

What were the
problems facing the
tsar nicholas ii in
1894



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The extraordinarily large country of Russia proved difficult to control as Tsar Nicholas II discovered during his reign. The almighty size alone was a major problem, alongside the political, economical and social status of the country, not forgetting perhaps Nicholas himself may be to blame for the poor governing of Russia during this time. Possibly the most influential problem facing Nicholas in 1894 was the social background of the country. 82% of the population were peasants. So much actually, that there wasn't enough land, leading to the introduction of the emancipation decree to occur. Meanwhile a meagre 18% were of working class or above. This meant that Russia's industry was rather pathetic and minor compared to the sheer size. This illustrates the slow economical development of the country, indicating Russia had not yet experienced major industrial expansion unlike America and Germany. This meant that Russia was perhaps weaker than other countries, displaying the vulnerability of both the country as a whole, and Tsar Nicholas II himself. Meanwhile, economically, the priorities of the government and Tsar Nicholas II were of concern. It was believed that such a colossal country should too have a colossal army. Vast amounts of peasants were sent to join the organisation in efforts to make it of satisfactory size in the eyes of the Tsar. On an annual basis the army and the navy accounted for forty five percent of the governments expenditure. This figure compared with the insufficient four percent set aside for education demonstrates that perchance, the Tsar was more worried about seeming powerful than educating peasants in order to increase the percentage of working class citizens. However, at the same time, was this a purposeful mistake? Tsar Nicholas II knew very well the peasants were extremely conservative and objected change, which maybe indicated that they wanted the Tsar to

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remain in control. Problematically to Nicholas II, if the peasants became educated, possibly together with their knowledge and large quantity, they could overthrow the Tsar. This therefore was perhaps placing him in a predicament. The political state of Russia was almost as if it were under many restrictions by the Tsar during this time. Even though he was a monarch, his way of controlling the country was ruthlessly and with a sense of dictatorship. There was no free speech, no democracy or parliament, moreover, an absolute Monarch with unlimited power and authority ran Russia. This was known as Autocracy. He placed censorship on newspapers and propaganda indicating he was the ultimate decider and ruler of his country ran by only his rules. Although he seemed to be in control, his methods of politics were harsh and therefore making him very unpopular to the citizens of Russia.