



**RUSSIAN
REVOLUTION**
TOPIC BULLETIN

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CRISIS DIRECTOR

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Academy Model United Nations

- THE TWENTIETH ANNUAL CONFERENCE -

Hi delegates!

My name is Maya Schonberg and I will be your crisis director for AMUN XXII. I am a junior in the science academy and have been an avid munner since freshman year. Model UN has always been one of my favorite things about BCA- I enjoy conferences and I love the family (or should I say *famunly*) that is BCA's model UN team. I'm also a rock climber and I play the guitar and the ukulele. When I find the time, I want to learn how to play the piano. I can't wait to meet you guys and watch (read: help) you guys cause chaos in committee :)

If you have any questions about anything, feel free to email me at maysch22@bergen.org
Maya Schonberg

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Russian Revolution

Procedure:

This committee will operate like a traditional crisis committee. Delegates try to work together to make small solutions to an overall larger problem. Through working with the backroom, using their portfolio powers, and making solutions in the front room, delegates will attempt to gain more power. There will be crisis updates which will occur when the backroom gives frontroom new information, usually in response to something the delegates have done, or in order to get the delegates to fix the new problem. Compared to a general assembly, crisis places a larger emphasis on interpersonal relations.

There are four types of notes you can send to the backroom: crisis notes, joint crisis notes, press releases and communiques. Crisis notes (personal directives) are the most common form of communication with backroom, in which delegates will take individual action by using one's portfolio powers. Joint personal directives are the same thing, but multiple



delegates may combine their personal powers in order to achieve something they would be unable to do alone. These notes are more powerful and more likely to get passed by backroom than personal directives, so work together when you can! Press releases are used by both committees and individuals to inform the public about certain “facts” and are usually written to gauge a reaction. Communiques are used to contact entities outside of the committee in order to involve them with the crisis in a certain way. For more information, read this article: [How to write crisis notes](#).

Directives are similar to resolutions in a general assembly, but are smaller. They are the committee’s main tool for solving the crisis. Directives try to solve issues that are brought up during crisis updates or to solve the crisis overall. They are short, concise and well written. Make sure to write them as quickly as possible to avoid escalating the situation!

Historical Inaccuracies:

For the background of this committee, we will be trying to stick to history as much as possible. There is an entire section of the topic guide devoted to giving historical background, and sources if you want to do more research. The committee diverges from history by having Tsarina Alexandra ask for help leading the country after the death of a close advisor, which does not happen in our history. However, we will be peppering in events from history as part of crisis updates, mainly related to World War I. After committee starts, we will not need to follow history. You will shape history to help yourself as much as you can- it’s part of the fun of crisis! A very important matter on which we will be turning away from history will be on issues relating to the offensive views some of these people held. We want this committee to be a positive experience for all and will not tolerate any derogatory language



towards other delegates, whether intentional or not. Thus, some of these positions will be modified to exclude anti-semitic, Islamophobic, sexist and otherwise hurtful positions that might offend other members of this committee.

Expectations:

We expect you to come to committee fully prepared, with research of your own off of which you will base your position. We will have some background research as well, so please do not deviate too much from your position.

The Tsarina will not be represented in this committee by a delegate because that position would be too powerful. The Tsarina will be represented by the chair instead.

Personal powers will be emailed to you or your advisor once positions are assigned. We request that you do not share them with other delegates as they are meant for you and you alone.

Prewriting of crisis notes, directives, communiques, and press releases is not allowed. Any delegates caught prewriting will be

disqualified from awards. However, it is acceptable to come with a prepared crisis arc; we highly recommend it, as it will help you direct your notes towards your goals with more efficiency and accuracy.

Finally, we want you to have as much fun as possible in our committee! Talk to other delegates, your chairs/ backroom, and be creative with your arcs! Also, if possible, be fully prepared to storm other committees blaring the State Anthem of the Soviet Union (hehe).

Historical Background:

Setting the Scene

Russia has always been a conservative country. There have been a few forward-thinking leaders in Russian history -namely Peter the Great (ruled 1689-1725) and Catherine the Great (ruled 1762-1796)- but the vast majority were conservative and did not want to initiate much change. Peter's accomplishments include his modernization of the Russian army,



improving the system of education for the sons of noblemen and the building of manufacturing operations in Russia. Catherine introduced the ideas of the European Enlightenment to Russian culture and intellectualism. However, all of this change has been a result of the leaders trying to enforce their personal agendas and visions for Russia. Two consequential examples of this are the freeing of the serfs in 1861 and the Russian Industrial Revolution. By the mid-nineteenth century, all the other European countries had abolished serfdom, while Russia still clung to its old ways. Russia had seen that serfdom was preventing its development as a country and played a role in their loss in the Crimean War. In order to further advance themselves, Russia began a program of economic industrialization.

This industrialization program was very successful. They placed a lot of effort into developing a railroad system and incorporated heavy industry. With generous help from foreign investors, Russia became fourth in the world in steel production and was a major player in the textile, coal and oil industries.

All of this economic growth led to massive social changes. Firstly, there was the emergence of an educated middle class of businesspeople and professionals. The middle class strongly disagreed with the conservative political structure of tsarist Russia, but they also relied on the government's help with keeping their businesses running through funding and quashing the increasingly radical working class.

The radicalism of the working class was especially dangerous to the middle class because they were united in their resentment of their mistreatment- long hours, little pay, unsanitary living conditions and overt mistreatment from their superiors. They had no outlet with which to air their grievances except for large-scale strikes. These strikes didn't change much, and the workers realized that they would need to initiate change through other means.

The Revolution of 1905

Under the oppressive conditions of factory life, a small number of workers educated themselves on Marxist ideas of worker's insurrection and began to see it as a



way to better themselves and their peers. In 1898, these workers formed an illegal Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP), also known as the Social Democrats. They began educating their peers, advocating for worker's rights through unions and eventually leading a call for revolution. Many members of this party were almost immediately arrested by the police, chasing the others into exile.

The exiles met in Brussels and London in 1903 in order to discuss a new course of action. The Social Democrats became divided between the followers of Lenin and the followers of Martov. Lenin wanted the party to be solely made up of revolutionaries who were willing to do that it took to liberate Russia. Martov thought that anyone who agreed with their ideology should be able to join their party. These two factions became known as the Bolsheviks (Lenin) and the Mensheviks (Martov).

The Social Democrats were not the only relevant socio-political group at the time. Other radical groups within Russia consolidated into the Socialist Revolutionary Party at a summit in Switzerland. The Socialist Revolutionary Party

focused on gaining support of the peasants while the Social Democrats wanted the support of the urban workers. Due to the isolated nature of Russian villages, both of these parties found the majority of their support from the cities. Neither was able to consolidate a majority.

There was also an uptick in Russian Liberalism- some educated conservatives, the zemstvo liberals, cautiously pushed for a constitutional monarchy and radical liberals later formed the Union of Liberation. Nationalist parties began to form among other Russian states such as Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine.

While the tsarist government was willing to initiate change that would help the upper classes, they were hesitant to do anything to help the workers. The anger over their continued oppression and lack of change from above boiled over after a humiliating loss in the Russo-Japanese War. Just as military victories boost national pride and nationalist sentiment, military defeats achieve the opposite.

On January 22, 1905, a day that became known as Bloody Sunday, police killed over 100 peaceful



protesters outside of the Winter Palace. Bloody Sunday sparked a series of uprisings throughout Russia. Constitutionals became much more forceful with their demands over the Spring and Summer of 1905. There was an uptick in strikes and agrarian riots. By October, there was a widespread, coordinated strike that disrupted the Russian communication system. The independent strike committees in St. Petersburg coalesced together into soviets (worker's deputies councils). In the eyes of the tsarist government, the soviets had the potential to become a revolutionary government. The idea of a widespread revolution was enough to scare the tsar into making changes.

The First and Second Dumas

On October 30, Tsar Nicolas II reluctantly issued the October Manifesto which established an elected legislative body (the Duma) and granted civil and political liberties to many Russians. While this was a massive step towards change, this did not appease many of the more radical parties who boycotted elections. The creation of

the Duma caused many political groups to reconsolidate into parties. The Union of Liberation, rebranded the Kadets, won the most votes. The second-largest portion of the vote went to a socialist group that decided not to boycott, the Trudoviks. The Socialist Revolutionary Party completely boycotted the election, as did the Social Democrats except in Georgia where they did very well. The First Duma, under former financial minister Witte, managed to pass a slew of radical reforms. They wanted to grant rights to dissenters and those following religions other than Russian Orthodox Christianity and to free all political prisoners. This was too much for the Tsar; he dissolved the first Duma and fired Witte.

He appointed former governor Pyotr Arkadyevich Stolypin and decided to hold elections for the Second Duma, which would operate under Stolypin. The Social Revolutionary Party and Social Democrats both participated in the elections for the Second Duma, making it more radical than the First. It met in the March of 1907 and was dissolved by mid-June.



The Third and Fourth Dumas

For the Third Duma, the Tsar went against the October Manifesto in order to restrict the number of seats able to be won by liberals and leftists. The right wing parties and the Octobrist Party (formerly the zemstvo liberals) won the majority of the votes. The combined seats won by the Kadets, socialist parties and non-Russian delegates constituted about a fourth of the positions in the Duma.

Stolypin's Dumas were not democratic, but they were an improvement from the autocratic system of the past. While the Dumas were not representative of the opinions of the Russian people or powerful, they were a forum for voicing one's opinions. Unions were legalized, even though striking was illegal. The press was much less restricted and there was very little censorship of literature. The economy started on an upward trajectory in 1908 and Russia was prospering.

Under Stolypin, the Duma focused on agricultural reform. Individual peasants were encouraged to own land instead of having the land belong to the village. This incentivized a minority of the

peasants to work harder and help themselves prosper. However, those who were unable to take such initiatives were forced to turn to the industrial sector for work because Stolypin refused to divide the land of the nobles among the peasants, even though this would have benefited the majority of peasants unable to buy their own land.

Another initiative taken up by Stolypin was the revival of Russian nationalism. The old regime was scared that nationalism in other states would lead to them seceding from Russia, so Stolypin assuaged their fears by destroying nationalist movements. The one exception was the treatment of the Latvian peasants, as the government feared a repeat of the violence they caused during the Revolution of 1905.

The most consequential effect of these nationalist policies was the renewed interest in the Balkans. Russia's involvement escalated tensions in the Balkans, starting a global war that led to the demise of its longstanding empire.



Current Situation:

World War I

Early Russian involvement in WWI focused on attacking former East Prussia (modern day Germany). The second army went to intercept the retreating Eighth German Army while the Russian first army advanced into Germany's center. At first successful, the Tsar made further plans for an attack on Berlin. However, the Battle of Tannenberg was a turning point in which Russian forces began to fail. Germany, after heavy Russian losses, took the opportunity to launch a risky but ultimately successful attack. As a result, Russia was driven out of Prussian territory and began to suffer even heavier losses and setbacks afterwards. However, Russian forces were more successful in Austria-Hungary, eventually capturing the capital. The Southern Russian army then began to advance towards Poland according to plan.

The Tsar's ultimate failure, however, was believing that he could successfully lead the army and leave his position as ruler to

spend disproportionate amounts of time in the Eastern Front. This likely was a decision influenced by the Tsar's romanticized view of warfare and battle. Because of this, the Tsarina Alexandra was left at home to take over a large portion of the Tsar's duties, and she succumbed to the influence of Rasputin.

The Tsarina's Reign

When her husband left to lead the Russian Army, Tsarina Alexandra took charge of Russia. She was inexperienced with government and turned to her trusted advisor, self-dubbed holy man Grigory Rasputin. The Fourth Duma had been dissolved by her husband before he left for war (they formed the Progressive Bloc and called for the formation of a coalition government), leaving her without guidance from a group of seasoned and respected leaders. Under Rasputin's guidance, Alexandra began firing government officials left and right, leaving Russia without real leadership. Someone put an end to the madness when Rasputin was brought down by three assassination attempts on December 29-30 of 1916.



Where You Come In

Now with Rasputin dead and all the royal advisors fired, Tsarina Alexandra needs a way to keep Russia from falling apart. She knows she is unpopular with her people, so she decided to turn to a group of important Russian political leaders- you! She chose leaders from the important political parties of the now-dissolved Dumas and of nationalist movements in other Russian nations. She formed this committee on January 1st, 1917 (starting date of committee) in order to help her lead Russia. Delegates in this committee will be advising the Tsarina and dealing with internal tensions. The members of this committee do not exactly agree on everything, as they come from different backgrounds and have different ideas on how to fix Russia.

Pressing Issues

In reality, the most pressing issue in the country of Russia itself was simply obtaining food. Food shortages because of the lack of importation into the Russian market ensued, even though Russia

was one of the largest producers of food in Europe at the time. It was commonly said that Russian farmers were burying their bread instead of selling it in the markets. The food shortages, especially in large cities such as Moscow and St. Petersburg escalated to situations of starvation for millions of people in the years of 1915-17. The shortages were so severe both due to the scarcity of food in the markets and the relatively high prices, causing riots in the years of 1915 and 1916. In fact, in the year of 1916 it was estimated that close to 300 incidents of riots/uprisings occurred at city food markets as a result of the shortages. In 1916 the riots were mainly due to the high price of sugar. However, in 1917, there was a complete scarcity of all products in urban markets, leading to mass starvation. The rioting in 1916-1917 became so widespread that the police stopped trying to be effective and abandoned their posts en masse. Even soldiers joined in the riots, making it ultimately impossible to control.

However, this lack of resources and poor control and organization also permeated into the military. Firstly, it became quite difficult to mobilize men because the majority of



Russian males were too young to serve due to high birth rates. An even more concerning shortage was in the military reserves. To reduce costs the army had to resort to giving minimal to no formal training to new recruits other than the First Levy, leaving Russian troops ill-prepared and ill-suited for combat. Once the First Levy began facing increasing casualty counts, the military resorted to drawing troops from the ill-trained Second Levy.

The higher commanding military positions were given to inexperienced nobles, who ended up wasting resources on the obsolete cavalry, making poor strategic decisions, defending useless forts, refusing to dig trenches, neglecting to properly arm soldiers with modern weapons and artillery, and needlessly sending high numbers of troops to die in battles.

As the war dragged on through the winter the army began to experience shortages of material. Russia's transport network could not cope with the massive deliveries of munitions, food, clothing, and medical care to the fronts. Munitions shortages were the most acute. The War Ministry had run

down the armaments industry, assuming it could make do with existing stocks, and now had to place new orders for shells and guns abroad which were slow in arriving.

Questions to Consider:

What are possible solutions to the food shortages and resulting riots? Is it inherently an issue having to do with the Tzar's decision-making?

How can the current government be reformed so that the Tzar cannot dissolve the Dumas at his will? Is it possible to retain the current government while undergoing necessary reform?

What should be the course of action in relation to Russia's involvement in the Great War?

How should the military be reformed in order to be an effective fighting force? How should Russia change in order for this to happen?

Is a communist revolution something that one should be in support of or cautious of?



Positions

Vladimir Lenin:

Lenin is the leader of the Bolshevik faction of the RSDLP. He was sent to exile because of his socialist views, and he later moved to Western Europe. There, he made connections with fellow Marxists in many countries, establishing important connections and sending propaganda back to Russia to radicalize the proletariat. He believed that a violent uprising was necessary in order to establish a socialist state in Russia and believes that the ends always justify the means.

Joseph Stalin:

Stalin is a member of the Bolshevik faction of the RSDLP. He aligned himself with the Georgian Bolsheviks after escaping from Russian Prison and became one of their most prominent leaders. He edited the party's newspaper, Pravda, and raised funds for Vladimir Lenin through robberies, kidnappings, and protection rackets. Repeatedly arrested, he

underwent several internal exiles. A dedicated member of the party, he is known to go to great lengths to achieve Lenin's goals, whether the means are illegal or immoral. However, even with his loyalty to Lenin, many look down on him as an uneducated peasant trying to seize the opportunity to gain power.

Alexander Bogdanov:

Alexander Bogdanov is a prominent figure in the Bolshevik faction of the RSDLP, and was an early supporter as far back as 1904. He is a learned intellectual, having published multiple works on philosophy, economics, and politics. His influence in the party is second only to Lenin, and he spent his exile abroad with him in Finland after an arrest and three years in a Russian outpost. Though in the same party and equally supportive of its revolutionary ideals, his philosophies and works often clash with Lenin.

Julius Martov:

He is a Turkish Jew from Constantinople. An early Russian Revolutionary, he got introduced to



the Mensheviks through his sister, and early Menshevik leader. He is a Marxist intellectual who's ideals draw influence from European socialism, particularly the German brand. Like many other revolutionaries, he was exiled for circulating censored works and literature on marxist ideologies, and joined the Menshevik party while in exile. He is now the leader of the Menshevik faction.

Leon Trotsky:

He is a revolutionary and a current founder and member of the Menshevik faction of the RSDLP. An extremely prominent voice in the brewing revolutionary tide, he is a strong believer in the Marxist ideology and is also known for founding the school of thought rooted in Marxism known as Trotskyism, which is based on the ideal of one party dedicated to the proletariat that is run by the democratic participation of said proletariat. He, though a fellow revolutionary and exile of Lenin and Stalin, is vehemently opposed to many of the ideals of a unified Russian country under socialism.

He believed that the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks could never be unified.

Evgeni Gegechkori:

He is a Georgian nobleman, politician, and Social Democratic revolutionary. He is wealthy and born of a noble family and studied at Moscow University. During his time getting his education, he joined the RSDLP's movement in 1903 and joined the Menshevik faction. He was involved in the 1905 revolution in Georgia and was elected a member to the Third State Duma for the Kutais Governorate from 1907 to 1912, which was ultimately dissolved by the Tzar. A follower of the philosophy of Leon Trotsky and a loyal member of the Mensheviks, he is opposed to the Tzar and his actions and does not intend to keep him in power.

Grigory Gershuni:

He is a well-educated Jewish revolutionary and one of the founders of the Russian Socialist-Revolutionary Party. A supporter of the socialist ideology and philosophy, he, along with his fellow founders of the party, was repeatedly jailed, exiled, and



suppressed by the Tzar's government. He helped to plan and successfully go through with multiple assassinations of nobles and royalty. Though a revolutionary like many others, he is adamant that the rights of the Jews be upheld and is heavily opposed to others that consider them something to get rid of.

Andrei Argunov:

He was an early socialist revolutionary and an organizer of illegal journal publications and discussion circles. Argunov helped found and acted as the Russian Socialist Revolutionary Party's treasurer, collecting the funds for its combat organization. With the outbreak of war in 1914, Argunov supported the Russian war effort, and called for an end to all revolutionary activity until Germany had been defeated. He edited the war time social patriotic journals. Argunov strongly opposes the Bolshevik faction.

Viktor Chernov:

He is a Russian revolutionary and one of the founders of the Russian Socialist-Revolutionary Party. He is

the primary party theoretician or the 'brain' of the party, and is more of an analyst than political leader. His main goal for the party is to create support for agrarian peasants and to socialize all farming and to promote a federally structured government system. Though he is a fellow supporter of revolution, he is ideologically opposed to Lenin in terms of the type of government he wants to build from the ashes of the revolution he hopes to come... and he's not afraid to have his party use violence to advance its progress.

Pavel Miliukov:

A former educator, he is the founder and leader of the moderate political reformist group known as the Constitutional Democratic Party (Kadets). He is not a revolutionary like many others in this committee, but he does intend to reform Russia, as a liberal politician and historian. He, in fact, is the minister of foreign affairs in the Russian government, and is currently trying to do whatever he can to prevent Russia from exiting the effort of the Great War.



Vasily Maklakov:

He is an educated Russian trial lawyer and one of the leaders of the Kadets. Though a political moderate, he is very vocal and adamant in his advocacy for reformation of the Russian government into a constitutional monarchy. He takes great inspiration from the political system of Athens, which he studied in his time working on his PhD. He hopes to replicate a similar system in Russia in order to create a more modern and free country.

Gregory Lvov:

A prominent Russian nobleman and statesman, he is educated in law and is a prominent figure in the Kadet party. His main intention at the moment is to reform Russia into a constitutional government while keeping its monarchical legacy and traditions intact. As a noble, he is staunchly opposed to revolutionaries and marxists who seek to tear the Russian monarchy down and institute an entirely new socialist government.

Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams:

She is a prominent liberal journalist and writer. She is the daughter of a minor nobleman and was able to receive a well-rounded education, as well as experience a multitude of different cultures in her travels and studies abroad. She is an important member of the Kadet party and hopes to exact its plans for the constitutional reform of the Russian government. She is a vocal feminist and a campaigner for the equal rights of women in Russia.

Alexander Guchkov:

Alexander Guchkov is one of the founders of the Octobrist Party. He served as its chairman starting in October of 1906. He was elected to the First Duma and became involved in its military subcommittees. He became the chairman of the Third Duma before resigning in late March. He was not re-elected to the Fourth Duma, but he still continued to be active in Russian politics. Him and other Octobrists led an investigation into Grigory Rasputin. Throughout the war, he held important positions in non-governmental military



organizations and was one of the founders of the progressive bloc.

Mikhail Rodzianko:

Mikhail Rodzianko is a prominent member and one of the founders of the conservative Octobrist Party. They were strong advocates for a constitutional monarchy. He served in the Third and Fourth Dumas and was elected chairman in 1911. Like Guchkov, he was an outspoken critic of Grigory Rasputin and had fought with the Tsarina on the subject of his presence. He is also captain of the royal guard and has connections in the military. While he believes that there must be substantial change in the government, he is opposed to the Marxist reforms promoted by other members of this committee.

Volodymyr Vynnychenko:

He is a famous Ukrainian writer who produced many censored works in his time. He is a political activist who is involved in many Ukrainian revolutionary circles. Now, though he has been expelled and suspended from institutions multiple times through his

expression of revolutionary opinions, he continues to write and produce works that propel the revolutionary agenda.

Roman Dmowski:

He is a prominent advocate for the preservation of Polish culture and for the independence and autonomy of the Polish people. His goal is to get the Tzar to allow such a thing for the Polish citizens of the Russian empire. He is currently one of the main members of the Polish National Committee and has been called the father of Polish nationalism. He is opposed to the Bolsheviks, as they intend to unite the entire Russian empire under one socialist government without allowing any autonomy for the individual nations and cultures. He has attempted to curry favor with the Ally powers of the great war in his pursuit of Polish national autonomy.

Noe Zhordania

He came from fairly humble origins, having been born to a small landowner in his village and getting his education in religious studies. He founded and led the first legal



marxist organization in Georgia. He is now a Georgian journalist and a prominent member of the Menshevik faction, trying to advocate for agrarian peoples in Russia.

Countess Sofia Vladimirovna Panina:

She is a prominent member and founder of the Kadet party. She is the last member of the aristocratic Panin family and a well educated philanthropist. Ideologically, she is a vocal advocate for political reform and even more driven to build a good system of education for the country. That is what she believes will transform Russia into a truly free society. Though not involved in politics just yet, she intends to be an active figure in politics and help to put Russia through the reform it desperately needs, but not through revolution.

Vincas Mickevičius-Kapsukas:

He is a lithuanian revolutionary who was born into a wealthy family of farmers and well-educated. He was an early advocate against government censorship and overregulation. He was a member

of the Lithuanian Socialist Democratic Party and was always set on a goal of an independent and autonomous Lithuania. Now in exile, he like many other revolutionary radicals in the Russian Empire is waiting in the chaos for his chance to influence change.

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