

Lesson Plan: Labor, Socialism, and Politics to WWI

1st: Methods of Reform

The working class had three choices...

1) Trade Unionism (syndicalism)

--Benefits: direct action and immediate results

--Drawbacks: employers were very hostile towards unions

2) Democracy and Political Parties: all the major European states (except Russia) had adopted broad-based electoral systems

--Benefits: peaceful, long-lasting change, political representation (politicians could no longer ignore workers)

--Drawbacks: took time, quarreling amongst different parties

3) Revolution

2nd: Socialist Parties

--united workers across national borders (problems of workers were universal)

--major issue for socialists: democratic reform v. revolution

--First International (International Working Men's Association)

1) founded in 1864 by a group of British and French trade unionists

2) majority supported and approved efforts by workers and trade unions to reform the conditions of labor within the existing political and economic processes

3) disbanded in 1873

--Marxism emerged during the late-1860s

1) followers advocated revolution to implement radical and complete change

3rd: Socialism in the Major States: outside of Russia (and Britain where a conflict did not really exist), socialists opted to work within the existing institutions to implement reform...

Great Britain

--Labour Party

--Fabian Society

- 1) favored democratic reform
- 2) wanted to rectify the problems of industry, expand state ownership and direction of production (nationalization)

--Liberal Party (David Lloyd George)

- 1) with the Labour Party, responded (albeit slowly) to the plight of workers
- 2) National Insurance Act of 1911: government provided unemployment benefits and healthcare

France

--conflict between moderate socialists (Jaures) and Marxists (Guesde)

--opportunism: conservative government appointed a token socialist (Alexander Millerand) to the cabinet in 1899

--rejected, and, ultimately, unified the socialists in France

--by 1914, Socialist Party was the second largest group in the Chamber of Deputies

--Confederation General du Travail (founded in 1895)

- 1) worker party that considered itself a rival to the socialist parties
- 2) favored direct action

Germany

--conflict within the German Social Democratic Party (SPD): split between those that advocated reform and those that advocated revolution

- 1) kept Marxist socialism alive during the late-19th and early-20th centuries
- 2) from 1880s onward, polled more and more votes in elections to the Reichstag

--Erfurt Program (1891)

- 1) declared the imminent doom of capitalism and the necessity of socialist ownership of the means of production
- 2) however, intended to pursue these goals through legal political participation

--Revisionism (Eduard Bernstein): questioned many of Marx's expectations and, thus, the necessity of revolution (*Evolutionary Socialism*)

- 1) standard of living was on the rise
- 2) ownership of capitalist industry was becoming more widespread through stock holding
- 3) middle class was growing
- 4) franchise meant that revolution might not be necessary to implement change

4th: Russia

--Who was behind Russia's attempt to industrialize?: Nicholas II and Sergei Witte (between 1890 and 1904)

--What were the problems associated with such rapid industrialization?

- 1) Russian landowners felt that foreign capitalists were earning too much profit
- 2) Russian peasants saw their grain exports and taxes finance development that did not measurably improve their lives
- 3) small, but significant, industrial proletariat emerged and faced poor working and living conditions
- 4) Russian agriculture was extremely inefficient and the peasants faced poverty
- 5) there were uprising in both rural and urban areas

--Emerging Political Factions (each sought reform)

- 1) Social Revolutionary Party
 - influenced by the earlier Populist groups
 - opposed industrialization and sought communal agricultural life
- 2) Constitutional Democratic Party (Cadets)
 - composed of upper middle class and nobles who had been a part of the *Zemstovs*
 - wanted a parliamentary regime with responsible ministers, economic progress, and protection of civil liberties
- 3) Social Democratic Party
 - adopted Marxist ideology
 - forced to function in exile
 - Lenin
 1. wrote *What is to be Done?*
 2. altered Marx's theory

--Revolution does not have to be spontaneous...can be led by a "revolutionary elite"

--there can be an alliance between the proletariat and peasantry

--forced a split in the Social Democratic Party

1. Bolsheviks: supporters of Lenin (immediate revolution)
2. Mensheviks: wait until proletariat has grown larger

--Revolution of 1905

1) Causes

- social discontentment associated with rapid industrialization
- Russo-Japanese War
- “Bloody Sunday”

2) Russia was in disarray over the next 10 months

- Constitutional Democrats demanded political reform
- Social Democrats and Social Revolutionaries incited riots
- Soviets, for a brief time, ran St. Petersburg

3) Results

- Nicholas issued the October Manifesto: promised a constitutional government and created the Duma
- Nicholas did not take the Duma seriously (dissolved it twice)
- government still looked corrupt and uncaring of the people’s plight (Rasputin)