

## WHY DID CIVIL WAR BREAK OUT IN RUSSIA AFTER THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND WHY DID THE BOLSHEVIKS WIN?



### BACKGROUND

The October Revolution was a step that would change Russia for the following years to come beginning from 1917. The main aspect that needs to be understood from the October Revolution was the Provisional Government was thrown over by the **Bolshevik Party**.

### INFORMATION:

#### **Who were the Bolsheviks?**

The Bolsheviks came from Russia's previous group called the Social Democrat Party. In 1903, they split and the group formulated a new name called the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks. Vladimir Lenin managed the Bolsheviks, who created this group with full support and determination in creating a strong party (The Bolsheviks).

#### **Who was involved in the war?**

Dates of civil war and who were the sides

### PART 1: WHY DID CIVIL WAR BREAK OUT IN RUSSIA AFTER THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION?

#### UNFULFILLED PROMISES:

The Russian people wanted and were promised the following by the Bolsheviks:

#### 1. Freedom ✘

- a. Political oppression = **the Red Terror**
- b. Formation of the Red Army and the Ceka
- c. Ignored the result of elections of January 1918 (Social Revolutionaries won)

#### 2. Peace ✔

- a. Russia withdrew from the Great War

3. Land ×

- a. Land was owned by nobility
- b. Peasants were not gaining the redistributed land
- c. Land was instead taken over by the states

4. Bread ×

- a. Food supplies were concentrated on the workers
- b. Peasants are hungry ☹️

Short term

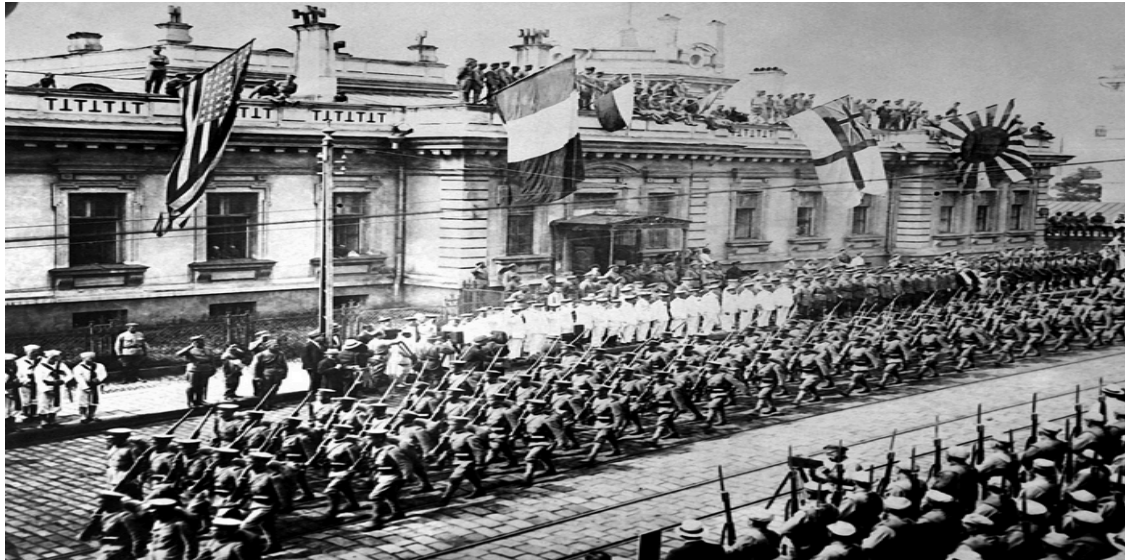
Long term

POLITICAL OPPOSITION:




<u>Group/faction</u>	<u>Why were they unhappy?</u>
Social Revolutionaries	Outcome of the January 1918 Elections: Social Revolutionaries won, but the assembly was shut down by the Red Guard
Mensheviks	Previously part of the provisional government; but overthrown by the Bolsheviks
Tsarists	Disliked the idea of having the Bolsheviks in charge, because they did not want an autocratic monarchy such as that of Nicholas II being re-established
Army officials	Country lost a lot of valuable land to Germany during the war regarding industrial and agricultural issues in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Ukraine
Nobles	Initially supported the Bolsheviks, but the government repossessed their land and distributed it to the peasants after the war



FOREIGN INTERVENTION:



“U.S Presented in Russia, 1918” (World Wars: War and Revolution in Russia 1914 - 1921 ).

Country(s)	Reason
Britain 	Fear of communism; wanted to end it “The infant Bolshevism should be strangled in the cradle” –Churchill Loyalty to the idea of monarchy
France 	Wanted to protect their investments in Russia Not particularly interested in the government
United States 	Had both investments and a fear of communism

The Bolsheviks were capable of giving Russia peace by taking Russia out of the Great War, but bread was not given abundantly and land was still government owned. The countries that intervened in Russia (Britain, France, U.S., and Japan) had two reasons to retaliate in Russia: (1) keep Russia weak and (2) reconstruct the Eastern Front (World Wars: War and Revolution in Russia 1914 - 1921 ).

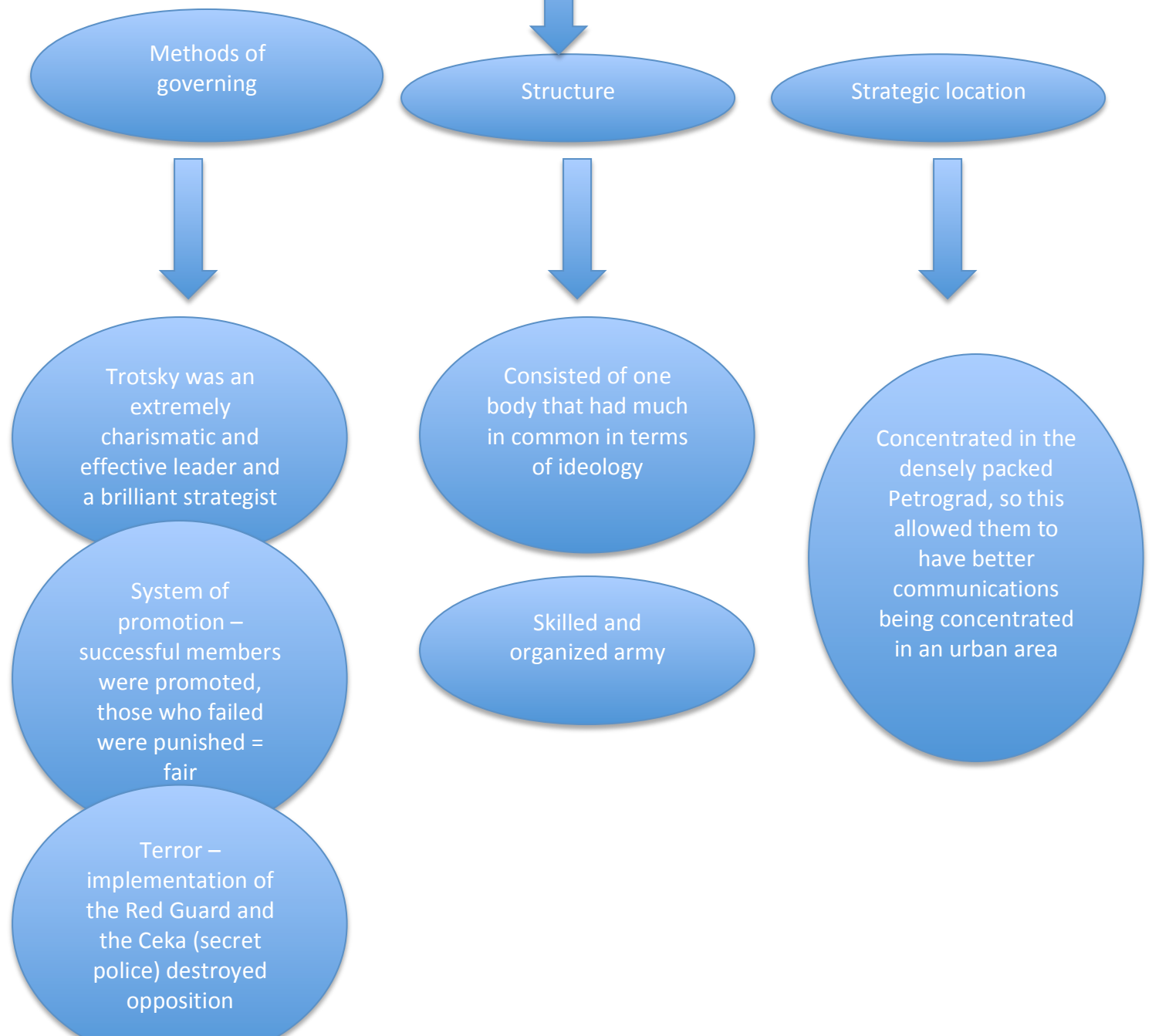
1. Britain, France, U.S, and Japan wanted to keep Russia weak simply because Russia was a huge country.
2. In addition, taking note of Lenin’s method of leading Bolsheviks, it wasn’t pleasant or merry. Lenin governed the Bolsheviks wanting to overpower many groups and take control of Russia as a whole. Rival countries, such as U.S and Britain, thought that Lenin’s method of ruling Russia was a start of communism that would harm their country leading them to enter Russia.

3. Another reason why rival countries entered Russia was to recommence the Eastern Front. This would mean it would create less implication for the Western Front. The pro for this would mean capability of trading and business agreements easier with Russia (US Intervention in Russian Civil War).

\*Japan also was a country that was wanted to intervene with Russia, but due to the results of the Russo-Japanese War, appearance in Russia would be displeasing (BBC History). Japan did intervene for territory and long term competition.

Part 2: Why did the Bolsheviks win?

COMPETENCE OF THE RED ARMY





Russian Map, 1918 (Russia, 1917-1921, Civil War )

## INCOMPETENCE OF THE WHITE ARMY

Openly anti-Semitic, which embarrassed their Western Allies

Currency issues and imbalanced exchange rates – ruble had no gold backing

Mistreatment of supporters (Denikin implemented pogroms in particular)

Allies uncommitted to causes (linked to anti-Semitism)

Geographic location – surrounds the central location of Petrograd; difficult to infiltrate

Mistreatment of army – “military officers with monarchist inclinations”

Lack of a unified leadership – compromised of several different factions

Wrangel, one of the only capable leaders, became involved in the war effort far too late



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