History Revision Notes – Russia Under Lenin And Stalin

Problems
- Russia is very big, and so trade and transport are difficult
- The population is unevenly distributed, and most land is too poor for farming
- There is no sense of national identity, as everybody speaks different languages
- Nicholas II is an autocrat, and has the Okhrana (secret police) and Cossacks.
- He is a weak ruler, he won’t share power, and his heir (Alexis) has haemophilia
- Peasants have little land, and have to pay redemption payments
- Workers have long hours, little pay, bad conditions, and no Trade Unions
- Opposition Groups
  - Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs) help peasants
  - Liberals want the Tsar to share power with a Duma
  - Communists help workers (Bolsheviks / Mensheviks)

1905 Revolution
- Japan defeats Russia, causing economic problems
- Bloody Sunday – protesters led by Father Gapon are shot at
- There are strikes and revolts, there is mutiny on Potemkin, and Soviets are set up
- The Tsar survives, and sets up the October Manifesto
- Redemption payments stop, and a Duma is formed, but the workers aren’t helped
- Stolypin Reforms help to stop terrorism, and Rasputin gets involved with the Tsar

The Great War
- Peasants and workers have to fight, so factories close and there are food shortages
- Nicholas takes personal control of the army, and leaves Alexandra in charge
- The Tsar is blamed for the badly trained army, and the rouble losing value
- Russia backs out of the war, and much land is lost to Germany

1917 Revolutions
- March revolution
  - Uprisings throughout Russia
  - The Tsar is forced to abdicate
  - Provisional Government and the Soviet are in charge
- November revolution
  - Lenin’s April Thesis – peace, bread, and land
  - The Provisional Government carries on with the war
  - The July Offensive is a disaster
  - The Kornilov Revolt is stopped by the Red Guards
  - The communists are heroes, and have weapons
  - The Bolsheviks storm the Winter Palace, taking power
- Lenin issues decrees to help peasants and workers, ban opponents and give peace

The Civil War
- The Reds (communists) fight against the Whites (supporters of the Tsar)
- The Whites are not united, but the Reds are highly organised, led by Trotsky
- The Whites have most of Russia, and the support of foreign armies
- The Reds have central Russia, and control the supplies
- The Reds win the Civil War by defeating the White armies one at a time

Communism
- War communism
  - Nationalises the factories
  - Gives food to the army
  - Stops private trading and abolishes money
- This fails because
  - 7 million Russians die
  - There is less food, as the peasants get no profits
  - The Kronstadt Uprising
  - New Economic Policy (NEP) – Back to capitalism to increase production
  - Communism will come later

Power Struggle
- Lenin dies in 1924, so the members of the Politburo struggled for power
- The Right Wing (Bukharin) wanted to help the peasants and use the NEP
- The Left Wing (Trotsky) wanted to exploit the peasants and abolish the NEP
- Lenin’s testament criticises Stalin and Trotsky, so it isn’t published
- Stalin is the General Secretary, and organises the funeral – Trotsky doesn’t come
- Trotsky wants ‘Permanent Revolution’ – supporting communism worldwide
- Stalin wants ‘Socialism in one Country’ – building up the strength of the USSR
- Stalin attacks the Left Opposition, then the Rightists, and becomes supreme leader

Collectivisation
- Peasants are poor and use primitive methods that don’t produce enough food
- There is a procurement crisis in 1928, so Stalin introduce collectivisation
- The Kulaks oppose collectivisation, so their land is taken and they are sent away
- 1.5 million Kulaks are deported, and a quarter of them dies
- Some peasants hate collectivisation, and destroy crops, tools, and machines
- There is a drop in food production, resulting in famine
Five Year Plans  
- There is a command economy in Russia.
- The Gosplan is set up, and sets targets for industry in the next five years
- Heavy industry has to triple its output, and light industry has to double it
- Capitalist country laugh at this, but the target are almost reached
- Russia is catching up with the West

Workers / Work  
- Workers work an uninterrupted week – 4 have the day off each day
- People can’t attend church, and they are sacked and evicted if they have time off
- Internal passports are introduced, so they need permission to change towns
- ‘Shock Brigades’ set a good example to workers, and make sure they work hard
- ‘Stakhanovites’ are exceptional workers seen as role models, but many were killed
- There are more workers and overcrowding, but no unemployment

Labour Camps  
- Gulags are set up in 1930 to make slaves work in the worst regions
- Zeks are badly treated, and their food is rationed
- They work in bad conditions with no machines (e.g. the Kolyma Region)
- They produce half the world production of gold, but 20% of them die each year

Purges  
- Stalin blames the Kirov murder on the old Left and Right wing opponents
- Show Trials oust communist party members
- The Great Terror sweeps the whole population

Life under Stalin  
- The Cult Of Stalin portrays him as a brilliant leader, and he has no opposition
- Religion is prevented, and the League of Militant Atheists support atheism
- Education is stricter, and writers, painters, and composers have to support Stalin
- Marriages are quick and non-religious, and abortions are allowed
- In 1936, abortions and divorces are stopped, and there are benefits for families

2nd World War  
- Russia is isolated – Britain and France won’t make a military agreement with her
- The Nazi-Soviet Pact is set up with Germany, to protect Russia
- The Russian army is built up, and conquers a lot of eastern Europe
- Hitler invades with Operation Barbarossa
- Russia uses the ‘scorched earth’ policy, bad weather, and aid to survive
- 1944 is the year of ten victories for Russia, and the end of the siege on Leningrad

Victory  
- There is a Russian victory at Kursk, which puts the Germans on the defense
- Russia advance on Berlin, Hitler commits suicide, and Germany surrender

After the war  
- Many towns and villages are ruined, and a tenth of the population are killed
- The aid to Russia stops, and the fourth five year plan is set up
- The USSR is isolated from the West
- The Iron Curtain is created, and eastern Europe is communist
- The Cominform and the Comecon are set up to coordinate policies
- When Stalin dies, people realise that he was too harsh and behaved like a dictator