

# The Revolutions of 1917

The Constitutional Experiment

The Fall of the Monarchy

Dual Government

The October Revolution

# Questions

- Could Russia have avoided another revolution?
- Could Russia have remained a constitutional monarchy?
- Was it World War I that undermined the monarchy or the revolutionaries?

# Demi-Semi- Constitutional Monarchy

- Duma
- Interpellation of Ministers
- Freedom of speech
- Freedom of organizing

But

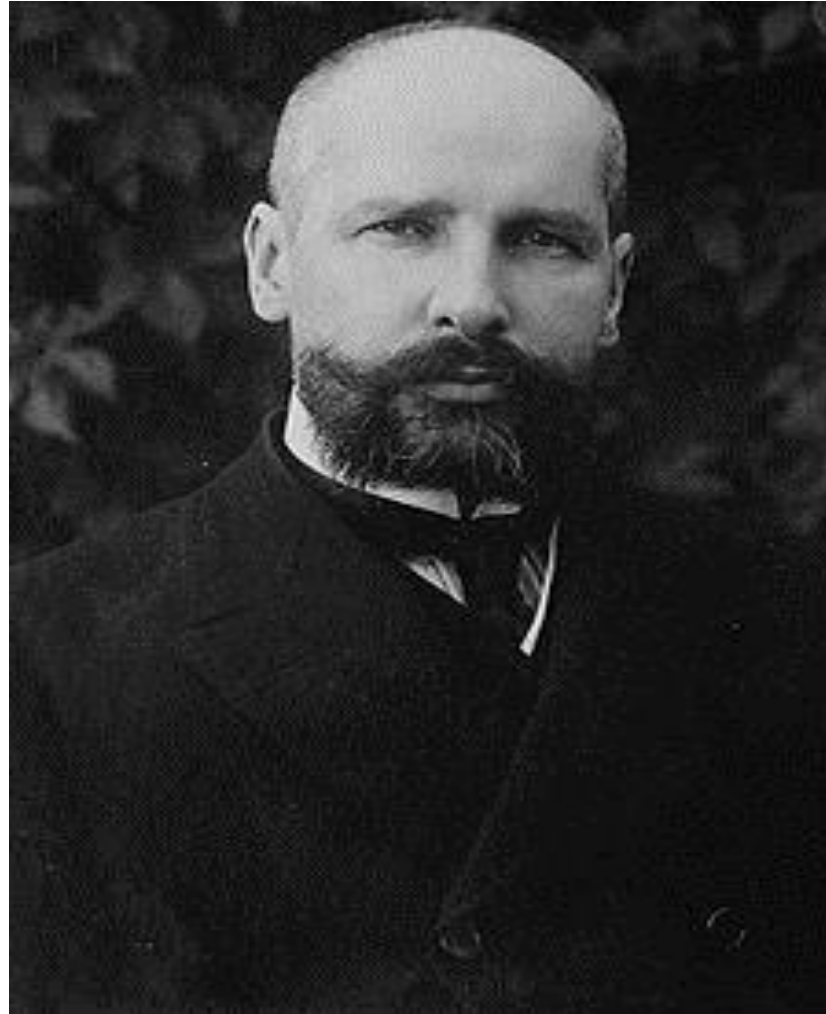
- Tsar's complete distrust of the Duma
- & Duma's complete distrust of the Tsar

# Contradictions of 1905-1917

- Freely elected parliament
  - But Nicholas II couldn't stand it
  - And he could dissolve it at will
- Civil rights extended to the population
  - But secret police still spy on everyone
- Bureaucracy still running the government in an autocratic manner

# Peter Stolypin (1862-1911)

## Prime Minister, 1906-1911



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# Stolypin's Reforms

- Wager on the strong
  - peasants could consolidate their strips
  - they could leave the commune
- Transfer of crown and state lands to the Peasant Bank for sale to the peasants
- Offer of Siberian lands to the peasants
- Stolypin's neckties

# Could Russia have avoided revolution?

## Pluses

Third Duma – stable

Economic growth

Growth of professional classes

## Minuses

Both left and right oppose the Duma

Peasant dissatisfaction

Loss of faith in the tsar

WWI: military, political and social disaster

# World War I: Why did Russia join?

- Pan-Slavism and patriotism
- Imperial Geopolitics
- Optimism about the offensive
- Technology's unexpected impact
  - The machine gun
  - The railroad



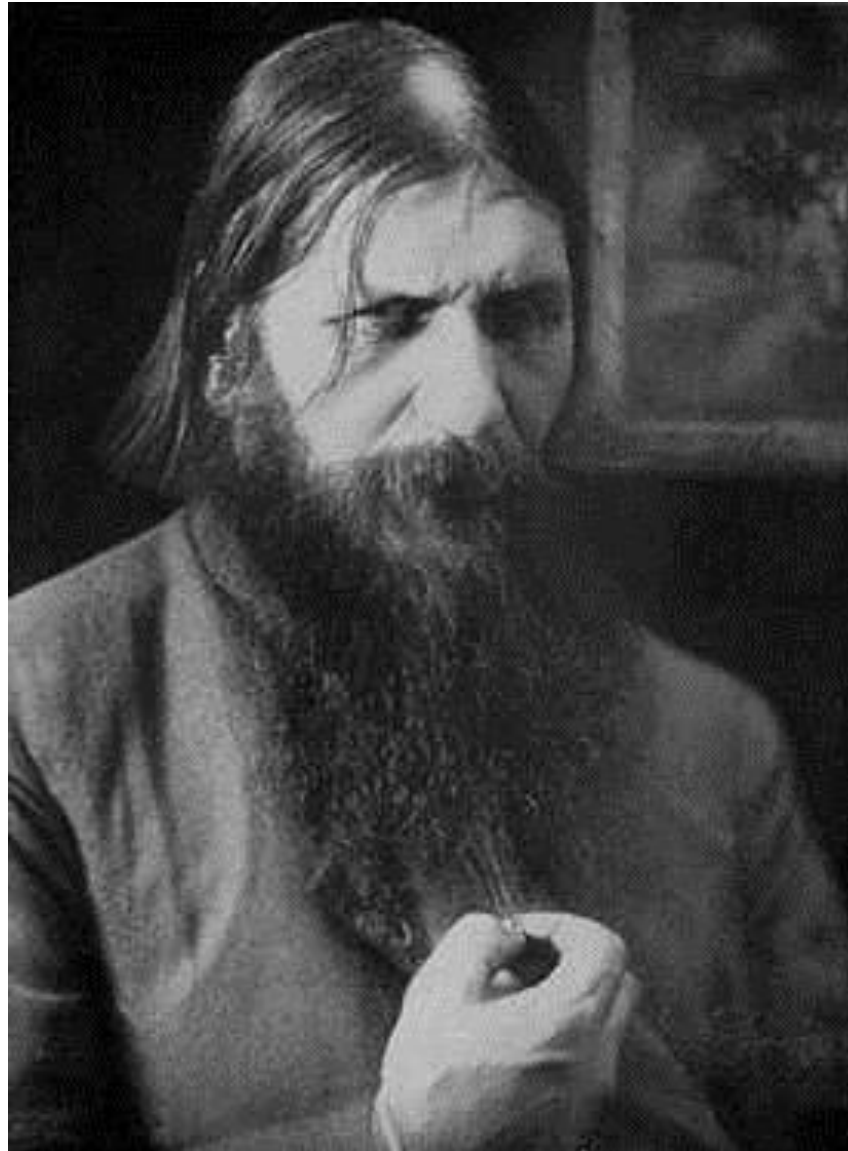
# Tsar Nicholas II in 1915

Painting by Boris  
Kustodiev



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# Grigori Rasputin



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# Tsar & Tsarina as Puppets of Rasputin



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# Russian Wounded Returning from WWI



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# Women's Bread Riots, Feb. 1917



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# The Putilov Factory



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The tsar has abdicated! The people and the army demand PEACE!  
This event took place in our blessed Russia! Rejoice, brothers.  
The Petrograd Telegraph Agency reports: "A revolution has broken out in Petrograd. The executive committee, consisting of 12 deputies of the State Duma, has taken power into its hands. The revolutionaries arrested the ministers. The garrison of the capital, consisting of 30,000 soldiers, has joined with the revolutionaries. The tsar has abdicated!"

# Dual government

- Provisional Government
- Soviet of Workers', Peasants', and Soldiers' Deputies



# Order No. 1

issued by the Petrograd Soviet of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies

- Election of regimental committees
- Election of representatives to the Soviet
- Subordination of all military units to the Soviet
- All arms under the control of the committees
- Officers forbidden to address soldiers with “ty” (familiar form of address)

# Tauride Palace



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# The Petrograd Soviet



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# The Provisional Government



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# Prince Georgy Lvov



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## Report from the Front:

### **General Alekseev to War Minister Guchkov. April 16, 1917**

[source: Seventeen Moments]

- The situation in the army grows worse every day: information coming in from all sides indicates that the army is systematically falling apart.
- (1) Desertions continue unabated: in the armies of the Northern and Western fronts between April 1 and 7, 7,688 soldiers are reported as deserters ... a number manifestly and considerably underestimated..
- (2) Discipline declines with each passing day; those guilty of violating military duty are completely indifferent to possible criminal punishments, convinced of the extreme unlikelihood of enforcement.
- (3) The authority of officers and commanders has collapsed and cannot be restored by present methods. Owing to undeserved humiliations and assaults, the de facto removal of their authority over subordinates, and the surrender of such control to soldiers' committees ... the morale of the officer corps has sunk to a new low.
- (4) A pacifist mood has developed in the ranks. Among the soldier mass, not only is the idea of offensive operations rejected, but even preparations for such, on which basis major violations of discipline have occurred ...
- (5) Defeatist literature and propaganda has built itself a firm nest in the army. This propaganda comes from two sides -from the enemy and from the rear ... and obviously stems from the same source.

# Dilemmas

- War
  - Annexations
  - Defense
  - Defeat
- Land
  - With or without compensation
- Bread
  - How to feed the cities

# Lenin at the Finland Station (April)



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# April Theses

- No to defensism
- All power to the Soviets
- No support for the Provisional Government
- Abolition of the police, the army, the bureaucracy
- All officers to be elected
- Confiscation of all private lands
- Nationalization of all lands

Principal Bolshevik slogan:

Bread, Peace, Land

# Who is Against the Soviets?

(the officer, the banker, the priest and the merchant)



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# July Street Demonstrations



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# General Kornilov (August 1917)



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# Kerensky (in white) arriving in Moscow (Aug. 1917)



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# Lenin's dilemma – September 1917

What the Provisional Government might do:

- Separate peace with Germany?
- Early elections to the Constituent Assembly?
- Provocation of another uprising like the July Days
  - discrediting/arrest of the Bolsheviks

# Provisional Government Mistake, September 1917

Mobilization of the Petrograd garrison for the  
front

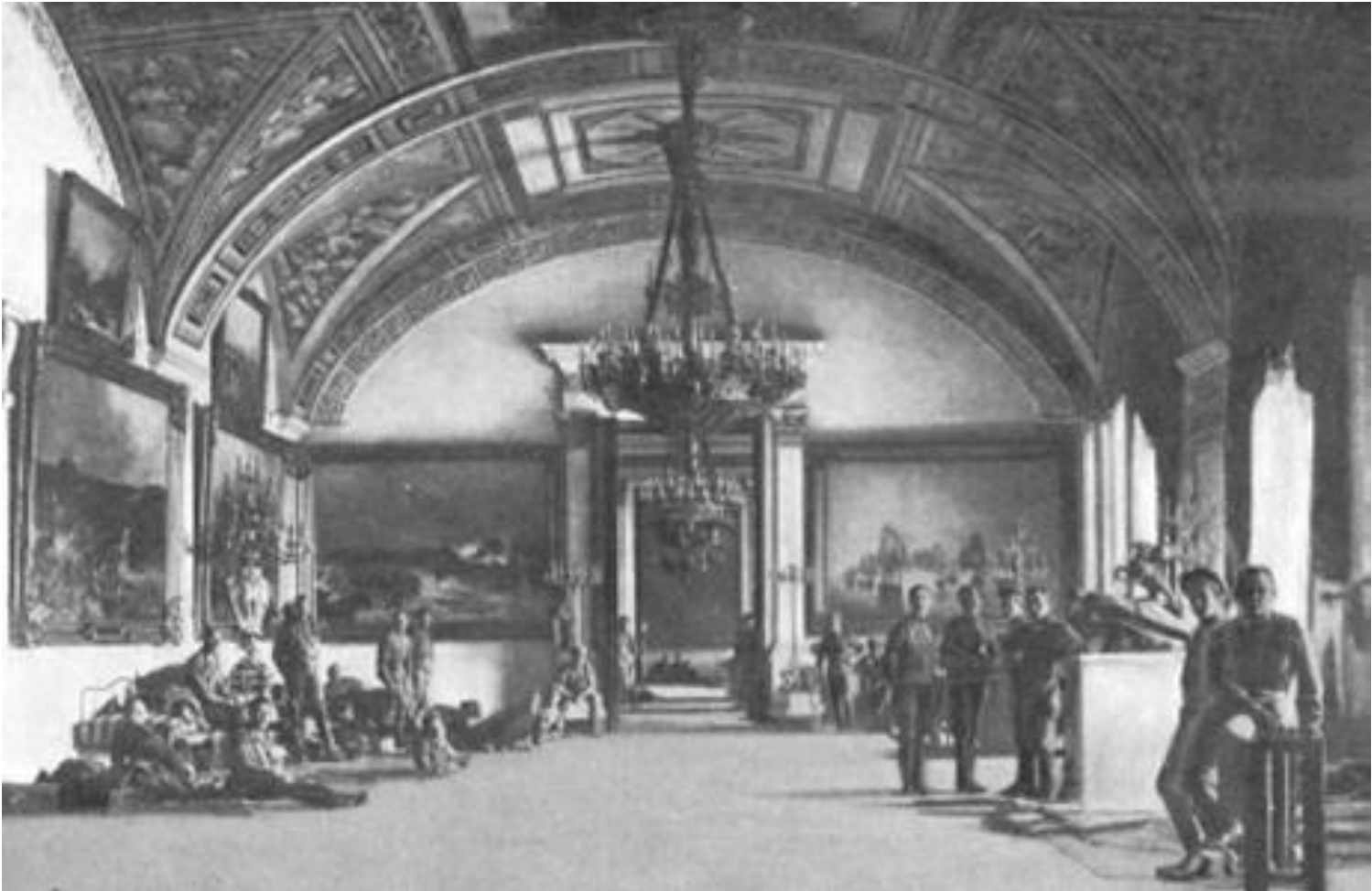


# October Seizure of Power

- 1) seize the main bridges and telegraph (night of October 24)
- 2) seize the main railways (day of October 25)
- 3) seize the headquarters of the Provisional Government (Winter Palace) (evening of October 25)

# Winter Palace Defended by the Junkers

October 1917



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# “To the Citizens of Russia”

(October 25, 1917)

- The Provisional Government has been deposed.
- Power has passed to the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies
- Long live the revolution of workers, soldiers and peasants!

# First Decrees

- Peace
- Land
- The press
- The rights of the peoples of Russia

# Leading Bolsheviks, 1919



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## Vladimir Lenin



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## Joseph Stalin



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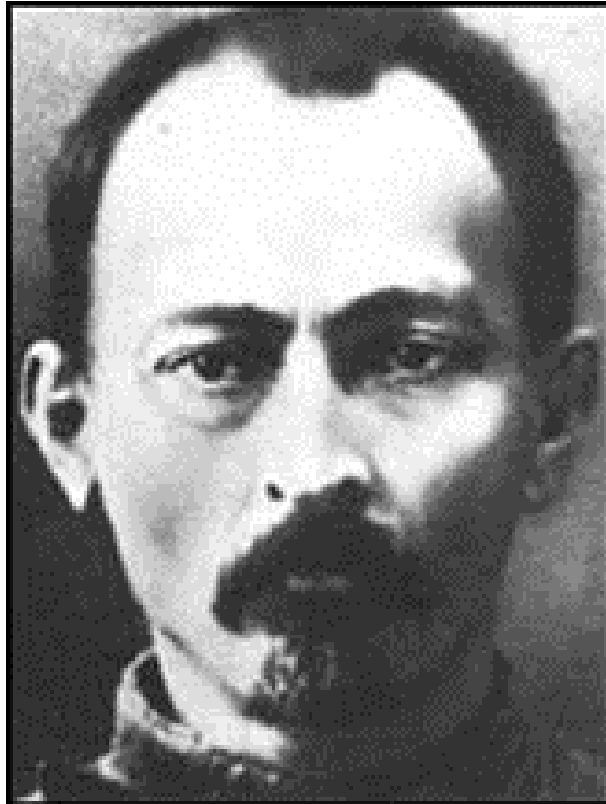
## Jacob Sverdlov

# Leading Bolsheviks, 1919



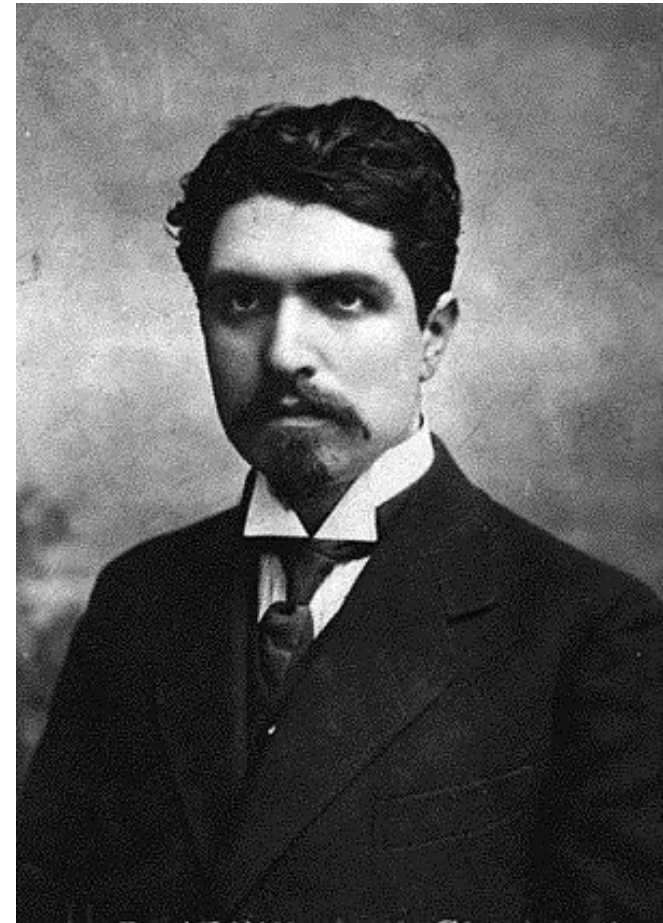
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# Leading Bolsheviks, 1919



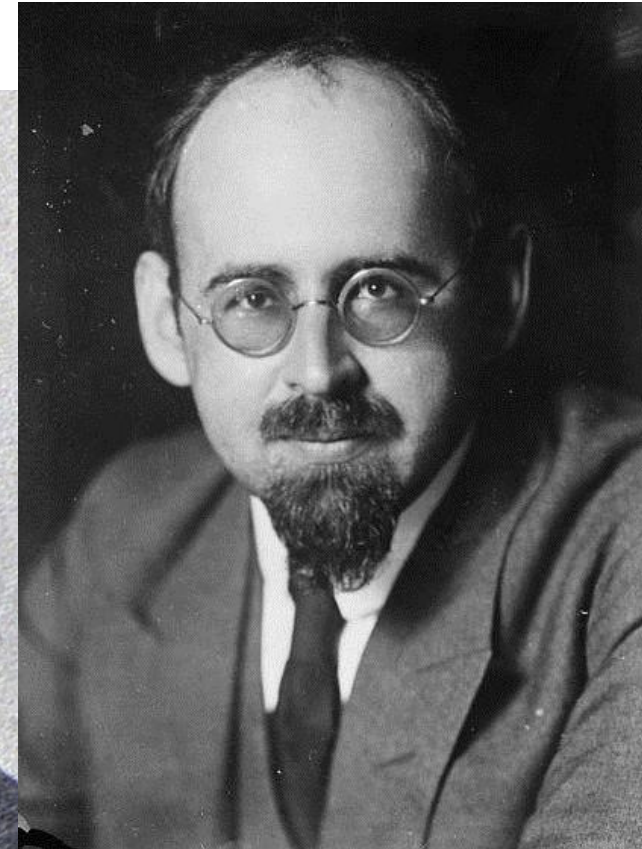
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**Nikolay  
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# Leading Bolsheviks, 1919



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Pavlovich  
Milyutin



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Alexandra Mikhailovna  
Kollontai



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Fyodor  
Andreyevich  
Sergeyev



# Leading Bolsheviks, 1919



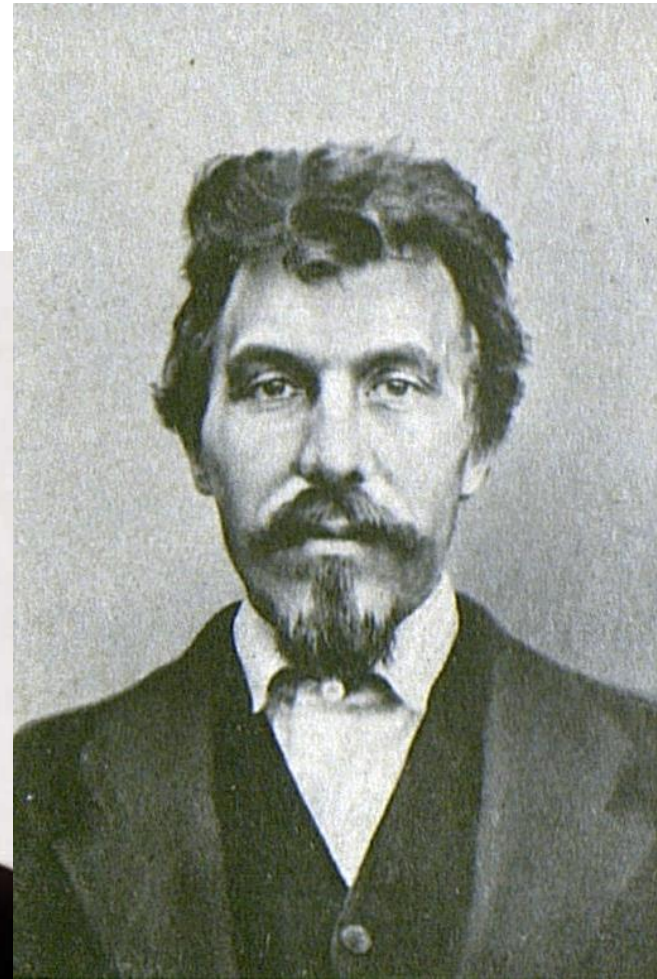
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Sokolnikov**



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**Nikolai Bukharin**



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**Alexei Rykov**

# Leading Bolsheviks, 1919



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**Viktor Nogin**

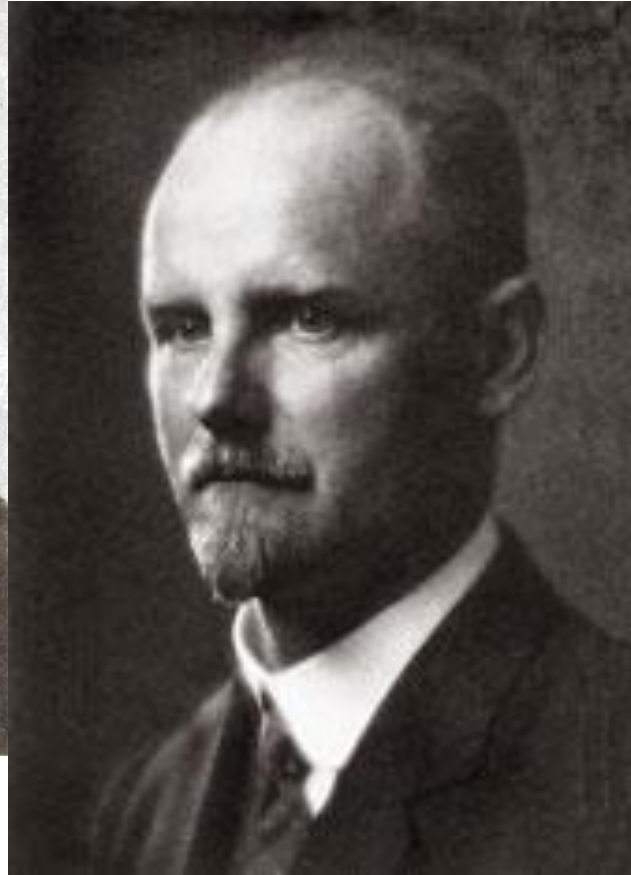


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**Yan Antonovich  
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**Lev Kamenev**

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**Ivar Tenisovich  
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