

Modern history research essay: russia and the soviet union.

[Politics](#), [Communism](#)



Modern History Research Essay: Russia and the Soviet Union. Throughout 1917 to 1924 Russia was experiencing extensive political, economic and social change that began with the Bolshevik revolution. The First World War had left Russia in a tragic state where the whole nation was facing a lot of social disruption and facing a major uprising. Throughout this time, the Bolsheviks, who had just taken control, undertook several measures to establish their authority. This included the declaration of initial reforms, i. e. the land decree, the marriage decree, the decree on workers, the signing of the treaty of Brest-Litovsk, fighting the civil war, starting with the ideologies of War Communism and lastly they introduced the New Economic Policy (NEP). All of these actions were each very significant in aiding the Bolsheviks to seize power by 1924. The year 1917 was the start of Russia's struggle for power as the revolution sparked major social, political and economic changes and difficulties. With the return of Lenin, the bolsheviks had swept the nation with ideas of revolution and that would begin their rise to power through Lenin's popular catchphrases of 'Bread, Peace, Land' and 'all power to the Soviets'. Lenin's 'April Thesis' in 1917 was a vital course of action towards change as he wanted a worldwide revolution, an end to the war and an end to the provisional government. The war with Germany was still occurring but food production was going downhill and soon Russia was overtaken by a devastating famine, which lead Russia into an economic crisis. As soon as the bolsheviks took power they instantly stopped all the freedoms that the proletariats had gained, as Lenin described Russia as 'the freest country in the world' to put it generally. This caused major disturbance throughout the opposing political parties and the bolsheviks faced civil war.

The bolsheviks put into action measure which allowed them to build up their power over Russia. Some of these were due to victories which gained them support and regard from the people of Russia. Other actions they used were those of a forceful manor. This enabled the bolsheviks to be in control of certain aspects and ensure their orders were reinforced. The way in which the bolsheviks treated their opposition parties, was the main cause that their rule was consolidated. The bolsheviks were determined to put an end to their oppositions. An intimidating secret police was set up in November 1917 called the Cheka. They quelled political opponents and had them either exiled or executed. Censorship was carried out and this assured that nothing negative was portrayed about the bolsheviks. To make sure that there wasn't a different political alternative to the communist rule, the cadets were banned. The existence of the civil war and its victory allowed the bolsheviks to eliminate much opposition. The Red Army was set up in 1918 and Trotsky's leadership of the army, and their unity authorised them to quickly and efficiently discard of the opposition. Also, throughout the war, repressive measures were introduced, such as no fair trial. This continued after the war and provided the bolsheviks with more control and authority. The Bolsheviks used propaganda to consolidate their rule and Lenin's 'April Thesis' being a good example of propaganda. The Bolsheviks also used propaganda to turn people against the opposition, for instance, whilst the civil war was occurring, many posters were produced showing the White Generals as puppets due to their foreign interference.