

History Department Summer Independent Learning – Paper 1 – The British Empire.

Task 1, 2 and 3 are mandatory work. In total, these three tasks should take you between four and six hours.

This research will provide you with a vital introduction to Britain of the 19th century, this preparatory work is essential if you are to understand the rise and fall of the British Empire 1857-1967 which is the topic covered by Paper 1.

Task 1 – your task is to produce an essay answer around **500 words** answering the following question,

Question - Was industrial development the main reason for the growth of British power during the 19th Century?

History- AO1 Essay Mark Scheme

This is what you will be assessed on, we are especially looking for how well you have researched this question and this will be demonstrated in your **Understanding & Knowledge**, we will then be expecting you to make a **Judgement**, do you think Industrial development was the main factor, you will be able to show us your **analytical** skills and understanding by **linking** the three factors in your answer.

| | Understanding | Knowledge | Features, Issues, Concepts | Comment and Balance | Judgement |
|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| Level 5 (21-25) A* - 23 | Very Good Responds to the full demands of the question Clearly answers the question | Range, specific, precise Every point/argument is supported with precise evidence, when relevant a couple of examples are provided. | Very good understanding Can demonstrate, the significance of events/people; causation; consequences; make comparisons or links between factors | Fully analytical and balanced Every part of the essay is answering the question, there is no description of events, and facts are used to back up judgements. Gives different interpretations – assesses to what extent | Well substantiated Clear argument from the start of the essay. Sophisticated and accurate judgement. Is not contradicted, but supported/returned to throughout the essay. Is explained, justified and supported by evidence |
| Level 4 (16-20) A – 20 B - 17 | Good | Range, specific, precise Majority of evidence is correct Uses relevant dates/statistics/events | Good; some conceptual awareness | Analytical/balanced Mainly analytical, some description/points not fully explained Will have a range of points – that both agree and disagree with the judgement/question | Some; may only be partially substantiated |
| Level 3 (11-15) C – 13 | Reasonable | Range, maybe imprecise Uses relevant dates/statistics/events but some are inaccurate | Some; may be generalisation | Links to the question; some balance Answers the qu. – but points not fully explained Most points simply agree/disagree | Partial – thin States a judgement but does not explain why it is the answer (may have one or two examples to support it – but they are not explained) |
| Level 2 (6-10) D – 10 E - 8 | Partial | Some – ltd scope Very few details, or the same facts are repeated | Some – there may be some irrelevance | Limited or descriptive | Undeveloped States a judgement but does not explain why it is the answer |

Introduction – Use this website to start your research as it will give a useful starting point.

<https://www.history.org.uk/primary/resource/3871/victorian-britain-a-brief-history>

You will then need to collect **detailed** notes assessing each of the three themes Industrial development, military strength and political change. The best way to approach this question is to complete a table like the one below.

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Industrial development – evidence | Military strength – evidence | Political - evidence |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|

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As you work your way through the research material on each of the three themes fill up the columns, this will help you to form your own answer (judgement) to the question **Was industrial development the main reason for the growth of British power during the 19th Century?**

Industrial growth – research material.

Use the following links to research this theme, your focus here is on British industrial growth – was the growth of British power during the 19th century totally dependent on **British Industrial Development?**

https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/publications/online_research_catalogues/paper_money/paper_money_of_england_wales/the_industrial_revolution.aspx

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/victorians/workshop_of_the_world_01.shtml

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLhNP0qp38Q>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zjK7PWmRRyg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9BdVHCuNPs>

Military strength – research material.

Use the following links to research this theme, your focus here is on British military activity – was the British military victorious during the 19th century and do you think this is **more important** than **British Industrial Growth?**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-14218909> - The strength of the British Army

<https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/crimean-war> - The Crimean War 1854

<https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/why-did-indian-mutiny-happen> - The India Mutiny 1857

<https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/zulu-war> - The Zulu War 1879.

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/battles/egypt/> - The British invasion of Egypt 1882

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nDZGL1xsqzs> – The Napoleonic Wars 1815.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jCeh1RiBjBk> – The Crimean War 1854. Part I

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0cVI5OuvLiA> – The Crimean War 1855. Part II

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rGoPN3WOBxU&t=66s> – The India Mutiny 1857.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-gZWrMRhpU> – The Zulu War 1879 Part I

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DYE8Igmh6Tc> – The Zulu War 1879 Part II

Political change – research material.

Use the following links to research this theme, your focus here is on British political change – was political change during the 19th century **more important** than **British Industrial Growth & Military strength** in leading to the growth of British power during the 19th century?

<https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/learn/story-of-england/victorian/power-and-politics/> - Introduction to political change.

<https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/evolutionofparliament/houseofcommons/reformacts/overview/changes/>

- The start of political change.

[https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-](https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/evolutionofparliament/houseofcommons/reformacts/overview/reformact1832/)

[heritage/evolutionofparliament/houseofcommons/reformacts/overview/reformact1832/](https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/evolutionofparliament/houseofcommons/reformacts/overview/reformact1832/) - The 1832 Reform Act

[https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-](https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/evolutionofparliament/houseofcommons/reformacts/overview/furtherreformacts/)

[heritage/evolutionofparliament/houseofcommons/reformacts/overview/furtherreformacts/](https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/evolutionofparliament/houseofcommons/reformacts/overview/furtherreformacts/) - The 1867 Reform Act

[https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-](https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/evolutionofparliament/houseofcommons/reformacts/overview/one-man-one-vote/)

[heritage/evolutionofparliament/houseofcommons/reformacts/overview/one-man-one-vote/](https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/evolutionofparliament/houseofcommons/reformacts/overview/one-man-one-vote/) - The 1884 Reform Act

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_9PGNHd5Zs – What was wrong with Britain’s political system?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I-ln4p4mWu0> – The Peterloo Massacre - 1819

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWucd5tXlqY> – The Chartists and the anger at the political system.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80Tk8_qKbjE – The dawn of democracy.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S6zW9TaQWMM> – The 1867 Reform Act.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-vqV8vD6tc> – The 1884 Reform Act.

Use your complete research to now answer the question - **Was industrial development the main reason for the growth of British power during the 19th Century?**

25 mark Essay question – Structure

Use this structure to complete your answer – remember it should be between 600-750 words long.

Introduction

- Make a judgement in answer to the question - is the view valid do you think industrial development was the key factor?
- Put forward your **argument**, this should be about **100 - 150** words what do you think and why?
- Define the criteria being used to judge, this means include **facts** in your **argument** that you will discuss in more detail in the later paragraphs.
- Outline the main factors to consider, is it possible to say one factor was more important than others?

Para 1 – this paragraph should be about **200 – 300** words.

- Point - state your judgement about the argument presented in the question, this means you should explain in **detail** the **argument** you put forward in your introduction.
- Evidence - provide detailed evidence to support / challenge
- Explain the evidence you have used to show how this supports your point
- Link your point to the next paragraph / overall argument

Para 2 – This paragraph should be about **200** words.

- Point - state your judgement about the main alternative argument, why were the other factors not as important explain in **detail** the **argument** that you put forward in your introduction.
- Evidence - provide detailed evidence to support / challenge
- Explain the evidence you have used to show how this supports your point
- Link your point to the next paragraph / overall argument

Conclusion - this should be about **100** words.

- Re-state overall judgement
- Reinforce arguments for and against

History Department Summer Independent Learning – Paper 2 – Russia, 1917-1953

This research will provide you with valuable knowledge about Russia in the late 19th and early 20th century which will allow you to confidently pick up the course for paper 2 in September.

Task 2: Research Russia's final Tsar (king) Nicholas II. What were his weaknesses and how did this eventually lead to revolution in Russia in February 1917? Create a detailed mind map to demonstrate this.

Use the following websites and videos to assist you in your research.

Biographical information on Nicholas II

<https://www.bl.uk/people/nicholas-ii-of-russia>

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/nicholas_ii.shtml

http://www.orlandofiges.info/section1_OriginsoftheRussianRevolution/WasNicholasIIFitToRule.php

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Nicholas-II-tsar-of-Russia>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicholas_II_of_Russia

<https://learnodo-newtonic.com/nicholas-ii-facts>



Videos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QpWyFch-1tE> – The Last of the Tsars pt.1

In September, we will pick up the course at the start of 1917, a year in which there were **two** revolutions in Russia. However, 12 years earlier, there was a revolution in Russia in 1905.

In order to be able to understand the problems Russia was facing in 1917, it's important to understand the long-term causes, many of which had caused the 1905 Revolution. Although the Tsar survived this revolution, many of the problems which caused it remained and resurfaced again in 1917. Therefore, understanding the causes, events and outcomes of the 1905 Revolution will greatly help in understanding why the Tsar falls from power in February 1917.

Task 3: Using the essay writing guidance above, produce an answer around 500 words long for the following question: 'The Tsar was responsible for the 1905 Revolution'. How far do you agree with this statement?

You may wish to consider the following headings for your research:

- Lack of reform
- Social unrest
- Russo-Japanese War, 1904-05
- Bloody Sunday

History of Russia - Videos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QH9WWxLPNQ&list=PLUOc2qodFHp80tLm7W2rT0zXyMaXikeWS&index=3> – History of Russia, 1700 - 1880

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQVjH4xFrdI&list=PLUOc2qodFHp80tLm7W2rT0zXyMaXikeWS&index=6&t=0s> – History of Russia, 1881 – 1917.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gSlVgtwAcRA&list=PLwGzY25TNHPBfaoOR3pXw3VyBvmXljeio&index=8> – The Romanovs. The History of the Russian Dynasty - Episode 8

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zXHybEb4b_o&has_verified=1 – The Russian Revolution (Full documentary) – first 25 minutes.

Websites

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zwvx34j/revision/1>

<https://spartacus-educational.com/RUS1905.htm>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Russia_\(1892%E2%80%931917\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Russia_(1892%E2%80%931917))

http://www.orlandofiges.info/section1_OriginsoftheRussianRevolution/TheWeaknessofSociety.php

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Russian-Revolution-of-1905>

<https://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/modern-world-history-1918-to-1980/russia-1900-to-1939/the-1905-russian-revolution/>



Strongly recommended additional content:

This chapter will plug the gap between 1905 and 1914 in Russia, allowing you to understand how the Tsar reacted to the 1905 Revolution and how Russia found themselves in the disastrous World War One.

Russia's parliamentary era started with a ceremonial opening of the Duma in the Coronation Hall of the Winter Palace in St Petersburg on 27 April 1906. On one side of the hall stood the great and good of autocratic Russia: ministers, senators, admirals, generals and members of the court, all in their dress uniforms dripping with medals and golden braid. Opposing them were the parliamentary deputies of the new democratic Russia, a motley collection of peasants dressed in cotton shirts and tunics, professional men in lounge suits, monks and priests in black, Ukrainians, Poles, Armenians and Tatars in colourful national costumes, a few noblemen in evening dress, but almost no workers. 'The two hostile sides stood confronting each other,' recalled a Crimean delegate. 'The old and grey court dignitaries, keepers of etiquette and tradition, looked across in a haughty manner, though not without fear and confusion, at the "people of the street", whom the revolution had swept into the palace, and quietly whispered to one another. The other side looked across at them with no less disdain or contempt.'¹

The ceremonial confrontation was only a foretaste of the war to come. The whole period of Russian political history between the two revolutions of 1905 and February 1917 could

be characterized as a battle between the royalist and parliamentary forces. To begin with, when the country was still emerging from the revolutionary crisis, the court was forced to concede ground to the Duma. But as the memory of 1905 passed, it tried to roll back its powers and restore the old autocracy.

The constitutional reforms of 1905-6 were ambivalent enough to give both sides hope. Nicholas had never accepted the October Manifesto as a limitation on his sovereignty. He had granted the Manifesto as a concession to save his throne but at no time had he sworn to act upon it as a 'constitution' (the word had nowhere been mentioned) so his coronation oath to uphold the principles of autocracy remained in fact, at least in his own mind. There was nothing in the Fundamental Laws (passed in April 1906) to suggest that from now on the Tsar's authority should be deemed to derive from the people, as in Western constitutional states. The Tsar retained the title 'Autocrat', albeit only with the prefix 'Supreme' in place of 'Unlimited'. Nicholas took this to mean business as usual.

The court remained the centre of political power. The Tsar appointed the Prime Minister (Ivan Goremykin) and the government (the Council of Ministers). He could dissolve the Duma and (under Article 87 of the Fundamental Laws) rule by emergency decree when it was not in session - a loophole used to bypass parliament when it opposed the government's bills. The Duma was elected by an indirect system of voting heavily weighted in favour of the court's traditional allies, the nobility and the peasantry (mistakenly assumed to be monarchists). Although it was a legislative parliament, it

could not pass its own laws without the endorsement of the Tsar and the upper chamber (the State Council), dominated by the aristocracy.

The make-up of the Duma turned out to be far more radical than the government had bargained for when it drew up the Electoral Law. From its opening session in the Tauride Palace, it was turned into a revolutionary tribune, a rhetorical battering ram against the fortress of autocracy. The SRs and SDs had boycotted the Duma elections, which they denounced as a sham democracy, but the largest party, the Constitutional Democrats (Kadets), with 153 of the 448 seats, was radically inclined and set about demanding far-reaching political reforms, including the appointment of a government responsible to the Duma, the abolition of the State Council, and universal adult male suffrage. The second-largest party were the 107 Trudoviks (Labourites), a peasant-based party, whose deputies smoked cheap tobacco and spat sunflower seeds on to the floor of the elegant palace. Their main goal was a radical solution of the land question through the compulsory expropriation of the gentry's property. With the Kadets (who wanted compensation to the landowners) they introduced a bill for land reform in the Duma.

There had been a time, in 1905, when many landowners would have been prepared to accept some form of expropriation in order to save their class. Even the reactionary D. F. Trepov, the Tsar's main adviser on agrarian affairs, had told Witte that he would be glad to give up half his land if it would help him keep the rest. But as the revolutionary threat receded, the gentry became less inclined to compromise. The United Nobility - a landowners' organization with

powerful supporters in the court, the State Council and the Civil Service – led the campaign against the Duma's reform proposals on the reasonable grounds that granting more land to the peasants would not solve the problem of their poverty, since this was caused by the inefficiencies of the village commune rather than by shortages of land.

Unwilling to consider its radical demands, the Tsar dissolved the Duma on 8 July. Outraged by the dissolution, which they saw as an 'attack on the parliamentary principle', the Kadets issued a manifesto from the Finnish town of Vyborg calling on 'the people' to unite in a mass campaign of civil disobedience, as they had done in the general strike of 1905. The Vyborg Manifesto was greeted by 'the people' with indifference. More than one hundred leading Kadets were brought to trial and suspended from the Duma for their part in it. Never again would the Kadets place their trust in the support of 'the people'. Nor would they claim to be their representatives. From this moment on, they would consciously become what they had been all along: the natural party of the middle class. Liberalism and the people went their separate ways.

Meanwhile, the Tsar appointed Petr Stolypin as Prime Minister – a man known for his resolute measures to restore law and order in the countryside as Governor of Saratov, one of the most violent provinces in 1905, but also for his ideas of agrarian and political reform to create stability in the longer term.

Few personalities in Russian history have been as controversial as Stolypin. The Left condemned him as a bloody

defender of the tsarist order. He gave his name to the hangman's noose ('Stolypin necktie') used by the military field courts to quell the peasant revolution; and to the railway carriages in which the revolutionaries were transported to Siberia ('Stolypin carriages'). After 1917 the most hardened followers of the Tsar would come to denounce him as an upstart provincial bureaucrat whose dangerous reforms had only served to undermine the sacred principles of autocracy. But to the admirers of his authoritarian statesmanship – and Vladimir Putin is one of them – he was the only politician capable of saving Russia from the revolution and the Civil War. His reforms, they argue, if given enough time, would have transformed the country into a liberal capitalist society. But this is a very big 'if'. Time was the one thing Stolypin did not have. Was it really possible to stabilize a revolutionary situation through political reform? Could one man have saved the Tsar?

Stolypin belongs to a tradition of governance in Russia – it runs from Peter the Great to Putin – that sees the state as the main agency of social management and modernization. The aim of his reforms was not to create a democratic order but to use democratic elements to underpin the tsarist government. The same statist instrumentalism determined his relations with the Duma. He saw it as an appendage of the state, a public body to endorse government policies, but not to check or direct the administration. His constitutional model was more Prussian than English (Bismarck was his political hero).

The second Duma, which convened in February 1907, was tolerated by Stolypin only in so far as it did what he wanted.

His administration had done its best to influence the elections and secure the return of its allies, the Octobrists, a 'party of state order' based on the political principles of the October Manifesto. But the 54 elected Octobrists, even if supported by the 98 Kadets and 60 other Centrist and Rightist deputies, were hardly enough to give the government a workable majority against the huge block of 222 socialists (including 65 SDs) now that all the parties of the Left, having been encouraged by the radical intentions of its deputies in 1906, had ended their boycott of the Duma. Nor could Stolypin rely on the peasant deputies to play a subservient role. One from his own Saratov province caused a great sensation during the debate on the land reforms when he said to a noble delegate: 'We know about your property, for we were your property once. My uncle was exchanged for a greyhound.'²

With little prospect of finding support for his reforms, Stolypin had no qualms about dissolving the Duma and changing the electoral law (by a decree on 3 June) so that when the next assembly convened it would be dominated by conservative elements. The representation of the gentry was increased at the expense of the peasants, workers and national minorities. When the third Duma assembled in November 1907 the pro-government parties (Octobrists and Rightists) controlled 287 of the 443 seats. The radicals called it a 'Duma of Lords and Lackeys'.

The 3 June decree was technically an infringement of the Fundamental Laws, and the liberals were quick to denounce it as a coup d'état. Even the Octobrists were uncomfortable with it. By his high-handed treatment of the Duma, Stolypin

had undermined the one potential base of political support – the liberals – capable of bridging the divide between the tsarist regime and society. Justifying his break with the parliamentary principle in terms reminiscent of the arguments deployed to excuse dictatorships in the Third World today, Stolypin told the British ambassador that Russia could not be governed like Western European countries because 'political life and parliamentary ideals were enigmas to the enormous majority of the nation, ignorant and unlettered as they were'.³

Stolypin's land reform was his attempt to remedy that deficit. Its aim was to create a new class of peasant landowners, who, he hoped, by owning property, would feel they had a stake in the system and become involved in local zemstvo politics as supporters of the government. Stolypin called it a 'wager on the strong'.

The reform involved the dismantling of the village commune, the organizing institution of the peasant revolution on the land, by encouraging the stronger peasants to leave it and set up as farmers on their own. By a law of 9 November 1906, the head of a peasant family was given the right to convert his communal strips of arable land into private property on fully enclosed farms outside the village (*khuitora*) or consolidated holdings within it (*otrubas*). Further legislation followed to speed up the separations through agronomic measures and to help the separators purchase land with low-interest credit from the Peasant Land Bank. The state put its full weight behind the reforms. This was the first time it had ever really tried to effect a major change in the

everyday life of the peasants and, unless its initiative succeeded, it would also be the last. Four ministries, hundreds of provincial and district land commissions, and thousands of officials, statisticians and agronomists were employed to implement the enclosure movement as quickly as possible. The regime had come to realize that its own survival would depend on the creation of a new agrarian order based on private property.

There were profound cultural reasons for the peasants to oppose the break-up of the commune, which had been the focus of their lives for centuries. The basic worry was that giving some peasants the right to own part of the communal land would deprive others of their customary rights of access to this land as their basic means of livelihood. What would happen if the peasant landowner bequeathed his property to his eldest son or sold it altogether? The rest of the family would be turned into paupers. Or if the richest peasants bought up all the land? Entire families would be unable to support themselves. There was also a widespread fear that the government surveyors, who had been instructed to encourage the enclosures, would reward the separators with more than their fair share of the best land.

And indeed the peasants had real cause to wonder just how the old patchwork of intermingled strips could be disentangled at all. On what terms was a good bit of land in one place to be exchanged for a poor one in another? How were they to divide the meadows, the woods and the rivers, which had always been held in common? And if the newly enclosed farms were to build their own roads, wouldn't these cut across existing boundaries and rights of way? The peasants

were attached to their land in a very particular sense. No one had ever taught them how to calculate the area of a piece of land by multiplying its width by its length – their fields were divided 'by eye' or by pacing out the strips and making rough adjustments where their length or the quality of their soil was uneven – so they had no reliable means of satisfying themselves that two plots deemed the same by the government's surveyors, with their town-made suits, their rulers and their tripods, were in fact of equal size.

All these fears led the communes to resist the peasant-separators, often using force or intimidation to put them off. Of the 6 million applications for land consolidation recorded before 1915, over one third were subsequently withdrawn by the applicants themselves; and of the 1 million that were completed, two thirds had to be forced through by the authorities against the opposition of the communes. Overall, the land reforms must be deemed a failure. Between 1906 and the eve of the revolution approximately 15 per cent of the peasant households in European Russia consolidated land as private plots, bringing the total of peasant farms in hereditary tenure to only around 30 per cent. Yet for every household that enclosed its land there was another that had tried and failed, usually because of communal opposition or bureaucratic delays, with the result that the would-be separators lost interest.

Perhaps the land reforms were too ambitious to succeed. It turned out to be much harder to impose foreign capitalist ways on the Russian peasantry than the bureaucrats in St Petersburg had been prepared to acknowledge. The village commune was an old institution, in many ways defunct and

inefficient, but in others still responsive to the basic needs of the peasants, living as they did on the margins of poverty, afraid of taking risks, and hostile to outsiders. Stolypin assumed that the peasants were poor because they had the commune: by getting them to break from it he could improve their lives. But the opposite was true: the commune existed *because* the peasants were poor, it served to distribute the burden of their poverty, and as long as they were poor there would be little incentive for them to leave it. For better or worse, the commune's egalitarian customs had come to embody the peasantry's basic notions of social justice and, as 1917 would prove, these were ideals for which they would fight long and hard.

As long as they were threatened by a peasant revolution on the land, the nobility supported Stolypin. But once they thought that threat had passed, they turned against the Prime Minister, whose broader reform programme was regarded by the court and its conservative allies in the military, the Church, nobility and nationalist circles as a challenge to the Tsar and the established order which threatened to lead Russia towards a liberal state they did not want.

Stolypin's political programme threatened to shift the balance of power from the court to the Imperial state. The Tsar saw the state as an extension of his personal rule (a patrimonial ideology rooted in medieval Muscovy). But Stolypin viewed it as an abstract agent of reform – above the dynasty or the aristocracy – whose purpose was to serve the empire's interests. For the Tsar and his conservative supporters the challenge represented by Stolypin's vision of

the state loomed even larger because of the strength of his personality. As a statesman the Prime Minister was far more powerful than the feeble Nicholas, who was quite incapable of mastering the complex mechanisms of the modern state which Stolypin's programme would consolidate. If Stolypin was allowed to get his way, the Tsar's personal rule would be overshadowed by this bureaucratic state; the mystically sanctioned pyramid of power headed by the court and the aristocracy would be undermined.

The first sign of the court's opposition to Stolypin was over the Naval General Staff Bill in 1909. Proposed by the Octobrists in the Duma's Committee of Imperial Defence, which had a veto over the military budget, the bill threatened to refuse the navy credits unless the Naval General Staff came under the control of the Ministry of War rather than the court. Nicholas saw the ultimatum as an attempt by the Duma to wrest military command from the crown, and used his veto to block the bill. He was infuriated that Stolypin and his Council of Ministers had supported the bill, but stopped short of accepting his offer to resign.

The crisis united the defenders of autocracy against the Prime Minister. They managed to defeat virtually all his political reforms. His proposal to expand the state system of primary schools was defeated by reactionaries in the Church, who had their own parish schools. The same fate awaited his legislation to ease discrimination against the Jews and other religious minorities.

Stolypin's local-government reforms were bitterly opposed by the nobility because they challenged the gentry's domination of rural politics. Their intention was to give the

peasants, as landowners, equal representation to the nobles in the zemstvos. They also proposed to abolish the peasant-class courts and bring the peasants fully into the system of civil law. Stolypin saw these measures as essential for the success of his land reforms. The new class of conservative peasant landowners which he hoped to create would not support the existing order unless they were made citizens with equal political and legal rights to those enjoyed by other classes. 'First of all,' he said, 'we have to create a citizen, a small landowner, and then the peasant problem will be solved.' He proposed to establish a new tier of zemstvo representation at the *volost'* (rural district) level, in which the franchise would be based on property rather than birth. But the gentry was afraid that the zemstvos would be swamped by the peasants, and accused Stolypin of trying to undermine 'provincial society' (i.e. themselves) through bureaucratic centralization. On this basis they organized against him in the Duma, the State Council and the United Nobility, forcing him to give up his reforms. Had Stolypin succeeded in broadening the social base of local government in the countryside, then perhaps in 1917 it would not have collapsed so disastrously and Soviet power might never have filled the subsequent political vacuum as successfully as it did.

As a result of the naval staff crisis and the gentry reaction, Stolypin lost support in the Duma, the Octoberists went into decline, and he became dependent on the Nationalists, formed in 1909 to represent the interests of the Russians in the empire's western borderlands.

The zemstvos had never been established in these western districts, because most of the landowners were Poles. But the Nationalists campaigned for a Western Zemstvo Bill, arguing that Russia's Imperial interests could be secured by a voting procedure based on nationality as well as property. The peasant smallholders in the region were mainly Russian, Ukrainian and Belorussians, all equally bearers of the Russian national idea, according to the Nationalists. If they were given the largest share of the vote in the zemstvos, as planned by the lower property franchise of the Western Zemstvo Bill, they might become model peasant citizens; an area dominated by Polish landowners would be ruled by the Russians.

The bill was passed by the Duma but defeated in the State Council, where the gentry's fundamentalists were unwilling to see the privileges of the noble estate sacrificed to ensure the domination of Russian interests; the fact that the Poles were aristocrats should in their view take precedence over the fact that the peasants were Russians. Their opposition was encouraged by Trepov and Durnovo, the reactionary Minister of the Interior, who were bitter rivals of Stolypin and favourites at the court. Stolypin threatened to resign unless the Tsar prorogued the Duma and passed the bill by emergency decree under Article 87. Nicholas agreed, albeit unhappily.

Stolypin had prevailed by sheer force of character. But his high-handed tactics had alienated almost everyone. The Tsar had been humiliated, and it was now far from clear whether the Prime Minister could count on his support. The

liberals were outraged by Stolypin's treatment of the Duma. The Octobrists moved into partial opposition, leaving the Nationalists as Stolypin's only supporters.

Stolypin was assassinated by a student-revolutionary turned police informer called D. G. Bogrov in the Kiev Opera House on 1 September 1911. On hearing of his death, the Tsar said: 'Now there will be no more talk about reform.' The Empress was relieved to see the end of Stolypin, a resolute opponent of the mystic Rasputin, in whom she placed her faith as a healer for her haemophilic son, the tsarevich Alexis, and whom she had promoted as a personal adviser to herself and Nicholas.⁴ Some historians speculate that the assassination of Stolypin was approved or even organized by police agents with connections to the court.

Long before Bogrov's bullet killed him, Stolypin was politically dead. Had he been more skilful in 'the art of the possible', he might have gained more time for his reforms. But he adhered so rigidly to his principles that he lost sight of the need to negotiate and compromise with his opponents on both left and right. He alienated the old political élites by riding roughshod over their traditional privileges, as well as the liberals by suppressing the Duma when it stood in his way. This political inflexibility stemmed from his narrow bureaucratic outlook and dependence on the Tsar. He thought he could get his reforms by administrative fiat, and never moved outside the bureaucracy to mobilize a broader social base of support. He failed to create his own political party, which might have been possible if he had organized the peasant beneficiaries of his reforms. There was a Stolypin

but no Stolypinites. And so when Stolypin died his reforms died with him.

According to some historians, the old regime's last real hope disappeared with him: his initiatives were its one chance to reform itself on parliamentary lines. But were these reforms succeeding in their aims? By 1911 they had made little headway in moving Russia towards a constitutional order. There had been some gains in civil liberties, and in press freedom, and the Duma had survived as something of a counterweight to royal and executive authority. But this hardly meant that tsarist Russia was moving towards some sort of Western liberal 'normality'.

The nature of the tsarist regime was the single biggest guarantee of its own political irreformability. The autocratic ideology of Nicholas II was deeply hostile to the Western constitutional vision of Stolypin's programme of reforms; and the entrenched powers of the court, together with the vested interests of the Church and the landed aristocracy, were strong enough to prevent that programme being realized.

Perhaps we should also ask if any package of political reforms could have resolved the social problems that had led to the revolution of 1905. Could the land question – the main concern of the majority of the population – have been resolved without the confiscation of the gentry's land? Would the workers have been satisfied by the moderate proposals of the Duma to improve conditions in the factories and allow limited trade union rights? The answer to these questions must be 'no'.

After a relatively quiet period for industrial relations, between 1907 and 1911, there was a dramatic rise both in

the number of strikes and in their militancy, beginning with a national wave of protests following the April 1912 massacre of demonstrating miners in Lena in Siberia, and culminating in July 1914 with a general strike in St Petersburg, where in the midst of a state visit by the French President barricades were erected by the workers and there was fighting in the streets. During these two years 3 million workers were involved in 9,000 industrial strikes, mostly organized under the Bolsheviks' militant slogans in preference to the Mensheviks'. Despite efforts at political reform, urban Russia on the eve of the First World War arguably found itself on the brink of a new and potentially more violent revolution than in 1905.

After Stolypin's assassination the government abandoned all reforms. The Duma was sidelined by the next Prime Minister, Vladimir Kokovtsov (1911-14), who took his lead from the court. Rightist elements pressured the Tsar to abolish the Duma, or at least to demote it to the status of a consultative body. It was only Western pressure and the fear of a popular reaction that restrained Nicholas.

Meanwhile the Tsar was courting the support of reactionary nationalists, who encouraged his illusion that the 'simple Russian people' loved their 'father-Tsar' (a belief embodied in the 'holy man' Rasputin, who was seen by Nicholas as 'just a simple peasant') and that nationalism could be used to rally mass support for the monarchy. The Tsar patronized the Union of the Russian People - an extreme nationalist and anti-Semitic party, whose paramilitary groups (the Black Hundreds) fought the 'foreign' revolutionaries in the streets and carried out pogroms against the Jews. But the nationalist

card was a dangerous one for the regime to play. For the Duma parties also used it to define the nation's interests in opposition to the government.

The threat of war in Europe was growing. The two great Balkan empires, the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian, were showing signs of cracking under growing pressure from Slav nationalist movements, leading to increasing tensions between Berlin and St Petersburg, not least because the Germans backed the Austrians in the defence of their Imperial interests in lands where the Russians saw their role as the protector of their fellow-Slavs. Russia wanted what it had aimed to achieve throughout the nineteenth century: to capture Constantinople, the ancient Byzantine capital of their religious heritage; to control the Straits, a crucial military waterway between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea; and to oversee the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire in regions where the Russians claimed to represent the Christian Slavs.

For most of the nineteenth century Russia had pursued its interests in Europe through an alliance with Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Romanov court had long been in favour of this pro-German policy, partly because of the strong dynastic ties between the ruling families and partly because of their mutual opposition to European liberalism. But after 1905 foreign policy could no longer be carried out regardless of public opinion. The Duma and the press called for a more aggressive policy in defence of Russia's Balkan interests, including support for Slav nationalists against rule from Vienna. Pan-Slav sentiment fuelled

a new type of Germanophobic Russian nationalism, which had a revolutionary edge because of the perceived domination of German interests at the Romanov court (the Empress Alexandra was particularly unpopular because of her German origins). Nationalist opinion was increasingly frustrated by the government's conciliatory approach towards the German-backed Austrian aggressors in the Balkans.

By 1914, ideas of a war to defend the Balkan Slavs had spread into the court, the officer corps and much of the state itself. The Tsar too was coming to the view that a firm stand had to be taken against the Austrians, whose assertive defence of their interests in the Balkans was dragging Germany into a potential conflict with Russia. His Foreign Minister, S. D. Sazonov, was more cautious, knowing that the Russian military was not prepared for war with Germany, although he worked hard diplomatically to engineer a favourable alliance in support of Russia's military aims, should a European war become unavoidable. Others, like Durnovo, warned the Tsar that Russia was too weak to withstand the long war of attrition which was likely to result: a violent social revolution was bound to be the consequence. In a memorandum of February 1914 Durnovo outlined the revolution's likely course in remarkably prescient terms:

the trouble will start with the blaming of the Government for all disasters . . . The defeated army, having lost its most dependable men, and carried away by the tide of primitive peasant desire for land, will find itself too demoralized to serve as a bulwark of law and order. The legislative institutions and the intellectual opposition parties, lacking

real authority in the eyes of the people, will be powerless to stem the popular tide, aroused by themselves, and Russia will be flung into hopeless anarchy.⁵

Nicholas faced a dilemma: if he went to war, he ran the risks of which Durnovo warned; but if he didn't, there could be an uprising of patriotic feeling against the Imperial family, which was seen as pro-German, possibly resulting in the loss of his political authority. There was little time to make a decision, for if Russia was to mobilize its forces, it would need a head start on its enemies, smaller countries with better railway systems that could mobilize their armies more quickly.

On 28 July, a month after the assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand by Serbian nationalists, the Austrians declared war against Serbia. The Tsar ordered the partial mobilization of his troops and appealed to the Kaiser to stop the Austrians. But Sazonov now called for a general mobilization, realizing that a German declaration of war against Russia was imminent (it came on 1 August). He warned Nicholas that 'unless he yielded to the popular demand for war and unsheathed the sword on Serbia's behalf, he would run the risk of a revolution and perhaps the loss of his throne'. Unhappily, the Tsar agreed. On 31 July, he ordered his forces to be mobilized for war.