

Name _____

Global 10R- Ms. Hock & Ms. Powers

Date _____

Period _____

Was Lenin a hero for Russia?

Directions: As you complete the following reading, answer the guiding questions.

The Bolsheviks Take Charge:

As a result of the November Revolution, the Bolsheviks (renamed the Communists), led by Lenin, take control of the Russian government, with Moscow becoming their headquarters. The Bolsheviks ended private ownership of land and distributed land to the peasants. Workers were given control of the factories and mines, and a new red flag with an entwined hammer and sickle was created.

*"We shall now occupy ourselves in Russia in building up a proletarian socialist state."
-Lenin*

1. What did Lenin want to establish? Who would have the power in Russia now?
2. What did Lenin do for the lower classes?
3. Why would their flag have a hammer and sickle on it?

Russian Civil War:

After the Bolshevik Revolution, Lenin signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany, to end Russian involvement in World War I. Russia lost territory and population in this treaty. On the domestic front, Russia catapulted into a three-year civil war between the "Reds," as the Communists were known and the "Whites," counterrevolutionaries who remained loyal to the czar. Britain, France, and the United States sent help to the Whites, in hopes the whites would win and rejoin in the war against Germany. The Reds appealed to nationalism and urged Russians to drive out foreigners. The civil war was brutal in Russia. The counter-revolutionaries killed off any Communists they caught, and the Communists set-up a secret police called the Cheka, to arrest and execute any ordinary citizens even if they were only suspected of taking action against the revolution.

4. Who was on each side of Russia's civil war?

"Tens of thousands of people had fled... during that space of time, rushing away from the Red Terror with nothing but the clothes they stood in, as people rush in their nightdresses out of a house on fire... We were being swept away in the wreckage of a demoralized army"

-Russia under the Bolshevik Regime

5. Why do you think people feared the Red Army? Why do you think they called them the "Red Terror"?

In order to ensure loyalty to the Communist regime, Lenin and the Bolsheviks adopted a policy of war communism. The communists took over banks, mines, factories, and railroads. Peasants were forced to deliver “surplus” food to hungry people in the cities. Peasant laborers were drafted into the military or factory work. Meanwhile Trotsky, Lenin’s top advisor, turned the Red Army into an effective fighting force. He used commissars, Communist party officials assigned to the army to teach Communist party principles and ensure party loyalty. Trotsky ordered officers to shoot every tenth man if a unit performed poorly. By 1921, the Communists defeated the Whites and were ready to establish a Communist Soviet Union.

6. What was war communism? Why do you think Lenin and the Communists instituted war communism?
7. How did Trotsky ensure party loyalty?
8. Who won the civil war? How?

Building a Communist Soviet Union:

Once the Communist victory was established and his personal power was secure, Lenin turned to the enormous problem of rebuilding a state and an economy that had been shattered by World War I, two revolutions, and years of civil war. In 1922, the Communists produced a constitution that was both democratic and socialist. It set-up an elected legislature called the Supreme Soviet, and gave all citizens over 18 the right to vote. All political power, resources, and means of production would be controlled by the workers and peasants, and the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) or Soviet Union was established. Reality, however, differed from the theory of the Soviet Union. The Communist regime reigned supreme over the people, and it used its secret police to enforce its will.

9. How did the Communists set-up the government? Did the people really have power?

New Economic Policy:

On the economic front, Lenin retreated from his policy of “war communism,” which had brought the economy to near collapse. Under party control, factory and mine output had fallen. In 1921, Lenin adopted the New Economic Policy. Although the state kept control of banks, foreign trade, and large industries, small business were allowed to re-open for private profit. The government also stopped seizing peasant land, and peasants held onto small plots of land and freely sold their surplus crops. This policy helped the Soviet economy recover, and by 1928 food and industrial production increased again.

The most urgent thing at the present time is to take measures that will immediately increase the productive forces of peasant farming and to strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat. . . . A wise Communist will not be afraid of learning from a capitalist. We shall learn to do the same . . . with the commission agents, with the buyers who are working for the state, with the little-cooperator capitalists, with the entrepreneur concessionaires...
-Lenin

10. What was the New Economic Policy (NEP)? What did it call for?
11. Looking at the primary source, what did Lenin believe the Communists needed to do? Did this policy help the Soviet Union?

