

Article 2

As soon as the two High Contracting Parties shall be engaged in common action no treaty of peace with the adverse party can be concluded by one of them without the assent of the other.

Article 3

During the military operations all the ports of China shall, in case of necessity, be open to Russian warships, which shall find there on the part of the Chinese authorities all the assistance of which they may stand in need.

Article 4

In order to facilitate the access of the Russian land troops to the menaced points, and to ensure their means of subsistence, the Chinese Government consents to the construction of a railway line across the Chinese provinces of the Amour [that is, Heilungkiang] and of Kirin in the direction of Vladivostok. The junction of this railway with the Russian railway shall not serve as a pretext for any encroachment on Chinese territory nor for any infringement of the rights of sovereignty of his Majesty the Emperor of China. The construction and exploitation of this railway shall be accorded to the Russo-Chinese Bank, and the clauses of the contract which shall be concluded for this purpose shall be duly discussed between the Chinese Minister in St. Petersburg and the Russo-Chinese Bank.

Article 5

It is understood that in time of war, as indicated in Article 1, Russia shall have the free use of the railway mentioned in Article 4, for the transport and provisioning of her troops. In time of peace Russia shall have the same right for the transit of her troops and stores, with stoppages, which shall not be justified by any other motive than the needs of the transport service.

✠ 56 ✠

*Father Gapon's Petition
to Nicholas II,
January 22, 1905*

The Pobedonostsev-directed reaction and persecution, designed to maintain autocracy intact, succeeded in driving the revolutionaries underground, where they became more active, and in increasing popular discontent. This discontent increased sharply following Russia's involvement with Japan in a war which the people neither supported nor understood and which inflicted several military and naval disasters (Port Arthur, Tsushima, Mukden) on Russian forces. In the midst of these reverses, *zemstvo* representatives (representatives of local self-governing districts which had emerged in 1864) unanimously called for a reform of Russian political life. They demanded what other revolutionaries had insisted on: civil rights; freedom of speech, assembly, press, thought, and conscience; equality before the law; and a parliamentary system of government. Official rejection of these modest proposals widened the existing gulf between government bureaucracy and the people, and on January 22, 1905, the tension exploded in a crisis known as "Bloody Sunday." A priest, George A. Gapon (1870-1906), led a peaceful procession of striking workers of St. Petersburg toward the Winter Palace, bearing a petition to Nicholas II listing their grievances and wishes. Instead of the expected audience with the tsar, the petitioners met with police bullets that killed scores and wounded hundreds. The incident caused a great public indignation, intensified the existing radicalism, led to nationwide antigovernment strikes and demonstrations, and triggered the 1905 Revolution.

Sovereign!

We, the workers and the inhabitants of various social strata of the city of St. Petersburg, our wives, children, and helpless old parents, have come to you, Sovereign, to seek justice and protection. We are impoverished; our employers oppress us, overburden us with work, insult us, consider us in-

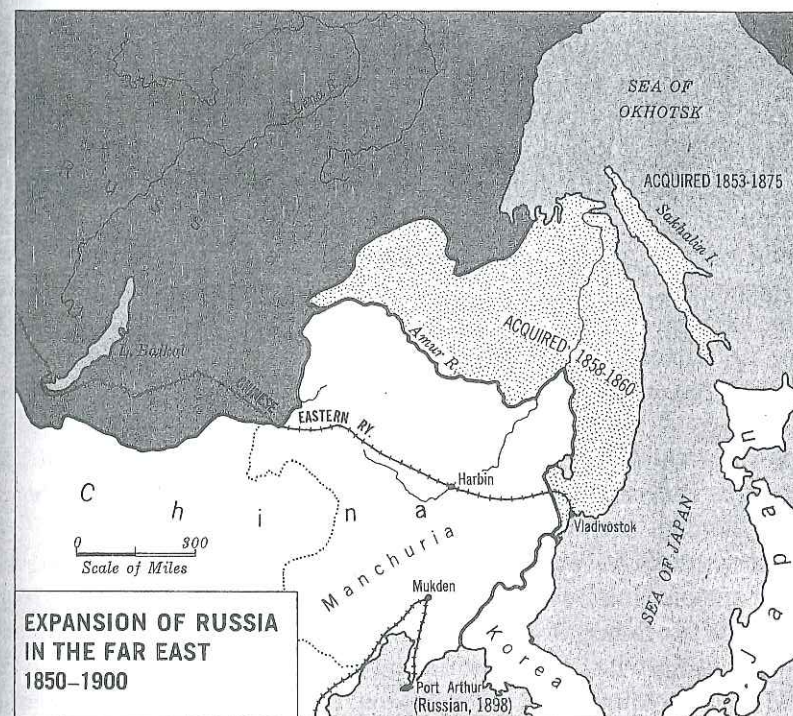
from N. S. Trusova, A. A. Novoselskii and L. N. Pushkarev, eds., *Nachalo pervoi Russkoi revoliutsii, ianuar-mart, 1905 goda* (*The Beginning of the First Russian Revolution, January-March, 1905*), (Moscow: Akademiia Nauk, 1955), p. 28-31. Translation mine. Words in brackets are mine.

human, and treat us as slaves who must suffer a bitter fate in silence. Though we have suffered, they push us deeper and deeper into a gulf of misery, disfranchisement, and ignorance. Despotism and arbitrariness strangle us and we are gasping for breath. Sovereign, we have no strength left. We have reached the limit of endurance. We have reached that terrible moment when death is preferable to the continuance of unbearable sufferings.

And so we left our work and informed our employers that we shall not resume work until they meet our demands. We do not demand much; we only want what is indispensable to life and without which life is nothing but hard labor and eternal suffering. Our first request was that our employers discuss our needs jointly with us. But they refused to do this; they even denied us the right to speak about our needs, saying that the law does not give us such a right. Also unlawful were our requests to reduce the working day to eight hours; to set wages jointly with us; to examine our disputes with lower echelons of factory administration; to increase the wages of unskilled workers and women to one *ruble* per day; to abolish overtime work; to provide medical care without insult; to build shops in such a way that one could work there and not die because of awful drafts, rains, and snow.

Our employers and factory administrators considered all this to be unlawful; they regarded every one of our requests as a crime and interpreted our desire to improve our condition as audacity.

Sovereign, there are thousands of us here; outwardly we resemble human beings, but in reality neither we nor the Russian people as a whole enjoy any human right, have any right to speak, to think, to assemble, to discuss our needs, or to take measures to improve our conditions. They have enslaved us and they did it under the protection of your officials, with their aid and with their cooperation. They imprison and [even] send into exile any one of us who has the courage to speak on behalf of the interests of the working class and of the people. They punish us for our good heartedness and sympathy as if for a crime. To pity a downtrodden, disfranchised, and oppressed man is to commit a major crime. All the workers and the peasants are at the mercy of bureaucratic administrators consisting of embezzlers of public funds and thieves who not only disregard the interests of the people, but also scorn these interests. The bureaucratic administration has brought the country to complete ruin, has brought upon it a disgraceful war, and continues to lead it further and further into destruction. We, the workers and the people, have absolutely nothing to say in the matter of expenditure of huge taxes that are collected from us. In fact, we do not know where or for what the money collected from the impoverished people goes. The people are deprived of the opportunity to express their wishes and their demands and to participate in determining



taxes and expenditures. The workers are deprived of the opportunity to organize themselves in unions to protect their interests.

Sovereign! Is all this compatible with God's laws, by the grace of which you reign? And is it possible to live under such laws? Wouldn't it be better for all of us if we, the toiling people of all Russia, died? Let the capitalist-exploiters of the working class, the bureaucratic embezzlers of public funds, and the pillagers of the Russian people live and enjoy themselves. Sovereign, these are the problems that we face and these are the reasons that we have gathered before the walls of your palace. Here we seek our last salvation. Do not refuse to come to the aid of your people; lead them out of the grave of disfranchisement, poverty, and ignorance; grant them an opportunity to determine their own destiny, and remove from them the unbearable yoke of bureaucrats. Tear down the wall that separates you from your people and let them rule the country with you. You have been placed [on the throne of Russia] for the happiness of the people; the bureaucrats, however, pull this happiness out of our hands and hence it never reaches us; we receive only grief and humiliation. Sovereign, examine our requests attentively and without any anger; they are intended not for any evil but for a good [cause] for both of us. It is not arrogance that forces us to speak but the realization of the

need to escape from a situation unbearable for all of us. Russia is too great, her needs too diverse and numerous to be administered by bureaucrats only. It is essential to have a popular representation; it is essential that the people help themselves and that they govern themselves. Only they know their real needs. Do not spurn their help; accept it; decree immediately to summon at once representatives of the Russian land from all classes, from all strata, including workers' representatives. Let there be present a capitalist, a worker, a bureaucrat, a priest, a doctor, and a teacher—let everyone regardless of who they are elect their own representatives. Let everyone be equal and free to elect or be elected, and toward that end decree that the elections to the Constituent Assembly be carried out on the basis of universal, secret, and equal suffrage.

This is our chief request because everything is based within it and upon it; this is the main and the only bandage for our painful wounds; without it they will bleed severely and will soon cause our death.

One measure, however, cannot heal all of our wounds. Other [measures] are indispensable and, Sovereign, we speak about them to you directly and openly, as to our father, in behalf of the entire toiling class of Russia.

[The following measures] are indispensable:

1. Measures to eliminate the ignorance and disfranchisement of the Russian people.

- (a) The immediate release and return [from exile] of all those who have suffered because of their political or religious beliefs, or because of strikes or peasant disturbances.
- (b) An immediate declaration of freedom and inviolability of person, freedom of speech and press, freedom of assembly, and freedom of conscience.
- (c) Universal and compulsory public education, financed by the state.
- (d) Responsibility of Ministers before the people and a guarantee of a law abiding administration.
- (e) Equality before the law for everyone, without exception.
- (f) Separation of the church from the state.

2. Measures to eliminate the poverty of the people.

- (a) Abolition of indirect taxes and the substitution of a direct progressive income tax.
- (b) Abolition of redemption payments, [introduction of] low interest rates, and the gradual transfer of the land to the people.
- (c) Placement of military and naval orders in Russia, not abroad.
- (d) Termination of the war by the will of the people.

3. Measures to eliminate the oppression of labor by capital:

- (a) Abolition of the institution of factory inspectors.

- (b) Establishment at the factories and mills of permanent committees elected by the workers which, jointly with the management, would consider complaints of individual workers. The dismissal of a worker would not take place other than by the decision of this committee.
- (c) Immediate freedom for consumer and trade unions.
- (d) An eight-hour working day and standardization of overtime work.
- (e) Immediate freedom for the struggle between labor and capital.
- (f) Immediate standardization of a minimum wage.
- (g) Immediate and continued participation of representatives of the working classes in the preparation of legislation for a state insurance for workers.

Here, Sovereign, are our principal needs with which we came to you. Only if and when they are fulfilled will it be possible to free our country from slavery and poverty; will it be possible for it to flourish; will it be possible for the workers to organize themselves to protect their interests against the insolent exploitation of the capitalists and the thievish government of bureaucrats who strangle the people. Decree and swear that you will realize these [requests] and you will make Russia happy, famous and will imprint forever your name in our hearts and in the hearts of our descendants. And if you will not decree it, if you will not respond to our plea, we shall die here, in this square, before your palace. We have nowhere else to go and it is useless to go. We have only two roads open to us: one leading to freedom and happiness, the other to the grave. Let our life be a sacrifice for suffering Russia. We do not regret this sacrifice. We offer it willingly.

George Gapon, Priest
Ivan Vasimov, Worker

Concessions of Nicholas II in the Revolution of 1905

The "Bloody Sunday" massacre had an electrifying effect on all segments of Russian society. It intensified radicalism, increased agitation, and brought on clashes with authorities; it precipitated strikes and demands for a constitutional government, equal rights, and autonomy for minorities; and even led to mutiny. Under the mounting nationwide radicalism, which was accompanied by critical military reverses in the war with Japan, Nicholas II was forced to yield. On October 30, 1905, he issued a manifesto (drafted by Sergei J. Witte) which granted the people of the Empire "personal inviolability, freedom of conscience, speech, assembly and association," and promised to allow the disfranchised elements of society to participate in the election to the Duma. Finally, it established as an "unbreakable rule" that no law should be promulgated without the sanction of the Parliament. The October Manifesto marked the end of absolute monarchy in Russia.

Then on November 16, 1905, the tsar canceled peasant redemption payments, which since the emancipation in 1861 had been one of the main deterrents to progress in the Russian villages. The cancellation paved the way to the agrarian reform commonly known as the Stolypin Land Reforms (1906-1911). These concessions, while failing to satisfy the extreme radicals, pacified the liberals and the majority of the people, thus enabling the authorities to restore order and direct Russia to a period of "constitutional experiment."

The October Manifesto, October 30, 1905

By the Grace of God, We Nicholas II, Emperor and Autocrat of all Russia, Tsar of Poland, Grand Duke of Finland, etc.

Make known to all Our loyal subjects: Rioting and disturbances in the capitals and in many localities of Our Empire fill Our heart with great and

The following two items are from *Polnoe Sobranie Zakonov Russkoi Imperii . . .* (Complete Collection of the Laws of the Russian Empire), 3d Series, vol. 25. "The October Manifesto" from no. 26,803, pp. 754-755. "The Cancellation of Redemption Payments" from no. 26,871, p. 790. Translation mine. Words in brackets are mine.

heavy grief. The well-being of the Russian Sovereign is inseparable from the national well-being; and the national sorrow is His sorrow. The disturbances which have appeared may cause a grave national tension that may endanger the integrity and unity of Our state.

By the great vow of Tsarist service We are obligated to use every resource of wisdom and Our authority to bring a speedy end to an unrest dangerous to Our state. We have [already] ordered the responsible authorities to take measures to terminate direct manifestations of disorder, lawlessness, and violence, and to protect peaceful people who quietly seek to fulfill the duties incumbent upon them. To successfully fulfill general measures which We have designed for the pacification of state life, We feel it is essential to coordinate the activity of the higher government.

We impose upon the government the duty to execute Our inflexible will;

1. To grant the population the inviolable foundations of civic freedom based on the principles of genuine personal inviolability, freedom of conscience, speech, assemblies, and associations.

2. Without postponing the scheduled elections to the State Duma, to admit in the participation of the Duma insofar as possible in the short time that remains before its scheduled meeting all those classes of the population which presently are completely deprived of voting rights, and to leave further development of general elective law to the future legislative order;

3. To establish as an unbreakable rule that no law shall become effective without the confirmation by the State Duma, and that the elected representatives of the people shall be guaranteed an opportunity of real participation in the supervision of the legality of the acts by authorities whom We shall appoint.

We summon all loyal sons of Russia to remember their duties towards their country, to assist in terminating this unprecedented unrest, and together with Us to make every effort to restore peace and tranquility in Our native land.

Given in Peterhof, October 30, the year of Our Lord 1905, and eleventh of Our reign.

Nicholas

The Cancellation of Redemption Payments, November 16, 1905

By the Grace of God, We, Nicholas II, Emperor and Autocrat of All-Russia, Tsar of Poland, Grand Duke of Finland, and so forth.

Make known to all Our loyal subjects: Our heart is filled with deep sorrow over disturbances that have developed in villages of certain districts where

the peasants have resorted to violence. We can tolerate neither violation of the law nor high-handed actions, and have instructed Our military and civil authorities to use every means to prevent and terminate the disorder and to punish the guilty.

We have the needs of the peasants close to Our heart and do not ignore them. Violence and crime do not, however, aid the peasant; [on the contrary] they may bring much sorrow and misery to the country. The only way to permanently improve the well-being of the peasant is through peaceful and legal means; to improve his condition has always been one of Our first concerns. We have lately issued orders to gather and submit to Us information concerning the measures that might be adopted immediately to benefit the peasants. After consideration, We have decided:

1. To reduce by half, from January 1, 1906, and to terminate completely after January 1, 1907, [redemption] payments from peasants for land which prior to the Emancipation belonged to nobles, state, and Crown.

2. To increase the resources of the Peasant Land Bank, in order to enable it to offer better terms for loans to petty peasants to buy additional land.

We have issued special instructions to realize these measures. We are convinced that if We unite Our efforts with those of the best men to be elected in Russia by Our loyal subjects, including peasants, We shall succeed in satisfying the other peasant needs without harming the interests of nobles.

We hope that the peasant population, which is so dear to Our heart, will follow Christian teachings of love and good and will listen to Our Tsarist call to maintain peace and order and to not violate the laws and rights of others.

Given at Tsarskoe Selo, November 16, the year of Our Lord, 1905, and the twelfth of Our reign.

Nicholas

58

The Fundamental Laws of Imperial Russia, 1906

Until the Revolution of 1905, imperial Russia's autocratic tsars embodied the executive, the legislative, and the judicial branches of the government. Moreover, since each tsar was also nominal head of the Russian Orthodox Church, his power was not only absolute but divine as well. The tsars jealously guarded their prerogatives and rebuffed all suggestions—even the most moderate ones—to alter this arrangement.

The Revolution of 1905 changed the situation. In his October Manifesto Nicholas II granted Russia a parliament, and by April 1906, when the country received its first constitution, imperial Russia had begun its slow development from an autocratic to a constitutional regime. It was an erratic process because the country lacked many necessary prerequisites for a constitutional system: established political parties, a literate population, the experience of self-government, and an atmosphere of mutual trust between the elected legislators and government bureaucrats. The transition was painful also because the tsar, as the following articles indicate, still retained power over matters which in parliamentary countries belonged within the competence of the legislative branch of government. He retained, for instance, his historic title of Autocrat (Article 4), and under Article 45 he had the right to issue imperial decrees in emergencies between sessions of the parliament, which later, however, were to be submitted for approval by the legislature. No longer was he an absolute monarch.

The Fundamental Laws

1. The Russian state is unified and indivisible.
2. The Grand Duchy of Finland, while comprising an inseparable part of the Russian state, is governed in its internal affairs by special decrees based on special legislation.