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Vladimir Lenin

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There are many revolutions that take parts in history of the world and have a significant influence on society; Russian Revolution is indeed one of them. Russian Revolution did not only change the regime of Russia from absolute monarchy to communism and made the world acknowledge the renowned slogan “Bread, Land, Peace” but also made Russia renowned as Red Army, Communism, Bolshevik, and many more. This event was mainly brought by Vladimir Ilich Ulyanov, later called himself Lenin, who was surprisingly both the savior and the demolisher. However, there were reasons why the man who fought for his people’s sake was called the demolisher. Though Vladimir Lenin might be the savior for some Russian from Tsar Nicholas II, what he had done after that should be considered merciless since he had done many things as brutal as Stalin.

Before the Russian Revolution – under the administration of Tsar Nicholas II – Russia was in a terrible condition. During the period of his throne, he had led the country to be one of the greatest nations of the world, yet; it is also under the period of his throne that Russia had collapsed in both economy and military.¹ Although his intention was good, the consequences of his decisions and actions mostly became tragedies which one of those, for instance, was the initiation of the Russo-Japanese War that brought about by the leading of Nicolas II to expand Russia to the east which

¹ H el ene Carr ere d’Encausse. *Revolution and Power*. 1982. P.6-9

was not a free land but even was already ruled under the government of Japan; as a result, Japan declared the war.² Nicholas II never thought of long-distance wars and was full of confidence in victories. After the annihilation of Russian by Japanese in the Battle of the Tsushima Strait then he decided to have peace. Moreover, on the 9 January 1905 or Bloody Sunday, the group of workers led by a priest, George Gapon, to hand a petition to Nicholas II at the Winter Palace.³ When the march of protestors reached the front of the palace, the soldiers commanded by Minister of the Interior – Prince Sviatopolk Mirsky – started the fire on the protestors. From that incident, around one hundred of people were died and several hundreds were wounded.⁴ In World War I, due to his incapable of controlling the armies making Russian army lost the war and many lives had died.⁵ These losses under the Tsar’s reign caused the unpleasant in people’s feelings that lead to the revolution which Vladimir Lenin be a part of.

The war caused the scarcity that initiated the revolution. Vladimir Lenin from an upper-middle class family had acknowledged the scarcity and inequality of that time; moreover his elder brother was hung for being a member of a revolutionary group. Influenced by ideas of Marx and his elder brother’s violent ideas, Lenin became against the autocracy and decided to be a part of the revolution. He gathered a group of workers or Bolsheviks which became Russian Social Democratic Worker’s Party. He figured out the problem people were facing and came up with the slogan “Bread, Land, Peace” which bread was for worker, land was for peasants, and peace

² S. Schmidt, K. Tamovsky and I. Berkhin. *A Short History of The USSR*. 1984. P. 98-99

³ S. Schmidt, K. Tamovsky and I. Berkhin. *A Short History of The USSR*. 1984. P. 92-94

⁴ S. Schmidt, K. Tamovsky and I. Berkhin. *A Short History of The USSR*. 1984. P. 110

⁵ S. Schimidt, K. Tamovsky and I. Berkhin. *A Short History of The USSR*. 1984. P.121-123

was for soldiers.⁶ The revolution he led had been actually started since Russo-Japanese War but succeed after the World War I. Lenin finally overcame the inequalities from the Tsarist autocracy. Due to his leadership and dictatorship, he could keep Russian together after the revolution. Not only politic that he changed but also the economy. He came up with the New Economic Policy to improve the economy. He was called the savior back then.

However, the revolution by Lenin did not bring better outcomes as everyone thought. To overthrow the power of the Tsar, he demanded the death of Nicholas II, his wife, his children, and even his servants in the palace so that there would be nobody to get the throne back.⁷ Vladimir Lenin came out to be more oppressive than Tsar Nicholas II. Nicholas II permitted some opposite side of political parties but Lenin approved only the Communist Party like his. Lenin had his own secret polices or Cheka that would oppress people who disagreed with him or his party for him. He set his subordinates in many parts of the government so the power will all be in his hand.⁸ Some politicians that were in his way, even they were already elected, were arrested or jailed or even killed. After Lenin seized power from the Tsar, he became the enemy of the White Army or the people who supported the royal; Lenin's army was Red Army. Like everywhere in the world, when there is war, there is scarcity. As Lenin's Red Army marched to do the war with the White Army, his troops needed food. The peasants along their way were forced to give the production crops to the army. Some peasants who tried to hide the seedlings or any productions were brutally killed. So did the unpleasant peasants that went to protest the brutal grain extraction;

⁶ S. Schmidt, K. Tamovsky and I. Berkhin. *A Short History of The USSR*. 1984. P. 123

⁷ H el ene Carr ere d'Encausse. *Revolution and Power*. 1982. P.42-51

⁸ S. Schmidt, K. Tamovsky and I. Berkhin. *A Short History of The USSR*. 1984. P. 141-143

Lenin executed them.⁹ Moreover, there were over 500,000 of religious people killed by the Cheka because they denied giving up the churches' properties; not only the Christian but also the Jewish and Islamic, while only slight of those properties reached the hands of poor.¹⁰ Likewise the economy of Russia, changing from capitalist system to socialist system made the production of food and manufactured goods dropped even lower than in the Tsar's time. To solve this problem, Lenin announced the New Economic Policy that peasants were allowed to keep their productions which left more than the tax paid to the state; the peasants who insisted will be captured or shot by Red Army.¹¹ After Lenin seized the power from the Tsar and became the leader of the country, people might expect the better outcome from him as he fought for their sakes but unfortunately Lenin became a merciless man. He cared only about the goals without any hesitation to use any means.

Acknowledging about the loss and inequalities in Nicholas II's time, Vladimir Lenin wanted to change Russia to be a better place and started the revolution. However, the total outcome of loss in life under the period of Vladimir Lenin is much more outnumbered than the loss under the Tsar Nicholas II's period. Nicholas II may lead his country to chaos and scarcity but his first intention was for his people's sakes even it came out to be tragedy. But helping people from the autocracy and killed everyone that against his ideas of Vladimir Lenin should be considered as nothing but destroyer.

⁹ Hélène Carrère d'Encausse. *Revolution and Power*. 1982. P. 51-57

¹⁰ Wikipedia contributors. "Anti-Religious Campaign During the Russian Civil War (1917-1920)." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 30 Jan. 2013. < [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-religious_campaign_during_the_Russian_Civil_War_\(1917-1921\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-religious_campaign_during_the_Russian_Civil_War_(1917-1921)) >

¹¹ S. Schmidt, K. Tamovsky and I. Berkhin. *A Short History of The USSR*. 1984. P. 168-170