, a leader who did not fear to confront directly anyone who challenged his views or authority. He was also an outstanding orator with a ringing voice that could be heard in the legislature despite the frequent shouts and hissing. A talented phrasemaker, he seemed to enjoy tangling with the obstreperous Duma deputies. But in his personal dealings with individuals, he always gave the impression of being sincere and thus inspired "confidence and even affection."

Because of his eclectic views and policies, Stolypin evoked the most divergent assessments. Liberals and radicals dismissed him as an arch-reactionary, whereas most conservatives viewed him as a farsighted progressive, the only leader capable of extricating Russia from the morass. Since the late 1980s, Stolypin's standing in Russia has soared because many believe that had his policies been implemented Russia would have avoided the agonies of Bolshevism. None of these assessments by itself quite captures the man, for he was a rather complicated person. He was essentially a man of action whose views on society were based not on wide reading

or commitment to one ideological position but on practical knowledge he had acquired from his experiences as a public servant.

In some respects, the acclaim he received in late 1906 as Russia's Bismarck may be most apposite. Stolypin, too, was widely believed to be a "man of iron and blood," determined at all costs to impose his will on the country, and, like Bismarck, he was guided by two principal concerns: to strengthen the state and to preserve the existing political order. Again like Bismarck, he was prepared to use a variety of means—progressive as well as reactionary, legal as well as illegal—to achieve his goals. Despite his strong personality, he always remained loyal to the tsar, believing himself to be simply the "executor of his plans and commands." In this he differed from Bismarck, who, according to a contemporary journalist, "combined in his person both a powerful locomotive and the driver of the machine," whereas Stolypin "appeared to . . . be only the locomotive."

Within two days of assuming the post of prime minister, Stolypin sought to mobilize support among Western governments and liberals in Russia by assuring them that he was not a reactionary. In a lengthy interview with the correspondent of Reuters on July 13, he vowed to pursue a two-pronged approach in seeking to solve the country's problems: pacification and reform. But he left no doubt about his priorities: "The revolution must be suppressed, and only then will it be possible to establish the definitive and firm bases for the future regime." He defended the dissolution of the Duma as entirely constitutional, but insisted that he had no intention of abolishing it altogether. At the same time, he made it clear that he was not a "parliamentarist" because he did not believe in the political supremacy of the legislature. He was, instead, a "constitutionalist," that is, he wished to maintain the system of government affirmed by the Fundamental Laws of 1906: the monarch would retain his authority, but he would govern in accordance with the rule of law. Stolypin's overall program can perhaps be best described as that of an authoritarian reformer: authoritarian on political questions, reformist on social and economic questions.

In an endeavor to overcome society's distrust, Stolypin made another attempt to co-opt leading figures from the opposition into his government. By July 11, two days after he took office, he had made overtures to seven moderates, all men who had gone out of their way to shun any activity that could be construed as illegal. He did not approach the Kadets, whom he considered too radical. Reports on Stolypin's discussions with the moderates made their way into the daily newspapers, underlining the riskiness of the prime minister's initiative. If the negotiations yielded no results, his government's prestige would suffer a serious blow at the very moment it was trying to organize itself. The tsar took part in some of the

negotiations, but even his intervention did not lead to an agreement. There were two main sticking points: some moderates wanted Stolypin to commit himself to the immediate abolition of capital punishment, while others insisted that the prime minister agree to a speedy convocation of the Duma and to a common, and specific, program that would guide the cabinet. Both these demands were unacceptable to Stolypin, and would certainly have been rejected by the tsar because their implementation would have signified a further dilution of the autocratic structure of government. And given the passions aroused by the dissolution of the Duma, the moderates could hardly be expected to show more flexibility. Had they done so, their standing in society would have plummeted. Stolypin considered his failure to broaden the government a serious blow to his overall strategy. To make matters worse, newspapers immediately published rumors that the court had already decided, only twelve days after the change of government, to replace the prime minister with a dictator.

That was mere speculation that did not take into account Stolypin's resourcefulness. He reorganized the cabinet, which turned out to be more competent and energetic than Goremykin's, although the opposition did not consider it much of an improvement. True, Stolypin forced the resignation of two of the most outspoken reactionaries and replaced them with moderates who held some Octobrist sympathies. But most of the men appointed by Goremykin remained at their posts, and only three of them could be regarded as slightly moderate. P. Kh. Schwanebach, an unreconstructed reactionary and probably the most effective intriguer on the extreme right, continued to serve as state comptroller. He was not on good terms with the Stolypin and did his best to undermine him at court, where, it was generally known, he wielded considerable influence. The critical point was that the government still consisted of men drawn from the bureaucracy; as a consequence it could not command the trust of society.

At the very time Stolypin was conducting the negotiations with moderates, he faced his first major crisis as prime minister: an eruption of mutinies in Sveaborg, Kronstadt, and Revel (Tallinn) and political strikes in some cities that for a few days appeared to be the mass upheaval the radicals had been predicting and hoping for. Actually, although Social Democratic activists had been aware of deep disaffection among the sailors in the three ports, no firm plans had been made to launch an armed attack on the government. To the contrary, the outbursts of unrest caught the revolutionaries by surprise.

The troubles began in Sveaborg, where on July 15 a group of disaffected artillerymen met with employees of the mine company on the island

and a few other soldiers to discuss plans for an uprising. But before they could carry out any of their plans, about two hundred men of the mine company were arrested for some "minor misdeeds," setting off a mutiny by militants in the local garrison, who arrested two officers and seized control of several fortifications. Three thousand soldiers and sailors joined the mutiny, which quickly spread to Helsingfors, but many soldiers remained loyal to the government. Fierce fighting broke out among troops in Sveaborg and continued for two days, prompting the commander of the Sveaborg fortress to inform his superiors that the "situation was critical" and that he needed more troops to cope with the insurrection. Shortly, two companies of Finnish infantrymen arrived in Helsingfors and almost immediately the tide began to turn in favor of the government. During the night of July 19, the insurgents, demoralized, decided to surrender. A fair number of rebels somehow managed to escape, but hundreds were arrested.

In the meantime, violence erupted in Kronstadt, where on July 19, sailors, fired up by exhortations from eleven civilian militants, initiated another mutiny. Emboldened by claims that the uprising in Sveaborg was succeeding, that a decision had been reached by political activists to stage an uprising throughout the country, and that four large warships were ioining the insurgents, the sailors struck at midnight: they secured the support of sailors at various locations in the city, but most soldiers remained loyal to the government and no warship joined the uprising. Within short order, men from the 94th Enisei Regiment began to fire at the mutineers, who beat a hasty retreat. The insurgents' one triumph was their seizure of the Konstantin Fortress, but after four hours loyal soldiers forced them to surrender. The entire disturbance in Kronstadt, from plotting to surrender, lasted no more than thirty hours. The city was placed under martial law, loyal troops arrested more than sixteen hundred mutineers, and immediately after the uprising had been put down, military courts sentenced seven mutineers to death.

The last mutiny in this series took place on the cruiser *Pamiat Azova*, on July 20, but before the day was out the loyal men on the ship overwhelmed the mutineers and regained control. Late in the evening that day, two companies of infantry boarded the cruiser and arrested the insurgents and all those considered unreliable, a total of about two hundred sailors.

In view of the three mutinies' brevity, revolutionary activists, who against their better judgment supported the uprisings, were hard put to provide effective support. Still, they felt that they could not stand aside. On Lenin's recommendation, an appeal was issued (most probably on July 19) in the name of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, calling on the

workers to initiate a general strike. The Central Committee of the RS-DWP joined in the appeal, but when news reached St. Petersburg that the mutinies in Sveaborg and Kronstadt had been quelled, Lenin wanted to rescind the appeal. It was too late, however, to inform the local districts of the reversal. The fact that the strike had lost its raison d'être, support for the mutineers, may partially explain its ineffectiveness. In any case, in the capital only about one-third of the factories were seriously affected by the work stoppage, and within a few days even that strike began to peter out. On July 25 the Executive Committee of the soviet urged workers to end the walkout. But the government took no chances because, as Stolypin put it, "the smallest revolt in Petersburg will evoke an echo throughout the entire country and will compromise us in Europe." Two divisions of soldiers were brought to the capital to crush the protest movement quickly. Twenty-seven members of the St. Petersburg Committee of the RSDWP were quickly arrested and calm returned to the city.

Only in Moscow was there a protest movement of any significance, and even there it did not amount to a serious challenge to the authorities. The newly formed Soviet of Workers' Deputies asked workers to begin a strike on July 24 in support of the slogan "Creation of a Constituent Assembly by Means of a Revolution," but the action seems to have been effective only in the city's printing plants, all of which closed down. In other enterprises, most workers ignored the call to strike; all in all, only about 30,000 people in a total industrial workforce of about 160,000 laid down their tools. Within a day, as it became evident that there would be no general strike, some men began to trickle back to work and the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, claiming that the "partial action" had been useful, declared the strike ended as of 2:00 PM on July 26.

The failure of the July disturbances to develop into an insurrection on a national scale once again demonstrated how difficult it was to gauge the mood of the masses. On hearing the news of the disorders in Sveaborg, Miliukov, who had all along predicted a major upheaval in response to a dissolution of the Duma, declared that this "was the first sign of a terrible hurricane." When he realized how mistaken he had been, he drew comfort from the British prime minister's reaction to the dissolution: "The Duma is dead; long live the Duma." Miliukov indicated that "this happy formula . . . must be the central thought of all defenders of a popular legislature."

The main beneficiary of the uprising's quick collapse was the government, whose self-confidence was markedly bolstered. Stolypin attributed the failure of the left primarily to the firm measures taken by the authorities. As he put it, "This experience demonstrates anew that in Russia, more even than in other countries, order can be maintained only when

the government demonstrates its real power without fear and without being influenced by sentiment." He was convinced that the revolutionaries were now thoroughly demoralized and the "organs of order" revitalized. The masses had come to realize that a "strong arm" ruled over them, and this would make it possible to restore respect for order and private property and to institute far-reaching reform.

The government provided abundant evidence of its resolve to use its strong arm by severely punishing the mutineers and their sympathizers. Forty-five of the former were executed and another ninety were incarcerated for varying terms. Workers at the city's printing office in St. Petersburg who had gone out on strike had to sign a statement drawn up by the authorities indicating that they wished to be reinstated and that they promised not to participate in any sort of meeting or join any strike at an "establishment that is important to the public or the state." In the capital and in Moscow, the police deprived many unions of their legal status. In several other cities of the empire, the police actions against unions were somewhat less draconian but nevertheless stern.

Still, it is a mistake to conclude, as did many of his contemporaries and historians, that Stolypin was a bloodthirsty tyrant whose preferred method of dealing with the disaffected was brute force. In a circular of September 15 marked "Strictly Confidential" that was sent to all governors-general, governors, and city governors, he stressed that he had learned during his days as governor of Saratov that force alone would not suffice to defeat the opposition. He was convinced that the best way to defeat the radicals was to cut the ground from under them by depriving them of popular support. He listed a series of measures that officials should take to accomplish this. The circular was, in effect, a handbook on how to outfox and defeat the radical left.

For example, Stolypin urged local officials to familiarize themselves with the peasants' economic grievances by visiting areas of unrest, speaking directly to peasants, and then taking steps to help them. If the authorities discover that peasants in their regions were waiting for the Peasants' Bank to conclude loans for the purchase of land, every effort should be made to speed up the transactions. Governors must also be vigilant in protecting peasants against excessive and illegal demands by landlords. Furthermore, the police must be trained to take action to prevent disorder, not merely to put it down. They should maintain a close watch on agitators, and outsiders bent on troublemaking should be quickly removed from the region. And if the police learned of impending unrest in a locality, a senior official should immediately appear on the scene and attempt to restore calm. If that failed, the authorities should quickly send additional forces to the area, "keeping in mind that the appearance in

advance of sufficient forces can prevent a misfortune." But if violence nevertheless erupted, local officials must take the "most decisive measures."

Stolypin conceded that he was placing "a complicated task" on the representatives of governmental authority. But he assured them that they were being asked to perform a great service to the state, which was experiencing an "historical moment, when new political structures were emerging." Stolypin left no doubt in the minds of Russian civil servants that he would force them to change their customary ways of doing the government's business and that he planned to mobilize the entire bureaucracy in his drive to realize his vision for revitalizing the country. He believed that in large measure the revolutionaries' success over the preceding two years could be attributed to "the confusion, flabbiness, and apathy of government authorities." He wished to "lead the country from disturbance to tranquillity" by pursuing policies that would not only put an end to violence but also would inspire confidence in the government. "By stopping revolutionary actions at the very beginning," Stolypin told senior officials, "even with the most severe legal measures, local authorities instill in the population trust in the strength of the authorities and the stability of the law."

CURBING TERRORISM

After the collapse of the July uprising Stolypin could breathe easier about the threat of revolution, but not for long. He soon had to contend with another outbreak of violence, a new avalanche of terror. Emanating from both the right and left, the rash of murders and robberies appeared to be more brazen and widespread than ever before. The incidents of violence could not overturn the old order, but they could undermine its authority.

The first major incident during Stolypin's ministry occurred on July 18, when M. Ia. Herzenstein was assassinated while on vacation in Terioki, Finland. The extremists on the right despised Herzenstein with a special passion: a Kadet deputy representing Moscow, he had been the leading advocate in the Duma of the expropriation of privately owned land (with compensation). Moreover, by their lights he was a Jew, although he had in fact been converted to Russian Orthodoxy as a young man and had married a woman of the Orthodox faith. For the ultraconservatives, it sufficed that as a Duma deputy he had spoken out vigorously against the restrictions imposed on Jews and had denounced the anti-Jewish pogroms.

Society, already agitated over the dissolution of the Duma, was deeply affected by the murder, and many suspected the government of being

somehow implicated in the bloody business. To avoid a repetition of the violence that had accompanied the funeral of Bauman the previous October, Herzenstein's wife insisted on having her husband buried in Terioki. Even so, the funeral was attended by some ten thousand people, many of them prominent citizens who had come from St. Petersburg and other parts of the country. Numerous armed infantry and cavalry guarded the train station and the streets along the funeral procession. Groups of workers carrying red flags marched peacefully to the cemetery.

Various police investigations uncovered evidence that implicated the Union of the Russian People (URP) in the murder. It turned out that N. M. Iuskevich-Krasovskii, a close associate of A. I. Dubrovin, the leader of the URP, had given Aleksandr Kazantsev, an unemployed worker, one thousand rubles to kill Herzenstein. Iuskevich-Krasovskii and Kazantsev and two accomplices were put on trial, found guilty, and given prison sentences of various terms. It proved to be a wasted effort. After receiving petitions for clemency from the URP, the tsar pardoned the four men.

The URP's violence was more than matched by terrorism from the left. On August 13, the weekly journal *Pravo* reported that no fewer than twenty-eight assassinations had taken place during the preceding seven days in various cities of the empire. A week later the same journal reported another twenty-three such incidents. The daily press contained so many accounts of violence that its absence was considered newsworthy. "Today was an exceptional day [in Warsaw]," *Rech* reported on September 9; "there was no bloodshed and no robbery." Terrorists frequently targeted policemen of various ranks, but they also proved adept at gunning down senior officials. On August 13, they killed the notorious G. A. Min, and a day later they shot to death the acting governor-general of Warsaw, General A. V. Vonliarliarskii.

The discovery of numerous caches of weapons and evidence of the importation of arms from abroad suggested that the violence was likely to continue for a long time. Over a period of a few weeks the police in St. Petersburg discovered 223 bombs, more than 3,000 pounds of dynamite, 183 revolvers, 3,302 rifles, and about 400,000 cartridges. In mid-August the authorities learned that a shipment of arms valued at one hundred thousand German marks had recently been sent from Hamburg to Russia. In Kerch (Crimea) a barrel filled with revolvers and cartridges was found hidden in the main synagogue. In the Cherkassk region, a police search of peasant households in early August turned up more than 1,000 rifles and 486 revolvers. These finds suggested that something of a more massive nature than acts of individual terrorism was being planned.

The accounts of violence in the empire during the months from July to approximately November could be vastly expanded; virtually no region of the country remained entirely immune, though some areas were harder hit than others. But no purpose would be served, especially since no such account could be complete. The essential point is the pervasiveness of terror from below and the government's inability to put a stop to it. The police found it difficult to keep the terrorists under surveillance or to apprehend them because they operated in small groups, moved frequently from one location to another, and made their preparations very quickly before striking their targets. Nor could the police rely on their agents, who had supposedly penetrated the terrorist organizations; some of them turned out to be loyal to the radicals. And the terrorists seemed to have an ample supply of funds, most of them derived from so-called partisan actions, which were actually armed robberies.

Many of the assassinations were the work of the Maximalists, a tiny circle of fanatics who had split off from the Socialist Revolutionary Party. Their most notorious exploit was the bombing of Stolypin's summer home on August 12, an action that dramatized the danger to the government of the wave of violence sweeping the country. It led to one of the most sustained, brutal, and controversial campaigns of government repression.

August 12 was a Saturday, which is why Stolypin was at his dacha on Aptekarskii, one of the islands in the Neva River. As was his custom, he devoted several hours that day to receiving petitioners with special requests. Many people were therefore in and around the residence early in the afternoon, when there appeared three men, two in army officers' dress, each carrying a briefcase loaded with bombs. The guards became suspicious of one of the men, and when they tried to inspect his briefcase, all three, shouting revolutionary slogans, threw their bags to the ground, producing an enormous explosion. The assailants died on the spot, as did twenty-seven people standing nearby—among them General Zamiatin and three other senior officials. Another seventy were injured as the facade of the building completely collapsed. Among the seriously wounded were two of Stolypin's children.

The prime minister himself had escaped with nothing more than minor cuts on his face. He remained remarkably calm and as soon as he had arranged for the care of his children he took charge of the rescue efforts. Then, after moving his family to the Winter Palace for reasons of security, he continued his normal routine as head of government. Ironically, the terrorists unwittingly made it possible for Stolypin to enhance his reputation with his show of fortitude in the face of danger. Often criticized for his provincialism, he was now viewed by people at court and in society as a noble and courageous man deeply devoted to his country. "He gained in stature," Kokovtsov recalled, "and was unanimously acclaimed master of the situation."

Outraged by the incident, the extremists on the right demanded stern

measures to combat terror, including the establishment of a dictatorship. Stolypin did not favor such a drastic step, though he did want to take energetic action to root out lawlessness. But as he had repeatedly noted in his directives to governors and other officials, he did not want the government to act without due respect for the law. Even after the attempt on his life, he believed that the introduction of unduly harsh measures would probably not be effective and would only deepen the hostility of society toward the government. However, he came under intense pressure, primarily from the tsar, to be more forceful. Fearful that if he did not produce a new, tough policy the tsar would opt for a dictatorship, Stolypin reluctantly decided to bring the matter before the cabinet, where only one person, Minister of Justice Shcheglovitov, normally a hard-liner, shared his misgivings. The result was the notorious law on field courts-martial, which was adopted by the government on August 19 under the emergency authority granted it by Article 87 of the Fundamental Laws.

A sweeping measure, it quickly became one of the most contentious of Stolypin's entire tenure as prime minister. It applied to all areas under martial law or under Extraordinary Security—in effect, most of the empire. It stated that whenever it was "so obvious" that a civilian had committed a crime that no investigation was necessary, the case was to be handed over to a field court composed of five military officers selected by the governor-general, the chief local administrator, or individuals invested with comparable authority. Within twenty-four hours of his arrest, the accused would appear before the court, which must conclude the trial within two days. All the court's work must be conducted "behind closed doors" according to legal procedures established for the military services. Once sentences had been handed down, they "immediately acquire the force of law" and must be carried out within one day. Thus, the entire process from start to finish would take no more than four days.

The law was, of course, a travesty of due process and even of military justice. "If guilt was so obvious," one historian has noted, "why have trials at all?" Virtually all leaders of society and most of the press denounced the law in the strongest terms, and only one prominent figure in society, A. I. Guchkov, defended the measure. Guchkov believed the new procedures were necessary to put down the revolution and preserve the political freedoms secured since 1905. "I deeply believe in Stolypin," he said. "We have not had such able and talented persons in power." Shipov, the grand old man of the Union of October 17, was so appalled that he resigned from the party, warning that the law would promote "the process of demoralization and extremism in society." People from all corners of Russia sent telegrams to Shipov congratulating him on his break with the Octobrists.

The extensive and vivid coverage in the press of every detail that was known about the trials, the punishments, and the heroism of the victims was bound to inflame public passions. On September 14, *Tovarishch* announced that during the first sixteen days of their operation, the field courts had sentenced twenty-seven people to death and listed the cities in which the executions had been carried out. Shortly thereafter liberal newspapers periodically ran columns headed "Field Courts-Martial," in which they gave the gruesome details of the executions. In the period from October 6 to November 6, a total of 112 individuals were put to death, somewhat below the monthly average for the eight months the law remained on the books. By early February 1907 the total number of executions had reached 771. When the law was allowed to lapse on April 19, 1907, it had taken a terrible toll: 1,144 men had been executed, and 349 people had been sentenced to hard labor, 443 to prison terms of varying periods, and 7 to exile. Only 71 of the accused were acquitted.

The law on the field courts-martial left deep scars in society long after it had lapsed. During a debate in the Third Duma, in November 1907, the Kadet deputy F. I. Rodichev referred to the noose that had been used to hang the courts' victims as "the Stolypin necktie." For dramatic effect, he used his arms to indicate how the rope was fastened around the neck of the victims. Stolypin and the cabinet stalked out of the chamber, and subsequently the prime minister challenged Rodichev to a duel. Rodichev apologized to the prime minister, explaining that he had not intended a personal slur. Stolypin was mollified and accepted the apology, but the Duma voted overwhelmingly to suspend Rodichev for the next fifteen meetings of the legislature. The phrase "the Stolypin tie" came to symbolize the ruthlessness of Stolypin's regime.

Although Stolypin had initially been reluctant to introduce the field courts-martial, he now defended them as necessary in the struggle against terrorism. "You always think," Stolypin told a Kadet deputy who had asked him to intercede on behalf of several men thought to be innocent,

that you can ask the authorities to act on the basis of starry-eyed idealism. The authorities bear a terrible responsibility. I have the facts here . . . : you demand the abolition of the military field-courts, [but] look at this chart. Each day, the more the Duma deliberates [about abolishing capital punishment], the greater the number of victims, dead policemen, constables. Terror continues and grows. I have a responsibility in this. You do not have the right to demand that I abolish capital punishment.

Stolypin did face unrest of frightening proportions, but it is not at all evident that his government's measures were effective. None of the figures on the frequency of terror before and after the draconian law were conclusive. In the autumn of 1906, the British ambassador to St. Petersburg,

who closely followed the implementation of the law on field courts-martial, offered an astute assessment of its impact on the country. He granted that the measure may have reduced terror and that "public opinion is not, for the moment, revolutionary, as it was a year ago, but it may be doubted whether it is for that reason any more reconciled to a continuance of the present regime."

The last point is critical. Even if the authorities succeeded in reducing lawlessness through its new instrument, pacification achieved by such means was bound to widen the chasm between state and society. Admittedly, reliance on due process by the government would have been more expensive, since it would have required a larger police force and an expanded judiciary. But such an approach to disorder would have gained the sympathy of large sectors of society. Equally important, it would probably have engendered a greater respect for the law. As the prime minister himself rightly saw, the traditions of the country and the pervasive hostility toward authority were major obstacles that would have to be overcome if he was to succeed in his efforts to create a state based on the rule of law. Lawless conduct by the government made matters worse. It served as a bad example and impeded the emergence of a genuine sense of citizenship.

The law on field courts-martial was only the most dramatic and most draconian aspect of Stolypin's campaign against the opposition. Immediately after the dissolution of the Duma, he initiated a crackdown against the press that continued for months. Determined to prevent the dissemination of the Vyborg Manifesto, he ordered his subordinates to secure signed statements from all owners of printing presses in the country that they would not print the document. In addition, the police conducted innumerable searches of offices and private homes and arrested thousands of citizens suspected of being "untrustworthy."

The government's campaign was directed with special rigor against the Kadets. On July 11, two gendarmes appeared at the offices of the Kadets' "central club" in St. Petersburg and closed it down. Policemen constantly patrolled the street in front of the building to prevent anyone from entering, and within a few days district clubs in the capital were also closed. Late in the summer, Stolypin refused to permit the Kadets, never registered as a legal party, to hold a congress, and early in October, the Council of Ministers issued a circular to officials ordering them to dismiss from government service anyone who belonged to the Kadet Party.

Punishing the men who had signed the Vyborg Manifesto became something of an idée fixe with Stolypin. He persisted in regarding the former deputies as unreconstructed revolutionaries, even though the Kadet Party had within a matter of weeks decided not to pursue the tactic of passive disobedience. First, he urged governors to take "the most decisive measures" against former deputies who were circulating the manifesto among the peasants and agitating for militant action against the government; this was directed mainly at the parties to the left of the Kadets. Then the government brought formal charges under Article 129 of the Criminal Code against everyone (about 230) who had signed the document. It was a year and a half before the case came to trial, but in the meantime the accused were disqualified from standing for election to the Second Duma. The former deputies were tried not for drafting the manifesto but for conspiring to distribute it, a more serious charge that carried the penalty of imprisonment and deprivation of political rights. A total of 166 were found guilty, sentenced to prison for three months, and prohibited from engaging in political activities.

THE TURN TO REFORM

Faithful to the promise he had made on assuming the leadership of the government not to rely only on repression to pacify the country, Stolypin sought to introduce some modest legal reforms. In mid-October 1906 the government issued a ukase lifting various restrictions on Old Believers and other dissenting sects, recognizing them as legitimate associations whose rights would be virtually equal to those of the official Orthodox Church. But another reform proposal along these lines, lifting some restrictions on the Jews, ran afoul of the tsar's prejudices.

Whether Stolypin was well disposed toward Jews is still a matter of dispute. Some contemporaries accused him of hostility toward them, whereas others hailed him as their friend. He himself insisted that he was "by no means an anti-Semite," and in a private note for his own eyes only he stated that it was wrong to "arouse and embitter a race of five million people," and that the government cannot tolerate "a situation under which a part of its citizens can justly consider itself offended and looks for relief in violence." Still, he maintained that it would be unwise "to solve the Jewish question by one stroke of the pen as absolute justice would demand." Such an action would not serve the interests of the Jews, he argued, for it would arouse popular hostility toward them and would provoke a new round of pogroms. Instead, he proposed abolishing some of the most egregious restrictions imposed on them. Thus, although he indicated that he would retain the Pale of Settlement as well as the law

prohibiting Jews from buying or leasing land in the rural regions of the Pale, he would permit those Jews who had engaged in trade outside the Pale for ten years to remain outside it. And in those areas within the Pale where Jews were allowed to engage in trade and industry, various restrictions would be abolished, placing them "on a nearly equal footing with other Russians." The official documents of Jews who had converted to Christianity would no longer indicate the original religious affiliation. Stolypin also intended to submit to the next legislature reform proposals on other aspects of the Jewish question. There was nothing very farreaching in all this, but the adoption of the reforms would have pointed to a shift in government direction on a contentious issue.

Before Stolypin submitted his modest measure to the tsar, he sought the approval of his cabinet, whose deliberations early in October demonstrated that the very mention of the Jewish question aroused the deepest passions in government circles. During spirited debates several ministers expressed their dislike for the Jews and their reservations about lifting any restrictions on them, but in the end they all agreed with Stolypin that the measure should be sent to Nicholas, in part because they wanted to conciliate foreign bankers and journalists, who took a dim view of Russian anti-Semitism, and in part because they hoped that the reforms would discourage Jews from joining the revolutionary movement. Everyone assumed that Nicholas favored Stolypin's proposal; it did not occur to anyone that the prime minister would bring up so sensitive a matter without first talking things over with the tsar. In this instance, they overestimated Stolypin's sagacity. Weeks passed without any word from the court on the measure, and when Nicholas's decision finally arrived on December 10 the cabinet was stunned. Nicholas indicated that he had thought about the Jewish question "night and day" and had concluded that he could not approve of any relaxation of the restrictions. "An inner voice," he said, "keeps insisting more and more that I do not take this decision upon myself. So far, my conscience has not deceived me. Therefore I intend to follow its dictates. I know that you too believe that 'the heart of the Tsar is in God's hands.' So be it. For all those whom I have placed in authority I bear an awesome responsibility before God and am ready at any time to account to Him." Even Kokovtsov, a fervent believer in the principle of autocracy, was surprised at this display by the tsar of his "mystical attitude toward the nature of his imperial power." Stolypin told Nicholas that he would not try to change his mind and would make sure that the official documents on the cabinet's deliberations would be changed in such a way as not to place the blame on him for the failure of the Jewish reform proposal. Privately, in conversations with the British ambassador to St. Petersburg he continued to express support for a more liberal policy toward the Jews. But as an ardent believer in monarchical rule, he felt he could not take a public stance in opposition to the tsar.

The tsar's prejudices, political naïveté, and intransigence surfaced with even more forcefulness in a candid conversation he had with the German ambassador in mid-January, just a few weeks after he had vetoed the Jewish reform measure. Nicholas expressed delight at the recent defeat of the socialists in the German election, not only because he considered this a wholesome development for Germany but also because he was sure that it would dampen the spirits of Russian radicals, who looked up to their German comrades. He was certain, moreover, that in Germany, as in Russia, there was "a close connection between demagoguery and international Jewry, which is undoubtedly the real driving force behind the Russian revolution."

The tsar then indicated that the Jews were not the only people he disliked. "The English," the tsar told the ambassador, "are too egotistical and the French too disorderly to have a claim on our sympathies. Not much good for the development of the world can be expected from the Italians and Spaniards." His own people, the Russians, as well as the entire Slavic "race," had many good qualities and great natural strength, but little character. Moreover, because they had endured the Mongol voke for centuries, they remained culturally at a "lamentably low level." The Finns were at an even lower level, "especially with regard to morality, and nothing good is to be expected from them." Faced with such inadequate human resources, the tsar drew what he considered to be an obvious conclusion about his own role in his country's affairs. "He is strongly determined," the German ambassador noted, "to continue to rule with an iron hand and views the future with confidence, even if the next elections to the Duma again demonstrate that the Russian people do not have the maturity to appreciate the benefits that He has granted them."

Even before he had been forced to retreat on the Jewish reform measure, Stolypin offered rather sober assessments of the state of affairs in the empire. Although optimistic about Russia's eventual recovery from its "illnesses," he was not sanguine about the immediate future. Stolypin foresaw three possible developments for the coming year, two of which did not augur well for the reestablishment of political stability: his own "tragic" disappearance (the recent attempt on his life was clearly on his mind); the election of a moderate Duma, with which the government would seek to cooperate on legislative proposals; more likely, the election of a socialist Duma, which the government would have to dissolve.

The prime minister had good reason to be pessimistic. The court had

just taken the pulse of the population in the provinces, and the results were not reassuring. It was evident that the split within the Union of October 17 between Guchkov and Shipov had diminished the moderates' chances of doing well in the upcoming elections of the Second Duma. At the same time, the right-wing parties, which were making strong efforts to mobilize mass support, did not seem to be attracting a large enough following to win many seats. The most optimistic statement Stolypin would allow himself was "that affairs were not worse than they [had been], and in this country this could be regarded as tantamount to saying that they were a little better."

Stolypin had other reasons to be pessimistic. Stories circulating among the political elite suggested that his own position was shaky. His influence at court was said to have declined, and there was talk of his being asked to surrender the portfolio of minister of internal affairs. Ironically, the ease with which Stolypin had succeeded in dissolving the Duma tended to undermine his authority and his program. If it was so easy to send the Duma packing, some of the tsar's advisers argued, "why retain Stolypin at all, with his policy of continued constitutionalism?" Nicholas sympathized with this position, but he was not yet prepared to renege completely on the promises he had made in the October Manifesto because he did not wish to offend the political classes at home and the financial circles abroad, both of which favored retaining an elected legislature.

Nicholas's stance troubled many ultraconservatives. Increasingly, they directed barbs at the tsar for irresolution in defending his prerogatives and even for incompetence. At saloons, the reactionary publisher of *Moskovskie vedomosti* and leader of the Monarchist Party, V. A. Gringmut, amused his friends with a description of a cartoon that had recently appeared in a magazine. The tsar was sitting on his throne, and the tsarina was behind a screen as the ministers reported to him on various issues and made recommendations. Nicholas expressed agreement with each minister. After the reports had been concluded, he sank into a torpor, confessing to his wife that he had understood nothing his ministers had told him, to which the tsarina responded: "I agree with that."

To add to the prime minister's troubles, in November 1906 his government was touched by a scandal that eroded confidence in his government. It came to light that in his capacity as deputy minister of internal affairs, the conservative firebrand Gurko had signed a contract with a shady firm named Lidval to supply some 160,000 tons of grain for distribution in several provinces stricken by famine. Gurko had agreed on a price higher than the bids made by other firms and had advanced a large sum of money to Lidval. Even then, Lidval delivered less than half the grain provided for in the contract. The opposition press exposed the

misappropriation of funds and demanded that the officials who had negotiated the contract be punished. The ultraconservatives in turn threatened to kill leading Kadets if their hero, Gurko, was dismissed. The tsar had no choice but to appoint a commission to look into the matter. The evidence of wrongdoing was so overwhelming that the contract with Lidval was suspended even before the commission completed its work, and Gurko was forced to resign in December 1906. About a year later, in a trial before the Special Senate Board, Gurko was found guilty of having misappropriated funds. But beyond that the board treated Gurko gently; it merely disqualified him from occupying any public office for three years.

PEASANTS INTO CITIZENS

For Stolypin, Gurko's departure from government service was a serious loss. Gurko had been a chief architect of Stolypin's agrarian reforms, in many ways the crowning achievement in his five years as prime minister. Although the reforms were in the deepest sense innovative and wrought fundamental changes in the countryside, the ideas they embodied had been discussed by experts and officials for several decades. Indeed, ever since the emancipation of the serfs in 1861, there had been a growing awareness in Russian society that far-reaching measures were required to cope with the country's economic backwardness and to stimulate economic growth. The emancipation had freed the serfs, but it had also strengthened the commune, an institution that had a large say in regulating the peasants' affairs and was widely believed by experts to have hampered economic progress in the countryside. About 80 percent of the communes periodically redivided land among villagers to maintain the equality of allotments assigned to peasant families, the size of which would naturally vary over years. Thus, there was no tradition of private landownership among the bulk of the country's population, and so long as the peasants did not own the land they worked, they lacked the incentive to modernize their farms and improve efficiency. Moreover, because of the sharp increase in Russia's population from 1861 to 1905 (by some 40 percent), the average allotment assigned to peasants, in most cases not overgenerous to start with, declined by 25 percent. The various commissions the government established in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to study the deficiencies of agriculture all agreed that indolence, low productivity, alcoholism, and indigence were the main features of the countryside. The commissions set forth a series of proposals that would become the basis of Stolypin's reform program.

This is not to minimize Stolypin's role in the reform process. He had himself sensed the need for change as far back as the late 1880s and the recommendations on Saratov he had sent to the tsar in 1904 adumbrated the reforms of 1906. Most important, as prime minister he was the driving force behind their implementation by taking the initiative on the issue and conveying a sense of urgency for speedy action. Soon after assuming the leadership of the government, he directed Gurko to prepare bills incorporating the proposals for reform. Once that had been done, it was largely up to Stolypin to ward off the opposition of influential Slavophiles like F. D. Samarin, who were nostalgically attached to the commune as the bedrock of stability in the countryside, and to persuade the Council of Ministers to support the reforms. Kokovtsov, Prince B. A. Vasilchikov, the minister of agriculture, and Prince A. D. Obolenskii thought that it would be a mistake to introduce such fundamental changes by government fiat. They wanted the measure to be passed by the Duma, but Stolypin doubted that the legislature would approve his proposals, which did not provide for the expropriation of privately owned lands. In view of the Duma's handling of the agrarian issue, there can be little doubt that Stolypin was right. Gurko supported Stolypin, arguing that under normal conditions the approach recommended by Vasilchikov would be appropriate, but given the prevailing turbulence, extraordinary procedures were necessary. "The vital interest of the country," he insisted, "must be placed above this or that provision of the law." On October 10 a majority of the cabinet voted to enact the program under the emergency provisions of Article 87 of the Fundamental Laws, and on November 9 the tsar gave his formal approval; the ukase was promulgated on that date.

In sponsoring the agrarian reforms, Stolypin was motivated by much more than a desire to improve the country's economy. He believed that they would transform the peasants' attitudes on a whole range of issues, that they would produce a fundamental change in the *mentalité* of the people. The most critical problem in Russia, according to Stolypin, was that the peasants, who composed the vast majority of the population, were wholly lacking in civic spirit (*grazhdanstvennost*); they did not respect the laws of society, and they had no clearly developed sense of public obligation. In short, peasants were not yet citizens in the full meaning of the word. His goal, Stolypin stressed, was to transform them into citizens by giving them a stake in society, by making them realize that order and discipline were in their own interest. Unless the masses in the countryside were converted into citizens respectful of order, a state based on law was inconceivable. Stolypin's model, no doubt, was the West, where, as one historian has put it, "property rights have historically provided the

basis for other civil and political rights. Ultimately, the person has assumed the inviolability granted to property." In sum, Stolypin aimed at nothing less than a transformation of the peasantry's psychology in the deepest sense of the word.

In several speeches justifying the reforms—delivered after they had already been enacted—Stolypin used phrases that tended to muddy the waters by giving the impression that the reforms were designed to help only the well-to-do peasants, the so-called kulaks. Thus, in 1908 he declared that the ukase of November 9 "placed a wager not on the wretched and drunken, but on the sturdy and strong." But what his critics overlooked was that in the same speech he also made clear that he was not speaking of a small sector of the peasantry; the "strong people" he had in mind were "the majority in Russia." And every effort had to made on their behalf:

All the powers of both the legislator and the government must be exerted toward raising the productive forces of the sole source of our well-being—the land. By applying to it personal labor, by applying to it the powers of all our people without exception, we must raise up our impoverished, weak, exhausted land, since the land is the pledge of our strength in the future; the land *is* Russia.

A careful reading of this and several other speeches by Stolypin on the agrarian reforms shows that when he used the word "strong" he was thinking not of peasants who were economically strong (that is, rich), but of peasants who were psychologically strong: rational beings who understood their own interests and were prepared to take initiatives to better their own lives. They were, in short, strong in willpower. Every peasant so inclined would be given an opportunity to abandon old habits of work, which had proved so disastrous, and to adopt modern, rational methods of farming. Although conservative landowners tended by and large to support Stolypin's reforms because they did not involve compulsory confiscation of land, it is worth noting that the prime minister's long-range goal was not to preserve the nobility as a privileged class. He had a much larger vision for Russia: he assumed that eventually there would be only one agricultural class, a class of independent farmers.

The ukase of November 9 was actually the capstone of a series of agrarian reforms introduced in 1906. In August the government announced that it would make available for sale to peasants a modest amount of land from the state, the tsar's personal holdings, and the properties of the imperial family. Stolypin also facilitated the purchase of land by the Peasants' Bank, which could then sell it to peasants on terms favorable to them. Many landlords, frightened by the unrest and the possibility that their land would be confiscated, were eager to sell, often at relatively low prices. But capitalists did not rush to buy the land because they too feared confiscation, and peasants did not show great interest in

purchasing it because they expected all the land to be distributed to them free of charge. Between 1896 and late 1905, the Peasants' Bank acquired 2,785 estates totaling 4.9 million desiatinas; over the next fourteen months, it acquired 7,617 estates with 8.7 million desiatinas of land.

On September 19 the government enacted a law opening up to colonization a substantial amount of land that belonged to His Majesty's Cabinet in the Altay region in West Siberia, where communes were not widely established. The next ukase on the agrarian question, promulgated on October 5, was much more far-reaching: it provided for an extension of civil and personal rights to the peasants, narrowing the distinction between them and other classes and thereby conferring many of the attributes of citizenship on them. Peasants were now permitted to work in administrative agencies of the state, to attend educational institutions without prior permission from the commune, and to maintain their ties with their village communities if they entered the civil service or some other profession. In addition, peasants could now become members of another village community by acquiring land there without forfeiting membership in their own community. They could move freely from one region to another so long as they received the appropriate permits from their new place of residence. The election of peasants to zemstvos no longer had to be approved by the provincial governor. Finally, the peasants were freed from various punishments previously imposed by the communal assembly and land captains for the infraction of regulations.

The key article of the ukase of November 9, the most far-reaching of all the agrarian reforms, reads as follows: "Every head of a peasant holding family allotment land by right of communal tenure is entitled at any time to claim the appropriation as private property of his due share of the said land." If no redistribution had been conducted during the preceding twenty-four years, the peasant would receive all the land he was cultivating at the time he requested separation from the commune. If redistribution had taken place within that period, the peasant could still obtain the amount of land he was cultivating, but only until the next scheduled redistribution, at which time changes might be made in the size of the individual holdings. The peasant was also guaranteed the use of the same quantity of meadowland to which he had been entitled as a member of the commune. Before the promulgation of the ukase, a peasant could leave the commune as owner of the land he worked only with the approval of the communal assembly, a cumbersome procedure that discouraged separation.

In addition, the ukase of November 9 made it easier for peasants to bring about consolidated ownership of the strips into which land was divided and thus to dissolve the commune. The strip system had been introduced centuries earlier to provide peasants with an equal share of different types of land in the village. Because the strips were widely scattered, the peasants were forced to spend a part of their working day walking from one strip to another, a waste of time and energy that reduced productivity. Strip farming also militated against the use of machinery. Prior to the reform of 1906, a unanimous vote of the communal assembly was needed before any consolidation would be enacted; now an affirmative vote by two-thirds of the assembly sufficed.

To help communes in the difficult task of reallocating the land in their villages, the government established Land Organization Commissions. Stolypin wanted the entire process to be voluntary; peasants who wished to stay in the commune might do so. But he did his best to encourage the process, and within a few years he even introduced measures that did away with repartitioning under certain circumstances. It also became easier to consolidate the strips, a majority vote rather than a two-thirds vote being necessary.

The opposition rejected Stolypin's bold reforms. Many liberals and all radicals denounced the ukase of November 9 because it did not provide for the expropriation of land; for that reason they predicted that the entire enterprise would fail. But some radicals implicitly conceded that the policy Stolypin was pursuing might divert the masses from a revolutionary course. Although Lenin voiced conflicting views on the reform program, on at least one occasion he granted that it was leading to the "creation of a peasant bourgeoisie." The SRs, strong supporters of the commune as an institution that facilitated socialist propaganda in the villages, now began to stress cooperation between peasants rather than the socialization of the land, a tacit acknowledgment that the commune was losing the support of peasants. Kadet leaders disagreed among themselves about the desirability of preserving the commune, but all of them opposed the ukase of November 9 because Stolypin had bypassed the Duma by resorting to Article 87 of the Fundamental Law.

Stolypin was optimistic about his program, but even he did not think it could be fully implemented in less than twenty years. And he thought that his resettlement program—migration to Siberia—would not be completed until 1929. One specialist on the agrarian question, the former minister of agriculture N. N. Kutler, predicted that it would take at least one hundred years for Stolypin's policy to have a decisive impact on the country. Although scholars differ in their estimates, their studies suggest that the prime minister may have been too sanguine. To be sure, many peasants showed interest in the reforms, but the obstacles impeding implementation were immense.

Sheer inertia, the unwillingness to change a lifetime of habits, played an important role in inhibiting peasants from taking advantage of the new laws. In addition, peasants did not necessarily find separation economically advantageous. At the same time, many villagers committed to the principle of egalitarianism feared that the new law would inevitably produce greater inequalities in the countryside. Finally, social considerations militated against the success of the reform. Women, especially those whose husbands spent large parts of the year working in the cities far from home, felt comfortable with the social life in the village and feared the isolation that would invariably accompany secession from the commune.

Despite the government's promise that the reform would be enacted on a purely voluntary basis, in many instances officials tried to coerce communes to proceed with secession. Enraged peasants at times resisted the pressure by resorting to violence. "Hostile manifestations," one contemporary noted, "toward separating members of communes often assumed bitter and barbaric forms. Fires, murders, and conflicts involving bloodshed were by no means rare occurrences. There was even a case of almost unbelievable atrocity in the drenching with oil of a departing member by his fellow villagers, who burnt him like a live torch."

An unqualified judgment on the effectiveness of Stolypin's agrarian reforms is difficult. His most ardent defenders claim that because of the outbreak of the First World War and the Revolution of 1917 the reforms could not be fully implemented; consequently, it is unfair to belabor them for failing to change Russia's political landscape. But an examination of the reform process indicates that it was very slow to begin with and had become markedly slower well before 1914. The number of applications reached its high point in early 1909 and declined sharply thereafter. Some 508,000 households left the commune in 1908, 580,000 in 1909, and 342,000 in 1910. In 1913 the number shrank to 135,000. By 1914, about 20 percent of the peasants had obtained ownership of their land while about 14 percent of the land had been withdrawn from communal tenure. And strip consolidation developed at an even slower pace. At best, then, the process would have taken many years to reach completion. Whether in the meantime political stability, one of Stolypin's primary goals, could have been achieved is open to doubt.

Nevertheless, the promulgation of the ukase of November 9 was a bold and imaginative stroke on Stolypin's part, almost certainly the most effective response to Russia's agrarian crisis. But because of the inevitably slow pace of so complex a process, a new eruption of political turbulence could probably not have been avoided. Nevertheless, had the war not broken out in 1914, the turbulence might not have taken the form it did in 1917. A substantial number of peasants did acquire their own property, and their attitudes toward economic and political issues were bound to change. Given more time for implementation, the agrarian reform

might have contributed to a more moderate resolution of the political crisis. That would not have been a mean achievement.

ELECTIONS TO THE SECOND DUMA

As soon as the agrarian reforms had been promulgated, Stolypin turned his attention to the election of the Second Duma, to which he attached the greatest importance. He wanted a legislature with which he would be able to cooperate in introducing further reforms and modernizing Russian society, and he was prepared to intervene actively in the electoral process, which was virtually identical to that of the first election, on behalf of candidates to his liking. He legalized the Union of the Russian People and the Octobrists, and after some hesitation, the Group for Peaceful Renewal, a small party somewhat to the right of the Kadets. He also used his discretionary fund to disburse substantial funds (about three million rubles a year) to conservative candidates and to some thirty newspapers. His assistant, Kryzhanovskii, was disappointed that these handouts did not yield more articles favorable to the government, a failure he attributed to the fact that most newspapers were controlled by the opposition and "people of Jewish descent." Nonetheless, conservatives were able to wage a far more aggressive and successful campaign in this election than in the campaign for the First Duma. The extremists on the right were also helped by the fact that in a number of local regions the Octobrists entered into electoral blocs with them despite the unwillingness of the Octobrist central committee to do so.

The Kadets, sobered by the ease with which Stolypin had managed to dissolve the First Duma, adopted a moderate platform. Acknowledging that they had overestimated the speed with which they could transform the old order, they declared that their goal must now be to preserve the achievements of the revolution, and that they must therefore repudiate revolutionary methods. Instead of taking the old order "by storm," as they had attempted to do six months earlier, they intended to place the old regime under an "orderly siege," which would mean a long, drawn-out process of struggle against the authorities. They abandoned the demand for a "responsible ministry," and replaced it with a call for a "ministry enjoying the confidence of the Duma," a much vaguer and more moderate goal. Under the new formula, the cabinet would not have to consist of Duma deputies; it could be a cabinet composed of bureaucrats willing to work with the legislature. The Kadets' previous aim of seeking to transform the Duma into a constituent assembly was omitted altogether. The

party adopted as its guiding principle the slogan, "Preserve the Duma at All Costs."

The leaders of the various socialist parties found it difficult to settle on campaign tactics because many on the left still believed that movements committed to revolution ought not to have any truck with electoral politics. But most party faithful of the Social Democratic and Socialist Revolutionary movements clearly wished to take part in the campaign, and in the end all these radicals agreed to enter the legal political struggle. Indeed, it soon became clear that the masses still retained a remarkable degree of faith in the Duma. In St. Petersburg, for example, huge numbers of eligible workers flocked to the polls; worker participation there ranged from 70 to 100 percent.

The peasants also demonstrated strong support for the Duma. In the central Volga provinces an "overwhelming majority" of local observers reported that villagers had lost all confidence in the government and believed that only the State Duma could be counted on to solve the agrarian question to their satisfaction. Even in regions where unrest had been widespread (in Penza and Saratov provinces), peasants now took an interest in political questions.

Given the authorities' extensive intervention in the elections and harassment of the opposition parties, the results can only be described as an ignominious rout for the government. In fact, the Second Duma turned out to be far more radical than the first. True, the Octobrists increased their strength from thirteen to forty-four, and the extremists on the right, without any representation in the First Duma, succeeded in electing ten deputies and could count on the support of some fifty-four from other factions. But the number of left-wing deputies jumped from one hundred eleven to two hundred twenty-two, with the Social Democrats, Socialist Revolutionaries, and Popular Socialists numbering one hundred eighteen (as against seventeen in the First Duma), and the other party of the left (the Trudoviks) one hundred four. The parties of the center suffered a serious decline: ninety-nine seats were won by the Kadets and their adherents; in the First Duma these groups were supported by one hundred eighty-five deputies. The Muslim group elected thirty and the Cossack group seventeen. The Polish Kolo raised its number of deputies from thirty-two to forty-six. The nonpartisans suffered the steepest decline, from one hundred twelve to fifty.

In addition to being much more polarized than the First Duma, the second contained far fewer seasoned political leaders. All the deputies who

1. The Popular Socialist Party, formed after the dissolution of the First Duma, was represented by sixteen deputies in the Second Duma. Politically, the Popular Socialists stood between the Kadets and SRs.

had signed the Vyborg Manifesto (some one hundred twenty Kadets alone) were disqualified from serving in the legislature. Moreover, the average level of education of the deputies was lower; one hundred eighty-nine lawmakers (42 percent) in the First Duma had attended an institution of higher learning as against one hundred eleven (23 percent) in the second; an additional sixty-two deputies in the First Duma had completed secondary school as against thirty-eight in the second; one hundred eleven deputies in the First Duma had completed primary school only as against fifty-eight in the second. As a group, the members of the new Duma were also considerably younger than their predecessors: approximately 56 percent were under forty years of age, compared with 42 percent in the first legislature; and about 15 percent of the deputies in 1906 had been over fifty years old, as against only 9 percent in the Second Duma. The lower level of discourse and the greater outpouring of vituperation in the Second Duma may well be related to these differences in age and background.

The election results shocked the government and its supporters, and once again rumors circulated that the court was ready to remove Stolypin from office. On February 7, 1907, a meeting of the cabinet and senior court officials was convoked in Tsarskoe Selo, a very unusual event. The agenda consisted of two items: the election, and the stance to be taken toward the new Duma. Kokovtsov, the minister of finance, argued that the government had to spell out its attitude toward the legislature quickly, since the foreign stock exchanges were extremely nervous about political developments in Russia. The Europeans, he pointed out, feared that the people would not remain as calm as they had been during the period of the First Duma and its dissolution. Stolypin was more sanguine. It had come to his attention that the Kadets, "remembering the history of the First Duma," had decided not to pursue a revolutionary tactic; on the contrary, they intended to adhere strictly to the principles of constitutionalism. Stolypin expected the left to adopt revolutionary tactics immediately, but he assured the group that so long as the Kadets did not support the radicals, the extremists would be unable to muster a majority for such an approach. Consequently, he was not convinced that relations between the government and the legislature would immediately turn sour. He suggested that the government wait until the situation became clearer before reaching any decision on how to deal with the Duma. Stolypin's comments made a strong impression on court officials, who were now split on his fate and took no action to remove him.

Liberal society welcomed the election results, but there was little gloating because it was widely believed that the government and the opposition now faced a stalemate. The proponents of this position contended

that both the extremists on the right, who favored a quick dissolution of the Duma, and the extremists within the opposition, who advocated the destruction of the old order with one "decisive blow," were unrealistic in their estimates of their political strength. The Kadets, still a major force in the Duma and aware of the impending deadlock, thus appeared to be pursuing a sound policy in favoring an "orderly siege" of the old order. To the Kadets, moreover, it was beyond doubt that Stolypin had been so thoroughly repudiated in the elections that he would not be able to remain in office very long. Once he quit, the court, unable to find competent bureaucrats to fill the ministerial posts, would turn to moderates in the Duma. In the meantime, it was critical for the legislature to pursue a cautious course so as to win the confidence of the tsar and his advisers.

Whether the Kadet strategy of self-restraint was realistic is open to doubt. It assumed that the liberals would be able to hold in check the deputies on the left, that the tsar would be willing to tolerate an extended period of stalemate, and that he would dismiss Stolypin. But before the Kadet strategy could be put to the test, the continuing violence from below further embittered relations between the authorities and the opposition. Early in December 1906, three and a half months after the introduction of the field courts-martial, Stolypin expressed deep frustration over his failure to put a complete stop to the terror. In the span of six days, from January 23 to January 29, 1907, terrorists killed fifty-two officials, among them a governor, a deputy chief of police, and two okhrana agents. Also in January, the authorities nipped in the bud a plot to kill the tsar, and the police foiled an attempt to assassinate Count Witte.

Even before these latest incidents Stolypin made a daring move to mobilize public opinion against terrorism. Early in January 1907, he invited Miliukov to his office and in a state of great agitation proposed a deal: if the Duma would condemn political assassinations, he would legalize the Kadet Party, whose votes would be essential for such an action by the legislature. Stolypin had an ulterior motive. He thought that a repudiation of terror by the Kadet leadership might split the party, encouraging the right wing to align itself with the Octobrists and moderate conservatives. The result would be a pro-government majority in the Duma. It is not clear that Miliukov immediately grasped all the implications of the prime minister's proposal, but he was taken aback by its boldness. He told Stolypin that he could not speak for the entire party, which for reasons of "political tactics," refused to condemn revolutionary terror. In any case, it seemed to Miliukov unrealistic to expect the Kadets to cave in on this issue to those who themselves regularly murdered political opponents. Stolypin then appealed to Miliukov not as the leader of a Duma faction but as a contributor to *Rech*, a paper with very close ties to the Kadets. "Write an article denouncing assassinations: I will be satisfied with that." Miliukov still demurred, though he was tempted by the thought that he might be able to end the persecution of his party. Finally, he agreed to run an article on condition that he would not sign it. Stolypin accepted the condition, which seemed to him meaningless, since Miliukov's style was easily recognizable. Miliukov then added another condition. He would have to secure the agreement of other Kadet leaders. Once again Stolypin yielded: if the article appeared, the party would be legalized.

Miliukov immediately mentioned the meeting to Petrunkevich, who angrily rejected the entire arrangement, which, he believed, would ruin Miliukov's reputation and severely harm the party. "No," Petrunkevich said, "never! Better to destroy the party than to destroy it morally." Miliukov decided not to write the article, and the prime minister drew from this "a conclusion appropriate for him." In his memoirs, Miliukov claimed that at the time he did not realize that "the fate of the Duma" depended on his making the necessary gesture, that is, issuing a statement uttering the "sacred words" denouncing political terror. The prime minister, Miliukov acknowledged years after the meeting, was under great pressure from the right, and he needed "some sort of paper or some sort of gesture from the leading party in order to strengthen and perhaps even save his own position. Otherwise he faced having to surrender to the right." No one can be sure whether Miliukov's "gesture" would have sufficed to establish better relations between the new Duma and the government, but his rejection of Stolypin's proposal inevitably strengthened the conservatives' conviction that the liberals still banked on a popular upheaval to bring them to power. The Second Duma, scheduled to open on February 20, promised to be even more turbulent than the first.

Coup d'État

DELIBERATIONS IN THE DUMA

The Second Duma opened on February 20, 1907, without any fanfare. There was no reception at the Winter Palace, no address by the tsar, no large crowds in the streets exhorting the deputies to instant action on the amnesty issue. As the deputies entered the Tauride Palace, a small group of people cheered the left-wing legislators, hissed the conservatives, and remained silent on seeing the Kadets. Beyond that, the people in the street "humorously asked the deputies about their opinions" on political issues. Most deputies appeared to agree with the Kadets that instead of putting forth "hopeless demands," the Duma should proceed prudently and systematically seek to "conquer positions occupied by the strong enemy."

This is not to suggest that the population at large was indifferent to the Duma. Although the public mood was not as ebullient as it had been ten months earlier, peasants, workers, and society alike generally applauded the resumption of legislative work by their representatives and showed their support in numerous ways. Zemstvo boards, city councils, former deputies, various local societies, and private citizens sent thousands of encouraging telegrams to the Duma. Typical was the message from the zemstvo employees in Tver Province, who expressed confidence that the Duma would lead "Russia along the path developed by the best elements of the country, along the path of peace and well-being." The editors of *Russkie vedomosti* were not far off the mark when they wrote that the Duma "is at this moment the center of national life, the heart [of the nation], to which flow all aspirations of a people that has suffered [deeply]."

A day before the first session of the Duma, about three hundred deputies—Kadets, Popular Socialists, Trudoviks, Socialist Revolutionaries,

and Mensheviks—met to elect F. A. Golovin, a long-standing member of the liberal movement and a Kadet, president of the Second Duma. There was not much enthusiasm for Golovin, but men of talent and experience were in short supply. He was rather shy, widely known as "the person who does not speak," and modest enough to believe that he did not have the requisite abilities for the post. Two Trudoviks, N. N. Poznanskii and M. E. Berezin, were chosen as deputy presidents, and the Kadet M. V. Chelnokov was named the secretary. At the conclusion of the meeting, the group indicated a desire to "avoid any sort of incident" in the Duma.

Meanwhile, senior officials at court selected I. Ia. Golubev, assistant chairman of the State Council, to deliver the opening address in behalf of the throne. The officials decided that the government should do its utmost not to provoke the legislature, which would be allowed to conduct its business freely, in accordance with existing laws. If the good intentions of the court and the opposition had carried over to the Duma, the second popularly elected legislature might have gone down in Russian history as one of the country's great achievements.

As it happened, the very first session was marred by a minor scandal. Golubev opened the meeting with a greeting from the tsar, who expressed the hope "that with God's help your work in the State Duma will be fruitful for the happiness of dear Russia." At this the right-wing deputy from Bessarabia, P. N. Krupenskii, shouted, "Long Live the Sovereign Emperor! Hurrah!" The other rightists immediately rose to their feet screaming, "Long live the Sovereign Emperor! Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!" All the Kadets and the other opposition deputies, including Golovin, remained in their seats, which was interpreted by the right as a sign of the liberal-left's disloyalty to the throne. Actually, the deputies remained seated only because they did not want to follow the lead of the rightists, who had clearly planned the entire demonstration. It was an altogether inauspicious beginning.

Nonetheless, in his opening remarks, Golovin adopted a moderate approach and spoke generally about the principal tasks of the Duma, which were to implement the October Manifesto and to enact social legislation. He then asked for an audience with the tsar and was received graciously on February 21. About two weeks later, on March 6, Stolypin addressed the Duma and, despite some sharp attacks on him, he was satisfied with the deputies' reaction. The mood seemed to be quite different from the First Duma, where ministers were regularly met with shouting and whistling. The prime minister thought that a moderate center-right coalition of Kadets, Octobrists, rightists, and the Polish Kolo might be formed and that it would cooperate with the government.

Stolypin's interest in working harmoniously with the Duma was not

based simply on his desire to institutionalize the structure of government established by the Fundamental Laws. At this time he also believed that his own political fate was closely linked to the fate of the Second Duma. If the legislature were again dissolved, people to the right of him, in particular Durnovo, would argue that his entire political program was flawed and that he should be dismissed. By the same token, many of the cooler heads in the Duma, aware that Stolypin's positive attitude toward the Duma was not popular at court, were willing to work with him to protect him as well as the legislature. Thus, there appeared to be reason for deputies to be optimistic that "the Duma will last longer than is assumed."

The optimism was short lived. For one thing, Golovin's relations with Stolypin quickly soured. Golovin conceded that he was responsible in part for a series of misunderstandings between them, but he placed most of the blame on the prime minister, who, he claimed, tended to regard the legislature as little more than a department subordinate to the government and its president as merely a department head obliged to take orders from the bureaucrats. Some of their specific disagreements appear to have been trivial—over who controlled the entrance to the Duma or who had jurisdiction of the police in the Tauride Palace—but they reflected real conflicts over the respective prerogatives of the prime minister and the president and, by extension, over the independence of the legislature.

In any case, deputies in the Duma wasted little time before assaulting government policies, which led Stolypin as early as March 14 to express doubts to the tsar about the chamber's interest in legislative work after all. Nicholas, in turn, believed that the intemperate speeches in the Duma "constitute a serious danger to tranquillity in the villages." And, more ominously, he wrote to his mother that he was getting telegrams from all over the empire asking him to order a dissolution. "But it is too early for that. One must let them [the deputies] do something manifestly stupid or mean, and then—slap! And they are gone."

Inevitably, the Kadets, still the dominant force in the Duma, were held responsible for its conduct. True, they went to great lengths to delay a vote on measures that would disturb the authorities, and they focused, instead, on incremental reforms rather than on an overhaul of the entire political order. As Golovin described the approach, the Kadets would seek to form two different majorities: "On questions of 'tactics,' we will vote with the rightists, on questions of 'program' with the leftists." Moreover, four Kadet deputies—P. B. Struve, V. A. Maklakov, the Duma Secretary M. V. Chelnokov, and S. N. Bulgakov—took it on themselves to meet secretly with the Stolypin on several occasions to promote cooperation between the Duma and the government. It is symptomatic of the poisoned political atmosphere in St. Petersburg that the four deputies considered it

the better part of wisdom not to inform their Kadet colleagues about the meetings, and not much is known about their discussions with the prime minister. Somehow, word of the contacts leaked out, and the four men acquired the unflattering appellation of "Black Hundred Kadets."

At bottom, the Kadets' overall strategy was based on a dubious premise, that they could maintain a neat division between tactics and program. That such a division was illusory became clear very quickly as two key issues—terror and agrarian reform—came up for consideration. By resorting to various rules of procedure, the Kadets succeeded, for a time, in preventing a vote on both these explosive issues. But this approach could not work for very long: it enraged the leftists, who accused the liberals of abandoning their principles, and it convinced the government that the Duma was mired in endless debate and parliamentary maneuvers, rendering it incapable of constructive work. At the same time, right-wing deputies reviled the Kadets, in particular the Kadet president, for not muzzling the radicals, who seemed determined to use the Duma as a tribune from which to agitate for revolution.

It soon became evident that the Kadet policy of preserving the Duma through moderation was doomed from the start because of the makeup of the legislature. Close to one-third of the deputies—the committed extremists on the right and the left—were unalterably opposed to the legislature as an institution and made no secret of their intention to undermine it. About another 20 percent did not care enough about the Duma's survival to give solid support to the Kadet strategy.

The Kadet leaders' task was further complicated by a lack of party loyalty and discipline among the groups that might have formed a rightcenter coalition. For example, the Octobrist deputies were more sharply than ever divided into two camps: the left wing was close to the Kadets, especially on the question of the field courts-martial; the right wing favored the dissolution of the Duma and the promulgation of a more restrictive electoral law. By the spring of 1907 the divisions in the Union of October 17 was so deep-seated that the movement verged on extinction. The Polish Kolo, which commanded forty-six votes, failed to align itself permanently with any Duma group, switching its support from left to right, depending on the issue. And among the Kadets there was a group of about a dozen who sympathized with the radical left; they did not openly criticize their own party, but occasionally they voted with the left. Finally, a small number of Trudoviks alternated between support for the left and the center-right. Several Trudoviks were actually expelled from the fraction for having voted with the Kadets on the agrarian question. The point is that the Kadets were trying to secure the passage of legislation in a parliamentary body that was too fragmented ideologically and too undisciplined politically to attend to its own preservation.

Actually, the committees worked quite effectively and took valuable testimony on several major issues from expert witnesses. It was in the Duma itself that the Kadet plan for orderly procedures came to grief.

Hardly any of the sessions were wholly free of rancor, but the deputies managed to avoid a major confrontation until the fifth session, on March 6, when Stolypin gave his first address. It was a measured speech, in which he outlined the government's projects for the Duma's consideration. He stressed his goal of transforming the country into a state based on law by implementing the October Manifesto, to which end he would be submitting bills guaranteeing civil liberties and religious toleration. He then enumerated several specific areas in which reforms should be adopted: local government, the legal system, labor conditions, agriculture, and education. The ukase of November 9 on agrarian reform would be submitted for review to the Duma and the State Council, as required by law. Toward the end of the speech, he extended his hand to the deputies in a conciliatory gesture and pleaded for goodwill and cooperation.

I. G. Tsereteli, and twenty-five-year-old Menshevik from Georgia, immediately rose to deliver a barrage of attacks on Stolypin and the government so savage that it provoked the rightists into unseemly catcalls. Tsereteli denounced the autocratic government for being "indissolubly linked" to a small group of "landlords who advocate serfdom and live at the expense of millions of hapless peasants," for having placed the entire country under martial law, for having imprisoned its best sons, and for having squandered funds meant to aid starving people. When Tsereteli declared that "only with the direct support of the people" would it be possible to stop the violence of the authorities, Golovin asked him "not to issue appeals for an armed uprising." Tsereteli denied that he had made such an appeal, arguing that he was merely pointing out the obvious, that the "government invites an armed uprising."

Despite the best efforts of some Kadets to turn the debate to substantive issues, the polemics continued. V. M. Purishkevich, a right-wing firebrand from Bessarabia, felt called on to denounce Tsereteli's "seditious calls for an armed uprising" and government policies by stating, "There exists no state, no empire, where forceful, persistent, and firm measures would not be applied to stamp out sedition." But it was Stolypin himself who delivered the most eloquent and dramatic response to the left. Enraged by the tenor of the debate, he repeated his interest in working with the Duma and in enacting the reforms he had mentioned in his speech. Nevertheless, the government would not shirk from its duty, it would not give up its role as the protector of the state and the unity of the Russian people. And then he warned the deputies that his government would not be indifferent to those who attacked it intemperately and encouraged

open defiance of the authorities. "Such attacks are aimed at paralyzing the government, they all amount to two words addressed to the authorities: 'Hands up.' To these two words, gentlemen, the government must respond, in complete calm and secure in the knowledge that it is in the right, with only two words: 'Not afraid.'" When Stolypin returned to his seat, all the ministers gave him an ovation such as no other minister had ever received in the Duma. Maklakov, then a Kadet deputy, recalled that "many of us were only prevented by party discipline from applauding. [His speech] made an enormous impression throughout the country. . . . March 6 was the climax of Stolypin's popularity."

Golovin, no admirer of Stolypin's, later conceded that the government and the right generally had emerged from the skirmish with a "moral victory." Although the prime minister was widely distrusted, he had indicated a willingness to work with the Duma. The deputies on the left, however, were unwilling to put him to the test. And the silence of the center during the debate was interpreted as a reluctance to cooperate with the government even when the two did not disagree. It would have been much wiser, according to Golovin, for the Duma to have been more forthcoming, at least until the government's intentions had become clearer.

Indeed, it soon became apparent that the extremists on the right and the left were more interested in attacking each other, in hurling insults with abandon, and in debating the virtues of mass action of one kind or another than in passing legislation on concrete issues. The subjects under discussion varied, but at bottom many of the controversies centered on the legitimacy of seeking change by revolutionary means. Both the rightists and the leftists had been traumatized by the turbulence of the preceding two years, and none of them could come to grips with the need to focus on any issue less cosmic than revolution itself. With tedious regularity, debates degenerated into brawls.

In late March and early April, the capital was awash with new reports of an impending dissolution of the Duma. Eager to avoid a crisis, Golovin sought an audience with the tsar to assure him that the legislature was indeed making progress in its work. Nicholas said very little, but Golovin persuaded himself, and his colleagues, that he had succeeded in convincing the tsar that the Duma could work constructively.

But on April 16, only six days after the meeting, a new storm burst forth at an executive meeting of the legislature called to discuss a tentative request by the government for 463,000 recruits for the army and navy for 1907. From the beginning, one leftist after another interrupted General Rediger, who was making the case for the bill, but the uproar began in earnest during a speech by A. G. Zurabov, a thirty-four-year-old Social Democrat from Armenia. Zurabov had served in the army during

the Russo-Japanese War, which seemed to invest his comments on military affairs with a certain authority, but he spoke Russian with an accent, and this immediately made him suspect in the eyes of right-wingers. He raised a storm when he criticized the bill on two grounds: (1) that service in the army removes a large number of people from productive work, and (2) that the government misuses the troops by unleashing them against the people. To add injury to insult, he deprecated the army as worthless in defending the country. The "army of autocratic Russia always was and will [always] be defeated." The right now let loose with a furious outcry: "Away with him! Get out!" Several right-wingers ran up to the rostrum shaking their fists at Zurabov, who turned pale. It looked as though the Social Democrat would be physically assaulted then and there. Golovin rang the bell in an effort to restore calm, but to no effect. All the ministers and other officials made a great show of stalking out of the hall. Golovin recessed the meeting.

Fearful that the government now had the excuse it needed to dissolve the Duma, Golovin rushed over to the ministerial pavilion to pacify its occupants. He insisted that Zurabov had not intended to insult the army, that he had merely expressed himself clumsily. No one took his comments seriously, and, in great distress, Golovin returned to his office, where he received a phone call from an angry Stolypin, who asked him to explain why neither the Duma nor Golovin himself had protested against Zurabov's slurs on the army. The prime minister also indicated that the tsar was now considering disbanding the Duma. In a desperate effort to assuage the government's anger, Golovin arranged to prevent Zurabov from completing his speech when the Duma reassembled. But Golovin knew that that would not suffice to mollify Stolypin. He again called the prime minister, who invited him to his office in the middle of the night. The prime minister then arranged for the president of the Duma to meet Rediger, whose report to the tsar, Stolypin indicated, would be critical. Golovin assured the minister of defense that Zurabov had misspoken and had not intended to insult the army. Rediger was satisfied and promised to advise the Nicholas not to dissolve the legislature. The tsar followed his advice.

On the surface, the political crisis caused by Zurabov's speech seemed to have ended on a harmonious note. General Rediger was placated and the deputies in the end adopted the government's bill by a vote of 193 to 129, an action that, in the president's view, buttressed his claim that constructive legislation was possible. Golovin now praised the "gallant" army and dismissed Zurabov's comments as "sad."

But at a meeting of the cabinet on April 17, virtually all the ministers argued that the legislature should not be allowed to remain in session. Stolypin had reached the same conclusion, but he wanted to wait until a

new electoral law was completed. Tsar Nicholas supported the prime minister. Although the cabinet's deliberations were not made public, Golovin sensed that Stolypin's attitude toward the Duma had changed. The prime minister now seemed to be indifferent to its affairs, rarely attended its sessions, and no longer initiated any discussions of the legislature's business with the president. Nevertheless, Golovin as well as most deputies had persuaded themselves that the government would permit the Duma to continue its work.

It did remain in session, but it did not manage to pass much legislation. During its fifty-three meetings held over a period of one hundred three days (as against forty meetings held over seventy-two days for the First Duma), it adopted only three measures, one of which was turned down by the State Council. It is not that there was a paucity of projects for the Duma to examine. Unlike Goremykin, Stolypin had diligently prepared himself for the Duma, and by late March the government had submitted no fewer than one hundred fifty projects on such issues as the rule of law, civil liberties, education, taxation, and local government. And also unlike Goremykin, Stolypin at first made a point of attending legislative sessions and of expressing his desire to cooperate with the deputies. For about five weeks it actually seemed that despite signs of conflict, the government and legislature might be able to cooperate; the center-right majority appeared to be holding.

The Duma's most notable achievement was its cooperation with the government on famine relief, which once again became a critical issue because of the extremely poor harvest in 1906. According to one estimate, that year's grain crop in European Russia (including Poland) and in the southern Caucasus was 17.5 percent below the average for the preceding five years. In early 1907 there was widespread famine in the provinces of Saratov, Samara, Kazan, Kutais, Orenburg, and Nizhnii-Novgorod. In Kazan alone more than 190,000 people were going hungry. In April, the Duma voted about 23.5 million rubles for relief.

As in the First Duma, the agrarian issue caused some of the most virulent conflicts between the government and the legislature. But it was not until April 5 that the Duma elected a committee to draft a bill because the Kadets had succeeded in delaying consideration of the issue, and when this was no longer possible, they managed to keep the discussions confined to the newly elected committee. The Trudoviks, however, insisted that the matter be placed on the agenda of the Duma, and the conservative deputies supported them on the procedural point because they expected the legislature to come up with a measure unacceptable to the court, which would then feel obliged to dissolve the Duma.

A new wave of peasant unrest also spurred the Duma to take up the agrarian issue. Although the disturbances in the countryside were not on

the same scale as in the fall of 1905 or the spring and summer of 1906, they were nonetheless serious. During the first six weeks of the Duma's deliberations, there were almost three times as many incidents as there had been in the preceding six weeks; during the month of April the number of disturbances approached two hundred. In part, the peasants were galvanized by the Duma debates, which suggested that they would be able to count on support from many of the deputies. The unrest assumed the usual forms and spread across the provinces of Poltava, Orlov, Voronezh, Tula, Smolensk, Minsk, Kursk, and Chernigov.

Early in May three different bills on the agrarian question were introduced in the chamber, all of them providing for a substantial degree of expropriation of privately lands. And all of them rejected the reforms Stolypin had introduced under Article 87.

The Kadet leaders knew, of course, that the prime minister would not accept any measures that undermined his program, and in a few private meetings with him they tried to reach a compromise. Stolypin, eager to avoid a dissolution, was prepared to make concessions on political and legal issues, but he would not abandon his agrarian program. All hope of compromise ended on May 9, when the Duma committee adopted a measure favoring expropriation of large amounts of privately owned lands. The Kadets, fearful of losing the support of the increasingly militant peasant deputies, supported the measure.

The next day, May 10, Stolypin made a last effort to dissuade the Duma from voting for any of the bills under consideration. In a wideranging speech, he warned that the plan of the left, which called for nationalization, would lead to nothing less than a "social revolution" on a scale unprecedented in human history. It would place everyone on an equal footing, but on the "lowest level," resulting in economic and cultural decline. The Kadet plan of compulsory expropriation was also unacceptable because it too abrogated the principle of private property. In the end, Stolypin predicted, all 130,000 landowners would be deprived of their property, which would mean the "destruction . . . of [local] centers of culture" and the ruin of the country. The prime minister urged the Duma to support the agrarian policies he had already introduced, though he now conceded that in exceptional cases it might be necessary to confiscate some privately owned lands. For example, the construction of a road passing through strips of private land might necessitate such an extreme action. Stolypin ended his speech, which was widely disseminated, with a powerful rhetorical flourish: "The opponents of the State system would like to choose the path of radicalism, a path alien to Russia's historical past, alien to its cultural traditions. They need great upheavals, we need a great Russia."

The Kadets defended their stand, but, unwilling to provoke a dissolution

of the Duma, they allowed the debate on the agrarian issue to drag on for some time, and on May 26 the chamber in effect decided to leave the issue in the hands of the recently created committee without any guidance on how to proceed. But this did not satisfy Stolypin, who feared that the Duma would without warning adopt a bill he could not live with.

Revolutionary terror, a major concern to Stolypin, was another issue that the Kadets wished to avoid, for it placed them in a dilemma. The conservatives, Octobrists, and several members of the Group for Peaceful Renewal agreed with the prime minister that a formal condemnation of terror by the legislature was morally and politically necessary. But the Kadets refused to vote for such a measure lest it give the impression that they thereby were giving support to the field courts-martial. Moreover, the Kadets were most anxious to avoid alienating the left. Even after the government allowed the law on the field courts-martial to lapse on April 20—it knew that it could not secure an affirmative vote on it by the Duma—the Kadets continued to avoid any public censure of revolutionary terrorism.

By mid-April 1907 Stolypin may actually have been relieved to let the ukase on the special courts lapse. Although the evidence is necessarily impressionistic and inconclusive, it seems that at this time the extremists on the right were perpetrating more acts of terror than those on the left. Stolypin did not approve of right-wing violence, but he would not have been eager to subject members of the Union of the Russian People to drumhead courts.

Certainly, the most notorious political murder at the time was the work of rightists. On March 14, G. G. Iollos, an editor of the liberal Russkie vedomosti and a Jew who had been a Kadet deputy in the First Duma, fell victim to an assassin's bullets in broad daylight in Moscow. His funeral on March 19 became one of those poignant political events that occurred only too frequently during the revolutionary upheaval. Some twenty thousand people, including a large part of the cultural elite of Moscow, joined the procession despite a heavy downpour. Stolypin personally informed the minister of justice that it was his "categorical wish" that the police take all necessary measures to apprehend the murderer. If any organization was found to have planned the assassination, its leader was to be brought to justice. But as in previous such instances, the police did not look all that hard for the murderer, in part out of fear of uncovering links between the government and the URP. It subsequently turned out that the killer, a certain Fedorov, had been hired for the assassination by a URP operative. By that time he had fled to Paris and was never apprehended.

The assassination of Iollos was part of a right-wing campaign of terror against the opposition. Beginning early in 1907, the URP sent death threats

to many Kadet deputies and numerous reports circulated in various parts of the country that the rightists were planning a series of pogroms against Jews. On April 24, there were anti-Jewish incidents in Odessa and in the suburb of Romanevko as well as in Kiev and Ekaterinoslav.

In the meantime, the government continued to rule with a mailed fist, clear evidence that the authorities remained apprehensive about the public mood. Whenever the emergency regulations expired in any region, the government extended them. From mid-January 1907 until the end of May, officials shut down, either permanently or for short period of time, 226 daily newspapers. In St. Petersburg the police forced several trade unions to close and dramatically stepped up searches of private residences and arrests of people suspected of antigovernment activities. On April 14, the minister of justice begged Stolypin for funds to build additional prisons to house the one thousand people who were being taken into custody each month for political crimes. The restoration of order, one of Stolypin's primary goals, remained elusive in the spring of 1907.

DISSOLUTION OF THE SECOND DUMA

In mid-May rumors of an impending dissolution of the Duma once again preoccupied political circles in St. Petersburg. To head off the move, Golovin requested an audience with the tsar, the fourth private meeting since the legislature had begun its deliberations. Nicholas was cordial and listened carefully to Golovin's account of the Duma's work during the preceding few weeks and to his insistence that it could work constructively. Beyond that, the tsar merely expressed some general criticism of the Duma and hoped that the president's optimistic views would prove to be correct. Even though it was an inconclusive meeting, many liberals chose to believe that the Duma was safe. Some five years later, however, when Golovin wrote a full account of the meeting with the tsar, he noted that he had been betrayed. He quoted the words of N. A. Khomiakov, a leading Octobrists, to the effect that Nicholas "does not lie, but he also does not tell the truth."

It is not known exactly when Nicholas gave the order to dissolve the Duma, but there is little doubt that he had been committed to that action for several weeks and was simply waiting for a good pretext. Although Stolypin continued to hope that such drastic action could be avoided, late in April or early in May he authorized Kryzhanovskii to formulate new electoral procedures that would produce a majority of deputies from the "more cultivated strata of the population." Also, sometime in April Stolypin charged A. V. Gerasimov, the head of the St. Petersburg Okhrana,

with locating documents that would implicate Social Democratic deputies in a conspiracy against the state. Actually, the prime minister was at this time pursuing a two-pronged approach. On the one hand, in his speech on the agrarian question he made a conciliatory gesture by proposing to expropriate some privately held lands. On the other hand, he sought to placate the tsar and the court entourage, who were increasingly critical of what they regarded as his insufficiently tough stance toward the Duma. Not until late May, when it became evident that the Duma would not support his agrarian program, did he fully commit himself to drastic action against the legislature.

By that time a series of bizarre episodes provided the government with the pretext it felt it needed. It all began with what was by now a fairly routine police action, a raid of a deputy's apartment. On the night of May 5 several policemen, tipped off about a planned meeting of soldiers with radical deputies, burst into the residence of I. P. Ozol, a Menshevik deputy from Riga, conducted an extensive search, and detained some thirty-five legislators. No soldiers were in the apartment; nor did the police find the incriminating evidence they were looking for. But on May 7, during an interpellation about a "series of illegal actions" and violation of deputies' immunity in connection with the entry into Ozol's apartment, Stolypin announced that during further police searches on May 6 evidence linking Ozol to a military-revolutionary committee had turned up. The aim of the committee, according to Stolypin, "is to provoke an uprising within the army." The prime minister justified the police action and the violation of the deputies' immunity on the ground that the authorities had the "responsibility to preserve the public safety."

The government had taken these actions on the basis of very sketchy information. Several days before the search of Ozol's apartment, the police had obtained some evidence, probably from one of its agents, E. N. Shornikova, that at a recent meeting at the Polytechnical Institute, L. G. Gerus, a Menshevik deputy, had listened to soldiers complain about conditions in the service; the soldiers had also been asked to indicate what the Duma might do to revolutionize the army. Moreover, the secret police had laid its hands on an "instruction" drafted largely by V. S. Voitinskii, a Bolshevik activist; it urged the Social Democratic fraction in the Duma to demonstrate interest in the plight and personal needs of the soldiers by introducing a bill guaranteeing their rights and improving their conditions. The Social Democratic fraction, according to the instruction, should appeal for support to all sectors of the army and should invite soldiers' representatives to meet them at their headquarters. The instruction promised that if the government sought to expel the SD deputies from the Duma for these actions, the army would come to their support. The last point, of course, was the most damaging to the deputies; it seemed to implicate them in a military plot against the authorities. But the instruction amounted to a rather general statement and it did not directly implicate all the SD deputies. Moreover, the police obviously did not want to reveal how they had obtained the document. They therefore conducted additional searches of Ozol's apartment, but they did not find what they were looking for.

But this failure did not deter the authorities from taking a momentous decision. According to Gerasimov, as soon as Stolypin and the minister of justice saw the instruction, they felt confident that they had the evidence they needed to charge the Social Democratic representatives with conspiracy. They decided then and there "to ask the State Duma to surrender the Social Democratic deputies for judicial proceedings and if it refused, [the government] would not shrink from dissolving the Duma." On June 1, as Golovin noted in his diary, "the long awaited catastrophe . . . struck. The death agony of the Duma [began]." In the morning, the president received a brief note from Stolypin requesting the floor at the next sitting. Stolypin also invoked Article 44 of the regulations, which permitted him to request that the session be closed to the public.

As soon as the session began, Stolypin stepped up to the tribune and announced that the procurator of the St. Petersburg Provincial Supreme Court, P. D. Kamyshanskii, had decided to indict some of the deputies, who, according to documents found in Ozol's apartment, belonged to a criminal organization. Kamyshanskii then described the search of Ozol's apartment and claimed that the police had found convincing evidence that all fifty-five Social Democratic deputies were members of an organization dedicated to the violent overthrow of the government and its replacement with a democratic republic. The procurator asked the Duma to lift the deputies' immunity and expel them from the legislature so that a full investigation could be conducted. He indicated that sixteen of the SDs had played only an advisory role in the organization and therefore no action would be taken against them; sixteen others, however, were to be taken into custody immediately for investigation.

Determined to remain at all costs within the bounds of legality and to be as accommodating as possible so as to preserve the Duma, the chamber decided to select a committee of twenty-two deputies to examine the case against the Social Democrats. Its report would then serve as the basis for further deliberations and possible action by the entire body. The SDs were enraged and warned that to give in to Stolypin's demands would be tantamount to a partial dissolution of the Duma. Then, several of them made the unwise comment that the authorities did not need to turn to dubious documents to discover the aims and methods of the Social

Democrats, who had always insisted on maintaining close links with the masses, a comment that could be construed as an admission that the charges against the fifty-five deputies were well grounded. Disregarding the SDs' objections, the Duma voted to establish a committee to be chaired by Kizevetter to examine the government's case. It was to report to the chamber by 7:00 PM the next day, which meant that if it worked through the night it would have about nineteen hours to complete its task, an impossible assignment.

In the meantime, the Duma continued to debate a project on local courts so as to send a message to the country that even at the moment of acute crisis it continued to conduct business as usual. As expected, Kizevetter's committee could not complete its work in the allotted time, especially since it found some dubious claims in the official charges, and the more it probed the charges "the clearer it became that the SD fraction had not organized any kind of military conspiracy." At 7:00 PM the committee informed the Duma that it had not yet completed its work, and that it would need two more days to study the material. Golovin telephoned the prime minister to let him know about the delay and to ask whether the Duma would be disbanded if the committee did not submit its report that evening. Stolypin's "answer was completely reassuring."

The authorities, however, had taken measures that told a different story. As early as June 1 the police searched the apartments of several SD and SR deputies and began a massive roundup of individuals suspected of supporting left-wing causes. Also on that day, a large number of policemen had been stationed near the Tauride Palace. Whenever a crowd of citizens appeared on a street of the capital, mounted patrols as well as numerous agents from the secret police were sent to the area. Toward evening, additional policemen were deployed in various parts of St. Petersburg.

In a desperate attempt to change Stolypin's mind, the four Kadets who had secretly met him from time to time took it on themselves to visit the prime minister late in the evening of June 2 to warn him that it would be "sheer madness" to dissolve the Duma. The conversation began on a sour note. When the Kadets claimed that the charges against the Social Democrats were unfounded, Stolypin shot back, "I will not discuss this with you: if the judicial authorities say that there is proof, this must be accepted as the starting point for action, for us and for you. . . . While we talk here, Social Democrats are roaming from one factory to another inciting workers." But he perked up when Bulgakov informed him that the agrarian committee did not intend to adopt the plan on compulsory expropriation of private lands after all. If that was indeed the case, it

seemed to Stolypin that there was no reason at all not to expel the Social Democrats from the Duma. "Liberate the Duma of [the Social Democrats], and you will see how well we will be able to work together." The Kadets would command the support of a majority of the legislature and would be able to implement their program. "You will see," Stolypin continued, "how everything will then go well. Why don't you want this?" Maklakov replied that "we would be ashamed to look each other in the face" if they agreed to the expulsion. "I myself am a rightist Kadet and will vote *against* you." To which Stolypin responded, "Well, then there is nothing to be done . . . only remember what I say to you: now it is you who are dissolving the Duma."

One of the Kadets asked the prime minister whether he expected any unrest in response to the dissolution. "No," he said, "Perhaps purely local [incidents]; but this is not important." Stolypin could confidently make this prediction. Since mid-May he had received two detailed and cautiously optimistic assessments from the Department Police on how the people throughout the country were responding to the deliberations of the Duma. Although there were pockets of strong hostility toward the government, overall the country was calm, and the authors of the reports did not anticipate any major explosions in the near future.

The prime minister concluded the meeting with a surprisingly cordial statement: "I hope to meet all of you in the Third Duma. My only pleasant memory of the Second Duma is my acquaintance with you. I hope that when you get to know me better, you will not regard me as such a villain as people generally consider me." Maklakov could not contain his anger: "I will not be in the Third Duma. You have destroyed all our work, and our voters will turn to the left. Now they will *not* elect *us*." Stolypin grinned enigmatically. Maklakov posed one final question: "Or will you change the electoral law, effecting a coup d'état? This would not be better." Stolypin did not answer.

The last-ditch appeal by the Kadets was bound to fail, for Stolypin had now concluded that he could never cooperate with the Duma as it was then constituted. The differences over the agrarian issue were no doubt very important in leading him to that conclusion, but the final conversation with the Kadets suggests that political considerations were also critical. Even Bulgakov's revelation that the Kadets had decided to abandon the plank on compulsory expropriation did not prompt Stolypin to change his mind about the Duma. He may simply not have trusted the Kadets on this issue, or he may have doubted whether the four deputies who had visited him were authentic spokesmen for the Kadet Party, but it also seems that he had become convinced at this point that nothing short

of a fundamental political change would do. After all, his conflicts with the legislature ever since March 6 had not centered on the agrarian issue alone. He had believed all along that most deputies did not appreciate the necessity of restoring law and order, which to him was a sine qua non for restructuring Russian society. True, Stolypin did not accept the ultraconservative view of the Duma as an institution whose very existence was incompatible with the preservation of the monarchical order. Deep down, however, he too distrusted the Duma because it had never abandoned the demand for radical change of the political system.

In any case, by the time the four Kadets visited him the prime minister had made an irrevocable decision to disband the Duma, and he had so informed the tsar. He had told Nicholas that he would ask the legislature to expel the fifty-five SD deputies and to agree to the arrest of the sixteen who were "most guilty" of conspiring against the state. He would not ask for the arrest of all fifty-five, for that would smack of political revenge. "I firmly believe," Stolypin told the tsar on June 2, "that the Lord will lead Russia to its predestined path, and that Your Majesty will have the good fortune of seeing [the country] pacified and extolled."

And Nicholas had advised Stolypin in no uncertain terms that he would brook no delay. At 11:30 PM on June 2, he wrote the prime minister that he had signed the new electoral law, and that

I waited all day long with impatience for notification from you that the dissolution of the accursed Duma had been completed. But at the same time I feel in my heart that things are not moving along smoothly and are being dragged out. This is *intolerable*.—the Duma must be dissolved tomorrow, on Sunday morning. It is necessary to display decisiveness and firmness to Russia. The dispersal of the Duma is now the right [thing to do] and vitally necessary. There must be no delay, not one minute of hesitation! God favors the bold.

Stolypin succeeded in keeping its leadership in the dark about when and how he would act, just as he had a year earlier when the First Duma was disbanded. On the morning of June 3, "Golovin was having a late breakfast when he was visited by a foreign correspondent who asked him: 'Where are you going to live now, Mr. Golovin?' 'In Petersburg as long as the Duma lasts.' 'But do you not know? The Duma is dissolved.' For the second time, this was how the president of the Duma learnt of its dissolution." Golovin rushed to the headquarters of the Kadet fraction and to his surprise found the place virtually deserted. Golovin asked someone whether the deputies would again meet in Vyborg or somewhere else, and he learned that the Kadet representatives had decided to remain calm and to go home. As he returned to his home in Moscow, he consoled himself

with the thought "that the Duma had not done anything that could be used to accuse it of having violated the constitution and as a justification for a return to the old, preconstitutional order."

At 6:00 AM on Sunday, June 3, okhrana agents entered the Tauride Palace and posted the manifesto of dissolution on the doors. Within the entire building there was "a deathly silence, broken by the occasional loud orders issued by the bosses of the palace." The city also remained quiet throughout the day. The army was in a state of alert, but not a single unit was summoned from the barracks. Only on the streets near the Tauride Palace, on the boulevards, and in the city gardens were the police out in more force than usual. In other parts of the city, policemen arrested more than two hundred people, including the sixteen Social Democratic deputies at the center of the controversy. Other SD deputies received notices to appear in court the next day. During the night of June 3, the police arrested another three hundred citizens. By June 6 the total number in custody had reached six hundred, and the authorities had moved soldiers out of the Petropavlovsk fortress to make room for the political prisoners. The police conducted similar roundups in many other cities of the empire.

In the manifesto dissolving the Duma, Tsar Nicholas noted that he took the action, "to Our regret," because the legislature had failed to discharge its obligations. Instead of working to promote the well-being of Russia, it had made clear its "intention to increase unrest and to promote the disintegration of the state." He pointed to "an action unprecedented in the annals of history," the participation of a group of elected officials in a plot against the state and tsarist authority. He also announced that a new Duma would meet on November 1, but at the same time indicated that he would take appropriate measures to ensure that the new legislature would be devoted to the strengthening of the Russian state; "the State Duma," the manifesto declared, "must be Russian in spirit."

To achieve that, a new electoral law for the selection of deputies had been sent to the Senate for promulgation. Kryzhanovskii, who had been charged with devising the new law, thought that he was being asked to square the circle. On the one hand, Stolypin directed him to come up with a scheme that would ensure the election of "the more cultivated strata of the population," that is, a chamber dominated by conservatives

1. The SD deputies arrested by the government remained in jail until November 22, when they were brought to trial (which was closed to the public). On December 1 the court sentenced twenty-five of them to hard labor for four years, or to exile for an unspecified term; the court acquitted nine. The SDs who were found guilty were deprived of their civil and political rights. A few SDs were never apprehended, and one died before the trial.

supportive of his program. On the other, Stolypin also wanted Kryzhanovskii to remain faithful to the general principles underlying the previous elections so that the new regulations would not appear to be a total rejection of the concessions the autocracy had made in October 1905. A loyal servant of the tsar, Kryzhanovskii accepted the assignment.

Kryzhanovskii proposed three options and the authorities accepted the most "brazen," which altered the number of seats in the Duma assigned to particular geographical regions, social groups, and ethnic minorities, giving "trustworthy" citizens the lion's share. Even then, the Senate issued several interpretations of the law to further limit the franchise of various categories of voters. It was all thoroughly arbitrary and transparent, and it made for extraordinary complexity, but somehow it worked.

The essential features of the law can be briefly summarized. The size of the Duma was reduced from 542 to 442, almost entirely at the expense of the outlying regions of the empire. The Steppe and Turkestan regions; the vast Turgai, Ural, and Iakutsk oblasts; the nomadic peoples of Astrakhan and Stavropol; and the Siberian Cossacks lost their representation completely. The Duma delegations of the Poles, Armenians, and Tatars were sharply reduced. Thus, the Poles, with a population of about eleven million, would elect fourteen deputies, two of whom had to be Russian; in the Second Duma, it will be recalled, the Polish delegation numbered forty-six. The roughly six million people of Transcaucasia could elect seven deputies, one of whom would have to be Russian. By contrast, the province of Kursk, with a population of two and a half million, the vast majority ethnically Russian, was assigned eleven deputies; the three million citizens (also overwhelmingly Russian) of Tambov would elect twelve. In addition, the law favored the affluent over the masses: the peasants would choose only half as many electors (those who made the final selection of deputies) as they had chosen in 1906, and the landowners a third more.

In the fifty-one provinces of European Russia, landowners would get roughly 49.6 percent of the electors, the urban population 26.2 percent, the peasants 21.7 percent, and industrial workers 2.3 percent. In slightly more than half these provinces, landowners by themselves selected a majority of the electors, and in the remaining provinces they could obtain a majority by forming alliances with one or another urban group. To reduce the election of liberals in cities, eighteen of twenty-five urban centers were deprived of the right to choose their own deputies by merging them with provincial constituencies. Women, men under the age of twenty-five, students, and soldiers and sailors in active service were not given the franchise. Although the voting was fairly straightforward and

direct in the large cities, elsewhere the system of indirect voting was so complicated that the process resembled "walking through a labyrinth." The elections were to proceed in three different stages, and the electors who survived the process would meet in the capital of the provinces to choose the deputies. As one contemporary observed, "The system is so calculated that, in the end, the big landowners are almost certain to secure a majority, and the peasants returned are usually those who seem to the landowners fairly safe."

The dissolution of the Duma and the promulgation of the new electoral law can be said to have marked the final defeat of the revolution that had started almost three years earlier. But did these measures amount to a coup d'état, as the opponents of the regime claimed? Were they a deliberate violation of the constitution designed to reshape the state's political system? Many defenders of the old order claimed that the authorities could not be fairly charged with having staged a coup because they had simply dissolved the Duma without, however, abolishing it as an institution. And in doing so, they had acted within the law. This argument might be persuasive if the existing procedures for the election of a new Duma had been retained. But in changing those procedures the government had in fact violated the Fundamental Laws, Article 87 of which stated specifically that this emergency article must not be used to "introduce changes either in the Fundamental Laws [themselves] or in the Organic Laws of the State Council or the State Duma or in the provisions on elections to the Council or to the Duma." In fact, in his memoirs Kokovtsov noted that Stolypin was fully aware of what he was doing and "had had a great struggle with his own conscience before he had undertaken the task of revising the electoral law." When Scheglovitov, Stolypin's minister of justice, was asked in 1917 whether Stolypin understood that he was conducting a coup d'état, he answered, "I must say that Stolypin was a distinctive person, very talented, a very passionate man, who attached little significance to juridical questions, and if a certain measure seemed to him to be necessary then he would not countenance any impediments." There can be little doubt that the prime minister knowingly violated the constitution, not by breaching minor technicalities but by radically transforming the political system.

By all accounts, the people of the Russian Empire reacted apathetically to the news of the Duma's dissolution. All the major cities remained calm; in none of them was there even a large-scale demonstration. At most, workers would meet, adopt a resolution condemning the government, and go home. According to one informed observer, only in Kiev was there any forceful action against the government; a battalion of sappers tried to stage an uprising, but it was a feeble affair that was quickly quelled.

A mood of indifference and despair also prevailed in the countryside. "Professor Harper and I," Bernard Pares noted, "traveled widely in Eastern Russia immediately after the Dissolution. Everywhere we saw complete prostration and disillusionment. . . . A peasant of Saratov summed up for us better than anyone else the net result of the last five years: 'Five years ago there was belief and fear [of the Government]; now the belief is gone, and only the fear remains." In Kaluga Province, observers noted deep depression among the peasants. Even the liberal press reacted to the events of June 3 "with sullen resignation." Russkie vedomosti mildly censured the government and advised the people not to resort to boycotts or other such measures to protest the arbitrary action of the authorities. Tovarishch, the moderately left-wing paper, noted with astonishment that the coup made a stronger impression in Western Europe than in Russia. But perhaps that was not surprising, the editors suggested with obvious irony, because the "rotten West" was no longer used to such conduct by men in power.

The opposition parties did not undertake any serious protest either. Although stunned by Stolypin's coup, the Kadets, still smarting from the dismal failure of the protest against the dissolution of the First Duma, confined themselves to feeble criticisms of the authorities. The Octobrists were visibly troubled, especially by the new electoral law, but in public they tended to apologize for and even justify the coup d'état as a "regrettable necessity." Even the Social Democrats avoided militant tactics. It seemed to them that the workers in the capital and elsewhere were too disorganized and too dispirited to respond to a call for a political strike. A conference of Social Democrats in Terioki on the night of June 7 urged the party as a whole to appeal to the masses to conduct propaganda among the peasants for a general strike and armed uprising at some point in the future. Finally, the Socialist Revolutionaries did no more than issue a proclamation criticizing the dissolution, though they contended that the revolution had not yet ended and, like the SDs, they urged their supporters to prepare for the next round of the upheaval.

In large measure, absence of a vigorous popular reaction to the coup can be traced to a pervasive weariness and loss of self-confidence. "For three years," the liberal *Vestnik Evropy* noted, "we have spent [a great deal of] nervous energy without results; fatigue could not but be the consequence of the fruitless struggle of ideas against reality." Not a single social group—peasants, socialists, constitutionalists, *zemtsy*, professors, students—could fend off a mood of deep pessimism.

But, as most observers noted, the "comprehensive precautionary measures" taken by the authorities also weighed heavily on the nation and were an important factor in discouraging people from organizing

protests. The crackdown affected the press, trade unions, and activists in the opposition movement. Some statistics will suffice to indicate its magnitude. In Moscow alone, during the first ten days after the dissolution officials fined eight newspapers for disseminating "false information" and in the course of a year in St. Petersburg they closed down thirty-nine of the seventy-six trade unions that had been established since the beginning of the revolution. Total trade union membership in the capital dropped by some 40 percent. And the arrest of activists hostile to the government continued unabated. In St. Petersburg in the month of June about two thousand political arrests were reported, and similar roundups took place in various provincial capitals.

Although the dissolution did not evoke a large-scale protest movement, it was followed by a new outburst of lawlessness, both political and criminal. One of the more dramatic incidents occurred in Tiflis in mid-June. In an attack on a military escort transporting some 340,000 rubles, Bolshevik militants killed two policemen and a Cossack, wounded about fifty, and made off with the money. Another especially daring incident took place on a pleasure boat, the *Sofia*, which was cruising in the Black Sea some eighteen miles from Odessa. Three young men boarded the ship during a dinner party and "proceeded to hold up the assembled company." At the same time, two of their fellows overpowered the crew and forced them to take the ship to Odessa, where the intruders seized funds worth more than five thousand British pounds from an employee of the Russian Bank for Foreign Trade and smaller sums from other passengers. After destroying the machinery of the vessel, the thieves disappeared on two small boats.

Stolypin was so disturbed by this new outbreak of violence that on July 7 he sent a circular to the chiefs of provincial gendarmes and the heads of provincial departments of the okhrana ordering them to take stronger measures against people involved in any form of unrest. To obtain speedy punishment, officials were urged to bring the accused before military district courts. Ten days earlier the authorities had issued a decree amending the military judicial code. Preliminary investigations could now be completed in one day rather than in three days; on August 10 the government directed military commanders to appoint older officers as judges because they were more likely than younger ones to be firm in meting out punishments. In effect, the government was moving toward giving to the military district courts functions similar to those of the lapsed field courts-martial.

Not until early August did observers in Russia detect a decline in terrorism and criminality, which, interestingly, was accompanied by a significant loss of interest in domestic politics. Newspapers no longer dwelt as much on internal affairs and devoted an increasing number of articles to foreign affairs. "The Russian people, generally speaking," the British ambassador to St. Petersburg concluded, "is at present tired of the ceaseless internal troubles of the past, two, or nearly three years." But he also warned that "it remains . . . to be seen how far this new feeling of apathy and 'peace at any price' will be a durable one."

THE THIRD DUMA

Stolypin had to be content with his handiwork, for the result was the kind of legislature that he believed was needed to restore stable and effective rule. Not only did the new, restrictive electoral law by itself work to his advantage. Within days after the dissolution of the Duma, local election committees began to apply a variety of dubious measures to reduce the number of eligible voters even further. As a consequence, only about 19 percent of the eligible voters in sixty-seven cities of European Russia (roughly 10 percent of all the cities) participated in the elections to the Third Duma, compared to 55 percent in 1906. The total number of voters in these cities dropped from 307,930 to 195,000. Even in some rural areas with sizable numbers of large landowners, the registration lists declined by 30 to 40 percent. The reason for these declines was again the arbitrary exclusion of voters considered unreliable.

The composition of the Third Duma indicates how well the new electoral law served the government:

| Grouping | No |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| Rightists | 51 |
| Polish Kolo | II |
| Kadets | 54 |
| Polish-Lithuanian Belorussian Group | 7 |
| Muslim Group | 8 |
| Progressives | 28 |
| Moderate rightists | 96 |
| Octobrists | 154 |
| Trudoviks | 14 |
| Social Democrats | 18 |

Since the Octobrists had by now swung decisively to the right, the government could generally count on the support of about three hundred deputies out of a total of four hundred forty-one. Furthermore, thirty-

two of the deputies on the right had clearly identified themselves as candidates of the Union of the Russian People, which meant that slightly more than 10 percent of the legislators in the conservative camp were not simply pro-government but extremists who favored the restoration of the tsarist autocracy. On some issues, several Progressives also supported the government, giving it an even more decisive majority. Put differently, if all the national groups are counted as part of the opposition, which was true only to a degree, the combined strength of the parties that favored a fundamental reordering of the country's political system amounted to no more than a third of the Duma. One need only compare these figures with those for the First and Second Dumas to note how fundamentally the empire's structure of politics had been transformed. The opposition, the dominant force in the first two legislatures, had been reduced to a minority that could do little more than criticize the government.

The social group that now emerged as the dominant political force was the landowning nobility, which was represented by 173 deputies, almost 40 percent of the Duma's membership. These noble deputies were elected by some thirty thousand families, a fairly homogeneous group economically, socially, and politically. Although not all the noble deputies voted consistently with the right, most did so; a mere handful of men thus exerted a powerful influence on the affairs of state in a country whose population numbered about 130 million. The rightists could also count on the support of the fifty-three deputies who were Orthodox clergymen—a much larger contingent than in the two preceding legislatures and of the one deputy who was a Roman Catholic priest. Another twelve who could be relied on to side with the authorities were government officials. Significantly, only thirty-eight legislators came from the professions, and only seven were businessmen. Of the remaining deputies whose social origins are known, sixty-eight were peasants, twenty-seven workers, and seventeen Cossacks.

The drift to the right also manifested itself on the local level in various zemstvo elections that took place at about the time of the dissolution or within a few weeks of that event. Again, a few statistics will suffice to tell the tale. In the provinces of Poltava and Samara, only rightists won seats; in Tambov, twenty Octobrists, six members of the Union of the Russian People, and one Kadet were elected. These results marked a continuation of trends that had emerged in late 1906 and early 1907. A comparison of the political affiliations of chairmen of zemstvo assemblies in 1905 and 1907 graphically demonstrates the changes that had occurred. In 1905 the Kadets occupied fifteen chairmanships, the Progressives six, the Octobrists thirteen, and the rightists none. Two years later, the figures were Kadets, one; Progressives, three; Octobrists, nineteen; rightists, eleven.

Thus, at all levels of the political arena the opposition suffered devas-

tating defeats. To most activists, it seemed as though all the struggles had been for naught. The autocracy that in 1905 and 1906 had been forced to concede a constitution was strong enough in 1907 to violate the constitution with impunity and to reassert its authority so effectively that all the struggles and suffering appeared to have been in vain. In the months following the dissolution, such a conclusion was not implausible, but in fact the outcome of the revolution was not that clear-cut or bleak. Indeed, Russia in 1907 was not the Russia of 1904.

I asked a man the other day, who is employed in the "Zemstva," what party he belonged to. "I belong to the party of common sense," he answered; "unfortunately it does not exist." This exactly sums up, I think, the impression that any impartial observer must necessarily derive from the present situation in Russia. Common sense has gone. Hysteria and undisciplined rant have taken its place.

-Maurice Baring, A Year in Russia

This comment by the journalist Maurice Baring, made shortly after he arrived in St. Petersburg from Moscow in late 1905, does not by itself adequately explain the outcome of the Revolution of 1905, or, more accurately, of 1904–7. But it does point to one critical factor: both the opposition and the authorities were thoroughly unrealistic. The opposition wanted to change the entire system overnight; the authorities clung to the belief that they could rule as they had for centuries, arbitrarily and without much regard to the interests on the vast majority of the people.

The lack of political maturity among all social groups undermined every endeavor to reach a reasonable solution to the crisis. In none of the negotiations over a coalition government—four in all during the three-year period—did either the authorities or the opposition bend sufficiently to bring about an agreement. More important, the Duma, cherished by most citizens as the greatest achievement of the revolution, as the institution that would fulfill their deepest aspirations, met with such fierce hostility from the court and the government that its very existence seemed constantly at risk. Few within society rejected the suspicion that their ruler had agreed to the Duma not as an authentic concession but as a sop to the people to surmount a serious crisis. At the same time, few within that body showed any inclination for compromise, or even for civil discourse either with the authorities or with each other. Russia's first encounter with constitutionalism was not an edifying experience.

This universal intransigence was basically a legacy of Russia's autocratic structure of rule, which did not allow for the emergence of leaders with political acumen and independent judgment. Even Stolypin, who recognized the need for fundamental reform, failed to understand that the changes he wished to introduce would not succeed if they were enacted arbitrarily and without broad-based support. Nor was Stolypin a truly independent leader. A firm believer in autocracy, he abandoned reforms that he considered essential when they were opposed by the autocrat: witness the fate of his plan to lighten the burden on the Jews.

Ultimately, the failure of political leadership must be placed on the shoulders of the tsar himself. Despite his weak personality, he held fast to certain principles. He wished to retain the autocracy even while permitting certain institutional changes, and he would not accord equal rights to ethnic and religious minorities. None of the basic changes that Russia had undergone over the preceding decades—industrialization, the emergence of social groups demanding a say in state policy, the growth of radical movements, the decline in power resulting from the disastrous war with Japan—induced him to alter his worldview. Every time an opportunity for accommodation with the opposition presented itself, he insisted on maintaining his prerogatives and thus prevented the only kind of change that could have produced stability. Most of his closest advisers, and by 1906 much of the landed nobility, had neither the foresight nor the strength of character to resist him. They deluded themselves into believing that the old order could be maintained indefinitely, and with it their long-standing privileges.

In many ways, the conduct of the opposition's leadership mirrored that of the authorities. Without experience in the give-and-take of parliamentary government, without training in genuine political work, the opposition, too, demonstrated astonishing intransigence. The leaders of the various protest movements refused to be satisfied with the proverbial half a loaf and insisted on the rapid and total transformation of society, something that probably could not have succeeded even under more auspicious circumstances. A more conciliatory attitude during the Days of Liberty in late 1905 or during the deliberations of the two Dumas might have left the authorities no alternative but to adopt a more reasonable stance. Certainly, the liberals' refusal to repudiate and denounce terror from below played into the hands of those who wished to continue to rule with a mailed fist.

The intransigence of the opposition leaders also weakened the liberation movement itself. For most of the revolutionary period, the opposition was split into warring groups incapable of a united effort against the autocracy. These splits greatly hampered the forces for change and were

critical in helping the old order to survive. For Russia, it was a misfortune that modernization did not occur gradually, so that the demands of various social groups might have been met sequentially. History is rarely that tidy. As it was, modernization came relatively late and produced at one and the same time a whole array of parties and factions with irreconcilable demands. Though united in their hatred of tsarism, the liberals, Socialist Revolutionaries, Bolsheviks, and Mensheviks differed on too many fundamental points to collaborate for any length of time. Only those in power benefited from these divisions.

In fact, throughout 1905 the social groups represented by these political movements tended to act separately and in large measure spontaneously in protesting against the old order. When the liberals launched their campaign against the autocracy in late 1904, the workers, peasants, and minorities either remained aloof or participated only minimally. Worker unrest in early 1905 was viewed sympathetically by liberals but did not lead to a coordinated protest movement. Meanwhile, peasant unrest, though influenced by the turbulence in the cities, assumed a rhythm all its own. Disturbances began in the countryside during the summer of 1905, when workers were relatively quiescent, and reached a crescendo in late 1905, after the new outburst of unrest in the cities had subsided. Similarly, ethnic minorities followed their own calendar in demanding change. Nor, finally, did the major breaches of discipline in the military forces coincide with the most dramatic periods of political activism by other social groups. The bulk of the mutinies broke out after the workers had ended their most spectacular strike movement in the fall of that year.

In 1906, too, the absence of a coordinated effort by the protest movements had a strong bearing on the course of the revolution. The industrial workers, though by no means reconciled to the prevailing order, were not nearly so active in their opposition as they had been in 1905. Exhaustion, despair, and fear of unemployment had taken their toll. The peasants unleashed a new wave of unrest in the spring of 1906, but so long as their efforts were not coordinated with major activity elsewhere, the autocracy could not be brought to its knees. Also, the military unrest in the summer of 1906 caught the revolutionary parties by surprise; without their assistance, the mutinies inevitably petered out rather quickly, and where they did not, enough loyal troops were found to repress them.

Only once, during the general strike of October 1905, was there any significant degree of cooperation between the opposition groups with divergent long-range goals. Even on this occasion, the antigovernment movement was not planned. Still, once the strike had gained momentum, workers and liberals cooperated to such a remarkable extent that their combined efforts came close to toppling the old regime. As it was, the

concession the government made to bring the crippling strike to an end, the October Manifesto, marked the most momentous achievement of the Revolution of 1905. One can only speculate on what might have been achieved by a protest movement embracing all the discontented social groups acting in unison.

Considering the political conditions in Russia in the early twentieth century, such collaboration was too much to expect. Normal political activity was out of the question; as a result, the political movements that emerged in the years immediately before the revolution had only the most rudimentary organization and means of communication at their command. In any case, in 1904 neither the liberal nor the radical leaders could foresee the outbreak of an upheaval that might threaten the tsarist regime, and when that did happen, it was too late to forge a firm alliance between the aggrieved groups.

Senior officials were often at a loss as to how to respond to the unrest, and at times even the most talented among their number succumbed to despair. A confidential conversation in mid-May 1906 between the Russian ambassador to London, Count A. K. Benkendorf, and his German counterpart is instructive in this regard. Benkendorf was thoroughly pessimistic about Russia's future because he considered all the ministers mediocre. Moreover, he was convinced that the Duma would accomplish nothing and would soon be dissolved, which in turn would set off a "general revolution." In Benkendorf's view, Witte was the one man who could save Russia, but only if he embarked "on a thoroughly radical transformation of the Russian state organism." But having said that, Benkendorf related the substance of a conversation he had had with Witte two years earlier, which suggested that even the future prime minister was too bewildered to cope with the crisis. Benkendorf had posed several questions to Witte. Should the war with Japan be continued? Should Russia be granted a constitution, or should the autocracy be retained? "To all these questions, Witte responded that it was impossible. When [Benkendorf] finally asked what in his view should actually happen, [Witte] answered: 'Everyone in Russia is radical and I am the most radical of all.'"

Although Benkendorf's account of Witte's mood reveals the despair and paralysis that often beset the political leadership from 1904 to 1907, the government was not quite as helpless as Witte claimed. Most notably, the bureaucracy, a pillar of the old order, remained essentially intact and continued its faithful service to the monarch. The social structure also did not break down. In fact, in 1906 substantial sectors of the landowning nobility that had favored moderate liberalism, alarmed by peasant unrest and the breakdown of civil order, increasingly turned toward the right and supported the tsar on key issues. Moreover, Witte himself took initiatives

that helped the autocracy withstand the crisis. During the general strike he engineered the granting of the October Manifesto, a concession that not only curtailed the work stoppage and gave the authorities a new lease on life, but also caused fatal splits with the opposition. Six months later Witte succeeded in negotiating a huge foreign loan, which greatly strengthened the regime at a critical moment. No less important, he helped fashion the draconian policy that in late 1905 and early 1906 suppressed rebellious peasants and workers.

The repression continued at various levels of intensity for a year and a half. Shortly after Stolypin's coup d'état, in June 1907, it seemed as though Russia in the course of three years had come full circle. Most of the opposition's aspirations—for a sovereign parliament, democratic suffrage, and land reform, not to mention the additional demands of the socialists—remained unfulfilled, and the most sweeping concession, the establishment of an elected national assembly, had been severely undermined. The tsar, the bureaucracy, and the noble landowners were in the saddle once again.

Nevertheless, the empire's political system had been changed in important ways. True, the tsar still claimed to rule as an autocrat, but so long as the Duma continued to function, as it did until the end of the old regime, the claim was not convincing. Neither he nor the bureaucracy could operate as arbitrarily as they had before. On many vital questions the tsar and his officials needed the support of the legislature. Although the electoral law of June 3, 1907, deprived the masses of much of their representation, the Duma did not become a mere rubber stamp for the government. That the Duma was a vibrant institution was demonstrated with special force during the crisis of the old regime in 1916 and 1917. A significant majority in the legislature fiercely criticized the autocracy and in doing so spoke for large sectors of the nation. The provisional government that took control after the tsar's abdication in February 1917 was the Duma's creation. Without the reforms introduced during the Revolution of 1905, such developments would have been inconceivable.

Moreover, from 1907 until 1917 Russia lived under a multiparty system, another legacy of the revolution. There was still much repression of the left, and the Kadets were never recognized as a legal party, but various parties (including the Kadets, Social Democrats, and Popular Socialists) were represented in the Dumas, and radical as well as liberal deputies frequently spoke out against official abuses. Although the government continued to impose restrictions on the press, newspapers and journals could deal with sensitive political and social issues much more freely and in ways that were unimaginable before the revolution.

For many ordinary Russians, the Revolution of 1905 also produced

significant changes. Most notably, peasants found it much easier now to rid themselves of the debilitating restrictions imposed on them by the commune and to acquire property rights over the land they worked. Even though the trade union movement suffered some heavy blows at Stolypin's hands and declined sharply in the years from 1907 to 1912, it remained a viable force, and significant numbers of workers also participated in clubs, cultural societies, consumer cooperatives, and production cartels.

Slowly, painfully, against all odds, the Russian people were creating associations free from government control; thus, they continued a process that had received its greatest impetus during the Revolution of 1905. Russia in the years from 1907 to 1914 was not yet a civil society in the Western sense. But the country had taken its first steps along the road to such a society, a prerequisite for a genuine constitutional order. True, the men and women who had initiated the struggle against the old order in 1904 had hoped for much more, but in view of the obstacles they encountered, their achievement was not negligible. As a revolution, 1905 was a failure, but it was a failure that nonetheless brought about important institutional changes in Russia.

This is not to say that the changes were irreversible or that the struggle between the two political camps mentioned on the first page of this book had ended. After all, most countries undergoing transitions from absolutism to constitutionalism endured long periods of conflict; the path to what is generally referred to as modernity has rarely been smooth, almost never without many zigzags and major catastrophes. In France, where the transition can be said to have begun with the Revolution of 1789 ended only in 1905, when republican institutions finally appeared to be firmly established. In those 116 years, France underwent at least three revolutions and several periods of political turmoil that threatened the foundations of the state. In Germany, or more accurately in the German states, the process took about a century, from 1848 to 1945, during which there were two revolutions, a National Socialist regime, and two terrible world wars, and even then the establishment of a constitutional order and representative government owes much to the policies of the Western powers that occupied the country after 1945. Great Britain is often held up as an example of a country with a long history of constitutionalism and political stability. But Britain, too, experienced a period of political turbulence and revolution that included the execution of a king. All that happened long ago, in the seventeenth century, so it is often overlooked.

If one takes such a long-range view of Russian history, then the Revolution of 1905 can be seen not simply as a failure or as an event that was

important because it led inexorably to 1917. On the contrary, 1905 should be viewed as an upheaval that opened up new possibilities for the country that were suppressed by the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. Seventy-four years later, in 1991, it turned out that even that cataclysmic event did not introduce a political system of very long duration. Over the last thirteen years, the country has found itself in the throes of yet another upheaval, inspired to a large extent by the same ideals that had animated much of the opposition in 1905: the rule of law; government by the people; individual rights; and respect for the rights of ethnic and religious minorities. Though aborted, the Revolution of 1905 left an enduring legacy: it initiated a process of political, economic, and social change that even now still has not run its full course.

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