

Socialism in Europe and the Russian Revolution

Source Based Questions

Source 1

Read the source given below and answer the questions that follow by choosing the most appropriate option:

Industrialisation brought men, women and children to factories. Work hours were often long and wages were poor. Unemployment was common, particularly during times of low demand for industrial goods. Housing and sanitation were problems since towns were growing rapidly. Liberals and radicals searched for solutions to these issues. Almost all industries were the property of individuals. Liberals and radicals themselves were often property owners and employers. Having made their wealth through trade or industrial ventures, they felt that such effort should be encouraged that its benefits would be achieved if the workforce in the economy was healthy and citizens were educated. Opposed to the privileges the old aristocracy had by birth, they firmly believed in the value of individual effort, labour and enterprise. If freedom of individuals was ensured, if the poor could colour labours, and those with capital could operate without restraint, they believed that societies would develop. Many working men and women who wanted changes in the world rallied around liberal and radical groups and parties in the early nineteenth century. Social nationalists, liberals and radicals wanted revolutions to put an end to the kind of governments established in Europe in 1815. In France, Italy, Germany and Russia, they became revolutionaries and worked to overthrow existing monarchs.

Q1. What did liberals and radicals believe in?

- a. Values of individual effort, labour and enterprise
- b. Owning the property of individuals
- c. Paying attention to collective social interests
- d. Universal Adult Franchise

Ans. (a)

Q2. Who were liberals?

- a. Groups of people who wanted a nation which tolerates all religions.
- b. People who opposed the uncontrolled power of dynastic rulers.



- c. Both a, and b.
- d. People who believed in Universal Adult Franchise.

Ans. (c)

Q3. What were the industrialisation?

- a. Unemployment problems faced during
- b. Problems of housing and sanitation
- c. Both a. and b.
- d. None of the above

Ans. (c)

Q4. In which of the following countries, nationalists, liberals and radicals became revolutionaries?

- a. France
- b. Italy
- c. Germany
- d. All of these

Ans. (d)

Q5. Which of the following groups argued for a representative, elected, parliamentary government but believe in Universal Adult Franchise?

- a. Liberals
- b. Radicals
- c. Nationalists
- d. Socialists

Ans. (b)

Q6. Why did nationalists, liberals and radicals wanted revolutions?

- a. To change the world
- b. To ensure freedom of individuals
- c. To put an end to the governments established in Europe
- d. To develop new industrialised regions

Ans. (c)



Source 2

Read the source given below and answer the questions that follow by choosing the most appropriate option:

All political parties were illegal in Russia before 1914. The Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party was founded in 1898 by socialists who respected Marx's ideas. However, because of government policing, it had to operate as an illegal organisation. It set up a newspaper, mobilised workers and organised strikes. Some Russian socialists felt that the Russian peasant custom of dividing land periodically made them natural socialists. So, peasants, not workers, would be the main force of the revolution, and Russia could become socialist more quickly than other countries. Socialists were active in the countryside through the late nineteenth century. They formed the Socialist Revolutionary Party in 1900. This party struggled for peasants' right and demanded that land belonging to nobles be transferred to peasants. Social Democrats disagreed with Socialist Revolutionaries about peasants. Lenin felt that peasants were not one united group. Some were poor and other rich, some worked as labourers while others were capitalists who employed workers. Given this 'differentiation' within them, they could not all be part of a socialist movement. The party was divided over the strategy of organisation. Vladimir Lenin (who led the Bolshevik group) thought that in a repressive society like Tsarist Russia the party should be disciplined and should control the number and quality of its members. Others (Mensheviks) thought that the party should be open to all (as in Germany).

Q1. Who founded the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party in 1898?

- a. Liberals
- b. Radicals
- c. Socialists
- d. Conservatives

Ans. (c)

Q2. What was the basic idea of socialists?

- a. They were against private property.
- b. They saw private property as the root of the social ills.
- c. Both a. and b.
- d. They wanted to give women the right to vote.



Ans. (c)

Q3. What was the status of political parties in Russia before 1914?

- a. All political parties were illegal in Russia.
- b. They were of extreme importance before 1914.
- c. Several restrictions were placed on them.
- d. They used to work unofficially.

Ans. (a)

Q4. Why did Social Democratic Workers' Party have to operate as an illegal organisation?

- a. Because they respected Marx's ideas.
- b. Because of government policing.
- c. They were not so popular.
- d. Due to lack of civil liberties.

Ans. (b)

Q5. Where were the socialists active through the late nineteenth century?

- a. In the Russian countryside
- b. In all parts of the country, Russia
- c. In Britain
- d. In Japan

Ans. (a)

Q6. Who gave birth to the idea of socialism?

- a. Robert Owen
- b. Giuseppe Mazzini
- c. Karl Marx
- d. Vladimir Lenin

Ans. (c)

Source 3

Read the source given below and answer the questions that follow:

The Bolsheviks were totally opposed to private property. Most industry and banks were nationalised in November 1917. This meant that the government took over ownership



and management. Land was declared social property and peasants were allowed to seize the land of the nobility. In cities, Bolsheviks enforced the partition of large houses according to family requirements. They banned the use of the old titles of aristocracy. To assert the change, new uniforms were designed for the army and officials, following a clothing competition organised in 1918 when the Soviet hat (budeonovka) was chosen. The Bolshevik Party was renamed the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik). In November 1917, the Bolsheviks conducted the elections to the Constituent Assembly, but they failed to gain majority support. In January 1918, the Assembly rejected Bolshevik measures and Lenin dismissed the Assembly. He thought the All Russian Congress of Soviets was more democratic than an assembly elected in uncertain conditions. In March 1918, despite opposition by their political allies, the Bolsheviks signed peace with Germany at Brest Litovsk. In the years that followed, the Bolsheviks became the only party to participate in the elections to the All Russian Congress of Soviets, which became the Parliament of the country. Russia became a one-party state. Trade unions were kept under party control. The secret police (called the Cheka first, and later OGPU and NKVD) punished those who criticised the Bolsheviks.

Q1. Name two prominent political groups into which the Russian Socialist Democratic Labour Party was divided in 1898.

Ans. The two prominent political groups are:

- (i) Bolsheviks
- (ii) Mensheviks.

Q2. Mention the role of Bolsheviks in building a socialist society.

Ans. The role of Bolsheviks are:

- (i) They nationalised the banks and industries.
- (ii) In cities, large houses were partitioned according to family requirements.
- (iii) Prices of all goods and services were fixed.
- (iv) The use of old titles of aristocracy was banned.

Q3. Which secret police was formed to punish the one who criticised Bolsheviks?

Ans. The secret police formed was Cheka which was later renamed as OGPU and NKVD.

Source 4

Read the source given below and answer the following questions that follow:

When the Bolsheviks ordered land redistribution, the Russian army began to break up.



Soldiers, mostly peasants, wished to go home for the redistribution and deserted. Non-Bolshevik socialists, liberals and supporters of autocracy condemned the Bolshevik uprising. Their leaders moved to South Russia and organised troops to fight the Bolsheviks (the 'reds'). During 1918 and 1919, the 'greens' (Socialist Revolutionaries) and 'whites' (pro-Tsarists) controlled most of the Russian empire. They were backed by French, American, British and Japanese troops - all those forces who were worried at the growth of socialism in Russia. As these troops and the Bolsheviks fought a civil war, looting, banditry and famine became common. Supporters of private property among 'whites' took harsh steps with peasants who had seized land. Such actions led to the loss of popular support for the non-Bolsheviks. By January 1920, the Bolsheviks controlled most of the former Russian empire.

Q1. Who controlled most of the Russian empire during 1918 and 1919?

Ans. During 1918 and 1919, the 'greens' (Socialist Revolutionaries) and 'whites' (pro-Tsarists) controlled most of the Russian empire.

Q2. Which anti-social activities become common when Bolsheviks fought a civil war?

Ans. When Bolsheviks fought a civil war, the anti-social activities such as looting, banditry and famine became common.

Q3. Who took harsh steps with peasants who had seized land? What was its impact?

Ans. Supporters of private property among 'whites' took harsh steps with peasants who had seized land. The impact was that it led to the loss of popular support for the non-Bolsheviks.

