**Russian Revolution**

The Russian Revolution took place in 1917. This revolution actually took place in two separate "revolutions," the February Revolution and the October Revolution. The Russian Revolution replaced the existing system of autocratic rule by a tsar with the communist regime.

The revolution did not happen overnight. Discontent had been spreading and rising throughout Russia for many years prior to the revolution. One of the events which hastened the revolution was what is now known as "Bloody Sunday." This took place in 1905. The peasants of Russia, as well as the poor working class, were living in very bad conditions. They worked dangerous jobs, often went hungry, and felt that the tsar was doing nothing to help them. A priest helped organize a protest that would go to the tsar and issue requests for reforms that would help improve the lives of the people. These protesters were still loyal to the tsar, and believed that they could work with him rather than against him. They organized peacefully, and had already let it be known that they would be demonstrating. However, the soldiers protecting the tsar's palace opened fire on the protesters. Many people were killed, men, women, and children.

The tsar, Nicholas II, did a very poor job helping the people, and missed many opportunities to make reforms that could have helped prevent the revolution. He believed that the tsar should hold absolute power as given to him by God, and that the people would remain naturally loyal to him. However, a growing number of people wished to have a democratic government in which the common people would have representation and the power to improve their own lives.

The outbreak of the First World War further helped set the country on the path to revolution. Many people were against Russia entering the war, and many of their problems steadily grew worse. In February of 1917, the full-scale revolution finally broke out. The tsar was forced to abdicate, and a new government was set up. The Provisional Government was an extension of a governing body that had already been in place, called the Duma. However, the tsar had severely hindered its effectiveness. Now, it was fully in control.

The Provisional Government was not supported by everyone, though. One of the popular political movements at the time was the Bolshevik party. This group was led by Vladimir Lenin. Because the Provisional Government and the Bolsheviks couldn't work together, the country remained chaotic and unstable.

In October of that year, a second revolution took place, called the October Revolution. This time the Bolshevik party took over. The Bolsheviks had been against Russia's involvement in the First World War, and signed a treaty with Germany in 1918.

There were still many people in Russia who did not support the Bolsheviks. Eventually two primary factions appeared, the "Reds," being the Bolsheviks, and the "Whites," consisting of many various anti-Bolshevik groups. This erupted into a civil war which lasted several years, but which the Bolsheviks eventually won. This resulted in the adoption of communism and the formation of the Soviet Union (USSR).