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| Topic | Soviet Perspective | Western Perspective | Revisionist Perspective |
| **Lenin & The Structure of the Bolshevik Party** | **Central group of leaders driving change****Lenin had successfully adapted Marxism for Russia** | **Bolshevik Party were basically a power hungry party who took advantage of a set of circumstances** | **Lenin believed in and lusted power but only because the Bolshevik party should initiate the achievement** |
| *Quotes* | *“ The leadership given by Lenin and the Bolshevik Party … ensured the success of one of the greatest events in world history – the overthrow of the power of the landowners and capitalists.”- GD Obichkin* | *“To impose such immense sacrifices in the name of so naïve and flawed a vision makes Lenin one of the greatest criminals of all time.” Lievin* | *“While Lenin was cunning & untrustworthy, he was also dedicated to the ultimate goal of communism … He was determined that the Bolsheviks should initiate the achievement of a world without exploitation”**- Robert Service.* |
| *“Judged in terms of its own aspirations: the Communist (Bolshevik) party was a monumental failure.”**- Richard Pipes* |
| **Initial Decrees** | **Each new decree was a step towards realizing the goal of creating a new world.** |  | **Aimed at encouraging popular participation in the revolution** |
|  | *The Bolshevik Party were “…The only people in Russia who had a definite programme of action while the others talked for eight long months.” – J.Reed* |  | *“They were designed to inspire, to excite and to instigate.” – R. Service* |
| **Dismissal of the Constituent Assembly** | **The C.A was not truly representative of the way Russia should be run – Soviet democracy was better than that of bourgeoisie democracy** | **A symbol of things to come…** | **People preoccupied with the poor state of living conditions to worry about the C.A. In fact some believe that Russia was better ruled by someone telling them what to do…** |
|  | “*Lenin’s theoretical considerations went hand in hand with sharpshooters.” - Trotsky* | *“The machine gun became for them the principle instrument of political persuasion.” - Pipes* | *Most people were preoccupied with securing food and fuel, and that the Assembly was a “distant thing in the city.” - Figes* |
| **Civil War (7)** |  |  |  |
|  |  | “Every aspect of life, social, political and economic had to be subordinated to the task of wining the civil war.” – Lynch |  |
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| **War Communism (8)** |  |  |  |
| *Quotes* | *“We were forced to resort to War Communism by war and ruin. – Chamberlain* | “…while war communism tightened the Bolshevik grip on industry it did not lead to economic growth.” - Lynch |  |
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| **Kronstadt Uprising** | **The Party could hardly ignore an armed revolt in the midst of a supposed Communist stronghold.** | **A true example of the power and violence of the Bolsheviks** | **Symbolic break between the Party and the People** |
| *Quotes* | *“If the Bolshevik dictatorship fell, it was only a short step to chaos…” – Victor Serge on the events of Kronstadt* |  | *It was a “symbolic parting of the ways between the working class and the Bolshevik Party” - Fitzpatrick* |
| **Bolshevik use of terror (Red terror) and the role of the Cheka (9)** |  |  |  |
| *Quotes* |  | *“[Lenin] had always accepted the necessity of terror as an instrument of political control.” - Lynch* |  |
| **The NEP** |  |  |  |
| *Quote* | *“ (Lenin) always insisted that the NEP introduced in 1921 was really the old economic policy of 1918, … it was a large scale retreat, a Brest-Litovsk on the economic front.” – Christopher Hill* | *“The adoption of NEP showed that the Bolshevik government since 1917 had been unable to create a successful economy along purely ideological lines.” - Lynch* | *“As the urban food crisis deepened and more and more workers went on strike, it became clear that Bolsheviks were facing a revolutionary situation … It was a desperate bid to stem the tide of this popular revolution. Having defeated the Whites, who were backed up by no fewer than eight Western Powers, the Bolsheviks surrendered to the peasantry.” - Figes* |
| **Summary of Lenin’s communist regime (11)** | **The use of force and undemocratic methods was a necessary step in order to achieve the desired type of society.** |  |  |
| *Quote* | *“Besieged fortresses are hardly ever ruled in a democratic manner.” - Deutscher* | *“Judged in terms of its own aspirations: the Communist regime was a monumental failure.” - Pipes* | *“Russia in the 1920’s remained a society at war with itself – full of unresolved social tensions and resentments just beneath the surface. In this sense, the deepest legacy of the revolution was its failure to eliminate social inequalities that had brought it about in the first place.”* |