



THAIMUN

Historical Crisis Committee

Kosovo War

Bolshevik Revolution

August Coup



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Introductory Letters:

Main Chairs:

Wieroo Park

Hi all! My name is Wieroo Park, and I'm a senior at Branksome Hall Asia, an IB school in South Korea. I've been doing MUN since 6th grade and so far have attended around 20 conferences as a delegate, chair, and secretariat. I was a chair last year for the UK Parliament Committee and it was honestly one of the best MUN experiences I've ever had, so I can't wait to see what this year's THAIMUN has in store for us. I'm super into history and I've chaired / directed a handful of HCCs before, therefore I assure you that me and my co-chairs will do our best to make this HCC challenging, but also fun and engaging. I too, am (relatively) new to Thailand, so for those of you who are from overseas; don't worry! We're in the same boat. Please feel free to message me at parkwieroo00026@branksome.asia or @wiieroo on instagram if you have any questions or just want to chat and complain about the IB instead of revising (lol). Can't wait to meet all of you in March :)



Tara Weili Koh

Hello HCC delegates! My name is Tara (she/her) and I'm a Year 13 student at Bromsgrove International School Thailand. I want to welcome you all to HCC at THAIMUN XI! I've been participating in MUN for just about 7 years now as a delegate in various committees, including crisis committees such as HCC and HSOC, alongside running my school's MUN ECA and now this will be my first time as a chair. Crisis committees can definitely seem like a daunting task initially, especially if you're a new delegate or even if this is your first time in a crisis committee, with its unique



dynamic, fast-paced structure and distinctive Rules of Procedure but being a part of a crisis committee will be an experience like no other.

Outside of MUN (and not losing my mind and stressing out over A Levels), I'm a huge film, book, comic, manga, anime and video game nerd who listens to way too much music. I'm also interested in studying law at university so if you're interested in something similar or are just generally curious about it, feel free to talk to me about it!

I'm very excited to be serving as your chair. I look forward to welcoming and meeting you all soon and having an engaging crisis! If you have any questions (or just want to talk in general), please don't hesitate and feel free to reach out to me :))

Email: taraweilikoh2006@gmail.com

Instagram: @okkttara

Backroom Chairs:

Akewisut (Steve) Utchin

Hello delegates and welcome to the Historical Crisis Committee for this year's Thaimun. I hope you'll enjoy the committee, have fun !

I'm currently a junior student at the Regent's School Bangkok. I have been doing Model United Nations ever since I was a freshman. The main reason why I do MUN is because of the conference itself, you get to learn so many new things and meet with many new people. This is probably my fifth MUN experience and my first time as a chair, apart from that I'm also part of the Student Management Committee for this Thaimun. My email is : akewisut23@gmail.com feel free to email me if you have any problems or inquiries.



Nicharee (Naamsai) Wongtrakoon

Hello everyone! My name is Nicharee Wongtrakoon, and my nickname is Naamsai, but you can call me Natalie! I am a grade 11 student at Triam Udom Suksa, and I'm also TriamMUN's vice president. I've chaired many committees of various sizes in the past year, and I was selected to chair many more in the future. I also specialize (?) in chairing HCC, especially backrooming, so I'm very excited to put my skills to the test in such a large scale MUN! This experience will be a learning journey for me, and I'm grateful that I'll get to become a better chair with all of you. I look forward to meeting all of you talented delegates and exploring crises together, and just all around having tons of fun!



We understand that delegating a crisis committee can be confusing and challenging, especially for special committees' beginners, so we are always happy and available to help you in any way you need. We hope this chair report will assist you in your understanding of the topic, and feel free to contact me via email: naamsai312natalie@gmail.com or my Instagram account (natalie_naamsai) if you have any questions or just want to make friends! Can't wait to meet you!

Committee Overview

The purpose of the Historical Crisis Committee isn't to be a true reenactment of the real events, but rather, it's your chance to change the outcome of these historical events and to allow participants to take part in their favourite historical events. In the committee, delegates will role-play as different historical figures involved in different historical events. Through actions such as directives and press releases, you will be able to influence the outcome of history. In most cases, there will be 3 events per each committee. In each of these 3 events you will role play as a historical figure who had an instrumental role in that event. For this year's THAIMUN, the 3 events will be the Kosovo War (1998-1999), the Bolshevik Revolution (1917) and the August Coup (1991). All of you will have your own goal that you will try to achieve throughout the conference. No matter how big or small your character is, your actions will all contribute to the final outcome. To make sure you have a good understanding of events and how to portray your given character effectively, make sure to be well-versed with the help of research!

Topic 1: Kosovo War



Starting Date: 30th February 1998

TOPIC INTRODUCTION:

The Kosovo War was an armed conflict in Kosovo lasting from 28 February 1998 to the 11th of June 1999. The conflict originated from how ethnic Albanians were discriminated against by the ethnic Serbs and the Yugoslav government. The war was fought between the Kosovo Liberation Army and the Federal Republic Yugoslav. In response to the uprising of the KLA, the Yugoslav government, police, and paramilitary groups committed mass atrocities in Kosovo causing a wave of refugees to flee from Kosovo. This resulted in the displacement of 370,000 Kosovar Albanians. The situation had gained international recognition, as such a coalition group called the "Contact Group " consisting of the US, UK, Germany, France, Italy, and Russia, demanded an immediate cease-fire as well as withdrawal of FR Yugoslavia's forces from Kosovo. Although Yugoslavia agreed to most of the demands, they failed to actually implement those demands. As such, during the cease-fire each side regrouped and rearmed and renewed its attacks. Eventually the Yugoslav forces would begin an ethnic cleansing of Kosovo Albanians, this resulted in the Racak massacre where 45 Kosovan Albanians were killed. After the massacre

NATO decided to intervene by sending in a group of militants as well as issuing air strikes on FR Yugoslavia targets. In response, Yugoslavia drove out all of Kosovo's ethnic Albanians displacing hundreds of thousands of people into Albania, Macedonia, and Montenegro. However the NATO air strikes continued significantly damaging Serbian infrastructure. Eventually NATO and Yugoslavia signed a peace treaty which resulted in troop withdrawals out of Kosovo and the return of 1.5 million ethnic Albanians. Following this UN peacekeeping troops were deployed in Kosovo which subsequently came under UN administration. Apart from that the president of FR Yugoslav was also charged with war crimes and crimes against humanities being the first sitting head of state to stand trial for war crimes.)

KEY TERMS:

Term	Definition
Ethnic Cleansing	Wiping out an entire ethnic group either through force or diplomatic means
Albanian Revolt	This was the last revolt against the Ottoman empire's rule in Albania.
Expulsion of the Albanians	Forced migration of Albanian populations from areas which are now Serbia and Montenegro
1989 revised Constitution of Serbia	This was the constitution that restricted the liberty, independence, and autonomy of Kosovo as well as renaming it the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija.

History of The Topic:

While the main reason for the outbreak of war in 1998 would be the discrimination and oppression of ethnic Albanian in Kosovo, the true causes of the war go back many centuries. The conflict between Albanians and Serbians in this conflict has roots tracing back to the 19th century. Both of these events were events relating to struggles of territories in the Balkan area. Apart from that there were also conflicts in the late 19th century and early 20th century including attack on Serbs as well as massacres against Serbs. Throughout the 20th century, many events resulted in increased tensions between Serbs and Albanians, these events included the First Balkan War, WW1, WW2, and the Albanian Revolt. However tension and violence really escalated towards the end of the Cold War. After coming into power, the Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic began making trips to Kosovo, where he rallied the Serbs nationalist by promising to defend them. Milosevic does this by making changes in the constitution hoping to reduce the freedom and independence of Kosovo. Apart from that this results in massive

damages for the Kosovar Albanians which have been forced out of work, oppressed, and restricted. Furthermore in his campaigns he also promised to cleanse the ethnic Albanians out of the province even though they were the majority of the region. Ultimately Milosevic's continued oppression and violence against the ethnic Albanians would be the root cause of the war in 1998.

Timeline:

Date	Description
1991	The break-up of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia results in Slovenia and Croatia gaining its independence. Ethnic Albanians declares independence by creating their own Republic of Kosovo
1992	War in Bosnia breaks out, Yugoslavia increases Serbian aggression in Kosovo as well as beginning a period of ethnic cleansing.
1996	The Kosovo Liberation Army is created, it begins fighting back against Serbian authority in Kosovo. This results in increased Serbian oppression on Kosovo
1997	In October, violence escalated in Kosovo as Serbian authorities continued a crackdown on the KLA. Escalating violence causes the displacement of millions of ethnic Albanians.
1998	As violence in Kosovo escalates, the Contact Group consisting of (US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, and Russia) meets in London to discuss Kosovo. For a short period of time both sides agreed to a ceasefire, however violence would soon resume.
1998 (May-Oct)	Violence in Kosovo continues as Serbian authorities launch ethnic cleansing and massacres on ethnic Albanian. This has resulted in multiple hundred of Albanian deaths
Oct 1998-June 1999	NATO authorizes military action against Yugoslavia beginning with bombing campaigns. NATO launches multiple airstrikes against Yugoslavia. This greatly damages Yugoslavian and Serbia infrastructure.
1999 June	Serbs and Yugoslavs completely withdraw from Kosovo, subsequently NATO ends the bombing campaign. Shortly after the

	war, the Kosovo Liberation Army was disbanded.
2001	A supreme court based in Kosovo working under the United Nations found multiple cases of rape, murder, arson, and maltreatment inflicted onto the ethnic Albanian population.
2002 February	Ethnic Albanian parties reach a power-sharing deal resulting in a newly elected president for Kosovo.

Topics your Resolutions Should Address:

Below are several topics in which your resolutions and directives should aim to address
Massacre of Ethnic Albanians

Your resolution should aim to address the human right crisis in Kosovo specifically regarding the oppression that is being inflicted onto the ethnic Albanians

Autonomy for Albanian States

Your resolution should aim to address the issue of power and autonomy for many Albanian states still under control of the FRY

Diplomatic Relations in Bosnia

Your resolution should aim to address the diplomatic crisis faced in the Bosnian regions especially of the relations between countries in the region.

Violence in Yugoslavia

Your resolution should aim to address the growing violence and tension among the different republics which make up FR Yugoslavia.

Countries & Party Stances:

Here are some of the parties and countries which are taking part in this event.

Yugoslavia

FR Yugoslavia

The president of FR Yugoslavia's oppression of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo was the trigger for war.

Kosovo

Kosovo Liberation Army

This was the rebel group consisting of ethnic Albanians which was created to fight Serbian oppression in Kosovo. The war was fought between FR Yugoslavia and the KLA.

Neutral/Kosovo Allies

NATO

NATO's military intervention was one of the factors that led to FR Yugoslavia's retreat from Kosovo

Contact Group

This is the group consisting of the US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, and Russia which was created in response to the growing violence in the Balkan regions.

Recommended Websites to Use

These are some of the recommended links and articles that might be useful for your research

- <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/kosovo/etc/cron.html> (“A Kosovo Chronology | War In Europe | FRONTLINE”)
- <https://www.britannica.com/event/Kosovo-conflict>
- <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/kosovo/readings/roots.html>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kosovo_War
- <https://study.com/academy/les>

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- [son/the-kosovo-war-causes-timeline-nato-involvement.html#:~:text=What%20caused%20the%20war%20in,region%20from%201998%20to%201999](https://www.studydrive.net/son/the-kosovo-war-causes-timeline-nato-involvement.html#:~:text=What%20caused%20the%20war%20in,region%20from%201998%20to%201999)
 - <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40110035>
 - <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2021/7/9/a-tantalizing-success-the-1999-kosovo-war>
 - <https://www.deseret.com/2023/2/25/23590279/kosovo-war-anniversary-what-happened>

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PBS, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/kosovo/readings/roots.html>. Accessed 18 January 2024.

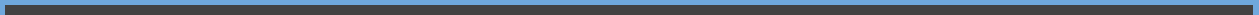
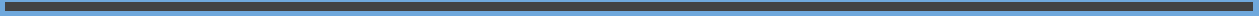
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<https://study.com/academy/lesson/the-kosovo-war-causes-timeline-nato-involvement.html>.

Accessed 18 January 2024.

Allcock, John B. “Kosovo conflict | Summary & Facts.” *Britannica*, 4 December 2023,

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Kosovo-conflict>. Accessed 18 January 2024.



Topic 2: Bolshevik Revolution (1917)



Starting date: August 31st 1917

TOPIC INTRODUCTION:

The Bolshevik Revolution, also known as the October Revolution, was one of the most influential political events of the 20th century and a pivotal event in Russian history which took place in October 1917. Economic hardships, military failures, food shortages, failure to achieve reform and government corruption all contributed to the growing discontentment and disillusionment with the Tsarist rule of Tsar Nicholas II whose people were looking to alternative forms of government. This revolution marked the overthrow of the Provisional Government, the end of the Romanov dynasty and centuries of Tsarist rule over Russia and the establishment of Bolshevik (Communist) rule under the leadership of Vladimir Lenin.

Our committee's exact starting date will be August 31st, 1917.

KEY TERMS:

Term	Definition
Marxist Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP)	Formed in 1898, it was one of Russia's earliest revolutionary movements/groups and in 1903, it split into the two different factions of Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.
Socialist Revolutionary Party (SRs)	A Russian political party during the revolutionary years that was more moderate in comparison to the Bolsheviks but less than the Mensheviks. Their main support base came from the peasantry which meant that they had a much larger support base than other parties in Russia. Before and during the October Revolution, the Bolsheviks and SRs were close allies but this changed after the revolution, the Bolsheviks abandoned the SRs after the SRs had won the majority votes in the elections for the Constituent Assembly.
Constituent Assembly	Created in November 1917, it was an elected body of representatives from all over Russia and it was meant to decide on the governmental structure of the society. After Tsar Nicholas II abdicated in February 1917, the Provisional Government created plans for the formation of this assembly to decide on a permanent government for Russia. When Vladimir Lenin and the Bolsheviks took power in the October Revolution, it was initially allowed for elections to happen as scheduled but this decision was later changed after the Bolsheviks received less than 25% of the total votes.
Bolsheviks	A far-left faction of the RSDLP and was led by Vladimir Lenin. It split from the Mensheviks at the Second Party Congress in 1903. They favoured a closed party consisting of and run by professional revolutionaries and supported the idea that a dictatorship was needed to accommodate and accelerate the transition to a socialist society. It placed importance on the working class from which it drew its support from.
Mensheviks	A faction of the Marxist Russian Social Democratic Labour Party which split from Lenin's Bolsheviks at the Second Party Congress in 1903. Compared to the Bolsheviks, they were less radical and favoured an open socialist party that would be governed democratically.
Russian Provisional Government	A government that members of the Duma formed in the wake of the February Revolution. It was only supposed to be a temporary government that would only rule Russia until the Constituent Assembly decided on a

	permanent government later.
Bloody Sunday	On Sunday, 22nd of January 1905, over 100 unarmed demonstrators, led by Father Georgy Gapon, marched peacefully to the Winter Palace to present a list of complaints about better working conditions in factories and demanding for better treatment to the Tsar. When they advanced closer to the palace, while some soldiers fired warning shots into the air, others panicked and fired into the crowd of protestors. About 200 people were killed and 800 were wounded as a result.
April Theses	Vladimir Lenin expressed his ideas for Russia's future upon his return to Russia in April 1917. He called for the provisional government to be overthrown and replaced with a communist government led by the working class. They were published in the newspaper publication 'Pravda' on April 7th.
Cadets	A political group (Cadet was an acronym for Constitutional Democrats) that wanted Russia to become a democratic republic governed by a constitution and an elected parliament. This meant that they were at odds with the Bolsheviks who wanted a communist government led by the proletariat. Their main support came from professional workers and the bourgeois.
Dual Power	Refers to the two governments that Russia had following the February Revolution which were the Provisional Government and the Petrograd Soviet.
Duma	The Russian legislature from 1905-17 and is an ancient Russian word that referred to small village councils that existed in early Russia. It was brought back as a term by Tsar Nicholas II after he agreed to allow the formation of a legislature after the uprising of 1905.
Petrograd Soviet	(Not to be confused with the Saint Petersburg Soviet) A representative body of the city's (the capital of Russia at the time; now Saint Petersburg) workers and soldiers was established in March 1917. During the February Revolution, the members of the Petrograd Soviet declared themselves to be the government of Russia but found out they were competing for the position with the Russian Provisional Government.
Proletariat	Refers to the working class/workers (namely the industrial workers).
Bourgeois	A class of business owners and merchants who are typically associated with the "middle class".
Soviets	Meaning "Council" in Russian, in the early 20th century, Soviets were

	governing bodies that were similar to labour unions and mainly existed on the local level where they made collective policy decisions for their respective regions. The idea of the Soviets was popular amongst various socialist parties such as the Bolsheviks, Mensheviks and Socialists Revolutionaries.
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History of The Topic:

The Tsarist Regime: In 1618, the Romanov family assumed power in Russia, ruling the country for three centuries with notable figures like Catherine and Peter the Great. However, recent rulers seem increasingly distant from the general populace. Tsar Nicholas, who assumed the throne at 36 after his father's sudden death, rejected constitutional limits, believing his rule was divinely ordained.

With his lack of political and military experience, Nicholas was criticised for being indecisive and weak, notably mishandling the 1905 uprising and the Russo-Japanese war, and was even called 'Nicholas the Bloody' among his citizens. The only heir, Alexei, suffered from severe haemophilia, leading Tsarina Alexandra, another unpopular figure amongst the public due to her German heritage, to seek help from Gregori Rasputin, which reasonably generated controversy amongst the Russian people.

The Bolsheviks: Formed in 1912, the Bolsheviks were an extremist, far-left, Marxist revolutionary group, led by Vladimir Lenin and Alexander Bogdanov. While it originated from the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP), it later split into the Bolsheviks (majority) and the Mensheviks (minorities) in 1903 to which the Bolsheviks emerged as the youngest party of the Russian faction.

The Russo-Japanese War: The Russo-Japanese War, spanning from 1904 to 1905, emerged as a conflict between the Russian and Japanese empires over Manchuria and the Korean peninsula. Despite the Qing dynasty leasing Port Arthur to Russia, the Russian Empire sought a port under its exclusive control. Tensions escalated for Japan after the Sino-Japanese War in 1895, raising concerns about Russian encroachment on its sphere of influence.

The Japanese Empire proposed a deal, offering Manchuria to Russia in exchange for Japan retaining the Korean peninsula. However, Russia rejected the offer, insisting on both Manchuria and the Korean Peninsula being recognized as Russian territory. The conflict reached a peak with a Japanese surprise attack on the Russian navy in Port Arthur, resulting in the sinking of every

ship and a significant military loss and humiliation for Russia by the end of 1904. In September 1905, Russia and Japan signed the Treaty of Portsmouth which gave Japan control over Korea and the majority of South Manchuria, including Port Arthur and the railway which connected it to the rest of the region.

The First Russian Revolution: In January 1905, while the Russo-Japanese war was ongoing, police opened fire on citizens demonstrating for a petition to the Tsar, resulting in the death of 1,000 people and numerous injuries, thus resulting in widespread strikes across Russia and Russian Poland. In June 1905, following an uprising by the sailors of the Potemkin over contaminated food, the people of Russia initiated a general strike and nationwide demonstrations. The 1905 revolution resulted in the October Manifesto, granting personal rights like freedom of speech and assembly, and extending voting rights to all men in Russia. The manifesto also established the State Duma to represent the people, ensuring legislative input. Despite promises of civil liberties, however, it became evident post-revolution that the Tsar had no intention of fulfilling these pledges.

Russia in WWI: Within five months of entering WWI, 390,000 Russian men had lost their lives, and 1,000,000 had sustained injuries. By 1915, the toll had escalated to approximately 22,500 men lost per month. The Russian military was under-equipped, struggling with starvation and poor military leadership as they were forced to fight in poor conditions whilst attempting to defend the Western front. Inside the country, conditions weren't much better as civilians were suffering as a result of Tsar Nicholas' mismanagement of the country which left many starving as 'breadlines' grew increasingly longer in many cities, most notably in the country's capital of Petrograd. Workers went on strike as they demanded higher wages to compensate for the higher food prices and as more and more citizens joined the strike, the Tsar's officials ordered the military and police force to break up the protests using any means. This harsh treatment of the protestors further fueled discontentment with the Tsar.

The end of the Romanov dynasty and the arrest of the Russian royal family: Beginning with the February Revolution of 1917, widespread discontent erupted into mass protests in Petrograd (modern-day St. Petersburg). Facing intense pressure, Tsar Nicholas II abdicated the throne on March 15, 1917, ending 3 centuries of Romanov rule. After his abdication, the Tsar had requested for his family and himself to be granted passage to the United Kingdom but once this request had been found out by the Soviet party, the Tsar and his family were immediately called to be put under arrest. They were arrested at the Imperial Railway Pavilion and were held under house arrest until 14th August 1917 where they were then sent into exile to Tobolsk.

Timeline:

Date	Description
January 22, 1905	Also known as Bloody Sunday, guards open gunfire on civilians participating in a peaceful demonstration outside the Winter Palace, resulting in the death of 1,000 civilians. The Tsar is blamed for this tragedy.
July, 1914	Martial law is declared in Russia
July 28, 1914	Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia; World War I begins
August, 1915	Tsar Nicholas II leaves the palace to head to the wartime front, leaving the Tsarina in charge as the regent
June/July, 1916	The Brusilov Offensive signals the last major military success for Russia in the war
January, 1917	The Mensheviks call for a nationwide revolution
January 9th, 1917	More than 140,000 Russian workers strike to commemorate the 12th anniversary of Bloody Sunday
February 9-22, 1917	Rising tide of strike in Petrograd (February Revolution)
February 14, 1917	More than 100,000 workers remain on strike; the government is attacked by the Duma for their failure to provide relief to the food shortages
March 2, 1917	Tsar Nicholas II abdicates; Provisional government is formed
March 20-22, 1917	Tsereteli arrives in Petrograd from Siberian exile; Tsereteli and Revolutionary Defensists establish leadership of Petrograd Soviet.
April 4, 1917	Lenin issues "April Thesis"
April 18-21, 1917	April Crisis

June 18, 1917	Russian military offensive begins. Soviet-sponsored demonstration in Petrograd turns into massive antiwar and antigovernment demonstration.
July 16-20, 1917	July Days, the streets of Petrograd are taken over by spontaneous armed demonstrations by soldiers, sailors and industrial workers against the Russian provisional government; Lenin and other Bolshevik leaders are forced to go into hiding
Aug. 27-31, 1917	Kornilov Affair; government collapses

Prominent Party Stances:

The Bolsheviks:

Leon Trotsky

Trotsky was a leading member of the Bolshevik Party and played a crucial role in the revolution, particularly in organising the October Revolution and the Red Army. Trotsky was a strong advocate for international revolution and believed in the spread of socialism beyond Russia's borders. However, at the same time, he was a vocal critic of Joseph Stalin and his policies. In the Politburo, Trotsky serves as the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs.

Lev Kamenev

Kamenev is a Bolshevik revolutionary, represented as a member of the Politburo. He opposed Lenin's plan, and was blatantly criticised by Lenin as a result. Influenced by Zinoviev, he is currently considering joining the anti-Trotsky alliance and weakening Trotsky's position in the Party.

Yakov Sverdlov

Sverdlov was a member of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party in 1902, supporting Vladimir Lenin's Bolshevik faction. Although he was subjected to continuous exile, he returned to Petrograd after the 1917 February Revolution and was appointed as the Party Secretariat for the Bolsheviks.

Vladimir Lenin

Lenin's initial revolutionary ideas were developed while he was in university, heavily inspired by the execution of his brother for the attempted assassination of Tsar Alexander III. After he was expelled from university, he later moved to Germany & Switzerland

where he met other Marxists. During this time, he rose to power as a prominent leader of the Bolshevik faction of the Social Democratic Party (SDP).

Joseph Stalin

Although raised in poverty, Stalin excelled academically and was given the opportunity to study to become a priest. However, realising the disillusionment of religion and authority, he began to involve himself in revolutionary activities such as joining Marxist groups and participating in protests against the Tsarist regime. By 1917, he emerged as a prominent figure within the Bolshevik faction, taking responsibility of organising military operations and coordinating the insurrection in Petrograd.

Nikolai Podvoisky

Joining the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP) in the early 1900s, Podvoisky's role included organising underground Bolshevik activities such as propaganda dissemination, organising strikes, and recruiting workers to the Bolshevik cause. Yet, as a member of the Military Revolutionary Committee, his primary involvement was in relation to military planning and preparation and the physical overthrow of the Provisional Government.

Russian Provisional Government:

Alexander Kerensky

As a member of the Socialist Revolutionary Party, Kerensky gained prominence during the February Revolution which placed him as a leading figure in the Provisional Government. Serving as the Minister of Justice and later the Minister of War, he advocated for liberal reforms and the continued participation of Russia in WWI.

Aleksandr Konovalov

Having experience in Russia's industrial sector, he became increasingly involved in policies advocating for economic reforms and modernization. As a member of the Constitutional Democratic Party, he was a supporter of constitutional monarchy. Later serving as the Minister of Trade and Industry in the Provisional Government, his role focused on stabilising the economy amidst the chaos of war and revolution.

Nikolai Avksentyev

Following the overthrow of the monarchy, Avksentyev was appointed the Minister of the Interior within the Provisional Government. While he advocated for land redistributions and political liberalisation, he faced opposition from both conservative and revolutionary

factions of the government pushing for more radical change. Although initially a supporter of the Bolshevik's goals, he believed Bolshevik extremism was a threat to Russia's democracy.

Lt Gen. Nikolay Dukhonin

During the outbreak of WWI in 1914, Dukhonin was a lieutenant general and a commanding officer in the Russian Army. Following, in February 1917, he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army by the Provisional Government. However, as war and revolutionary movements saw their peak, Dukhonin and his army faced difficulty in maintaining loyalty of the army to the Provisional Government.

Others:

Pres. Woodrow Wilson (US)

Serving in office since 1913, Wilson's policies were focused on the non-recognition of the Bolsheviks in Russia as an effort to oppose communism and maintain American interests in Russia. Furthermore, during the Russian Civil War, Wilson's administration sent military and financial assistance to the White Russian factions fighting against the Bolsheviks.

David Lloyd George (UK)

Lloyd George was a former member of the British Liberal Party, and also held the position of the Secretary of State for War. Serving as the British Prime Minister during WWI, he provided support to anti-Bolshevik forces in Russia along with the U.S. Still, the UK's support for the White Movement was very limited in comparison to other allied powers such as France and the U.S.

Questions to Consider:

- How will Russia, while navigating through domestic changes, maintain relationships with its neighbouring European countries during WWI?
- In what ways will the rise in communism in Russia concern the international community?
- How should the Bolsheviks navigate alliances of rivalries with other socialist factions of Russia?

Recommended Websites to Use

A few links to articles/videos/journal entries/other resources that provide further context or information on the topic in a list format.

- (Article) What Was the Bolshevik Revolution? | AHA
[https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/gi-roundtable-series/pamphlets/em-46-our-russian-ally-\(1945\)/what-was-the-bolshevik-revolution](https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/gi-roundtable-series/pamphlets/em-46-our-russian-ally-(1945)/what-was-the-bolshevik-revolution)
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Topic 3: August Coup (1991)



TOPIC INTRODUCTION:

The August Coup, also known as the 1991 Soviet Coup Attempt, was a coup d'etat attempt by Communist hardliners to seize control of the Soviet Union by holding Pres. Mikhail Gorbachev and his family captive. The coup continued in Moscow when they arrested several politicians with the support of the KGB and a tank division. However, over the course of the next few days, much of the population of Moscow protested against the soldiers occupying the city, and the soldiers, in turn, refused to fire upon the civilians. Reportedly, the leaders of the coup seemed to spend as much time bickering among themselves, leading to indecisive planning. The heavy opposition and failure to achieve any of their primary objectives, the coup collapsed. Most of the Gang of Eight were arrested soon after. The opposition to the coup was led by the Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who took control of all forces in Russian territory and strategically used his powers to deter the coup. The coup, which only further rushed the collapse of the Soviet Union, dissolved after only 3 days.

KEY TERMS:

Term	Definition
Soviet Union	Also the USSR, a transcontinental country that spanned much of Eurasia from 1922 to 1991. The country was a successor state to the Russian Empire. It was nominally a federal union of fifteen national republics, the largest and most populous of which was the Russian SFSR, but in practice both its government and its economy were highly centralised until its final years. As a one-party state governed by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, it was a flagship communist state.
State Committee on the State of Emergency	A self-proclaimed political body in the Soviet Union that existed only during the 3 days of the coup. It included a group of eight high-level Soviet officials within the Soviet government, the Communist Party, and the KGB. Its purpose was to prevent the New Union Treaty signing by initiating the August coup. Also known as the “Gang of Eight”
Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (Soviet Russia)	An independent federal socialist state from 1917 to 1922, and afterwards the largest and most populous constituent republic of the Soviet Union (USSR) from 1922 to 1991, until becoming a sovereign part of the Soviet Union with priority of Russian laws over Union-level legislation in 1990 and 1991, the last two years of the existence of the USSR. The combined capital was Moscow.
KGB	The main security agency for the Soviet Union from 1954-1991. Equivalent to the US’s CIA.
Kremlin	A fortified complex in the center of Moscow, with 5 palaces, 4 cathedrals and the former royal palace of the Tsars. The complex now serves as the official residence of the Russian president and as a museum. Kremlin means <i>fortress inside a city</i> and is also used metonymically to refer to the governments of the Soviet Union and Russia.
Red Square	One of the oldest and largest squares in Moscow with famous buildings such as Saint Basil's Cathedral and Lenin's Mausoleum. It has been the scene of executions, demonstrations, riots, parades, and speeches.
Politburo	The highest political organ of the central committee in communist parties.
General Strike	A strike action in which participants cease all economic activity, such as working, to strengthen the bargaining position of a trade union or achieve a common social or political goal.

Hard-liners	A member of a group, typically a political group, who adheres uncompromisingly and reacts severely to a set of ideas or policies.
Dacha	A country house or cottage in Russia, typically used as a vacation or second home.

History of The Topic:

Background and Gorbachev's Reforms:

In 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev assumed power as General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, initiating a reform program marked by perestroika (economic/political restructuring) and glasnost (openness). These bold moves faced resistance from hard-line nomenklatura members, leading to growing suspicion. The reforms also stirred nationalist agitation among non-Russian minorities, raising concerns about possible secession of union republics. By 1991, the Soviet Union grappled with severe economic and political crises, with widespread scarcity of essential goods. The year prior, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Armenia had already declared independence, while Russia declared sovereignty on June 12, 1990, limiting the application of Soviet laws on its territory.

KGB Concerns and Coup Considerations:

As rebellions escalated, some KGB members urged Gorbachev to implement a state of emergency, but no decisive actions were taken. By September 1990, the KGB began contemplating a coup. Soviet politician Alexander Yakovlev warned Gorbachev about this possibility after the 28th Party Congress in June 1990. On December 11, 1990, KGB Chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov made a televised "call for order" and tasked officers with preparing measures for a potential state of emergency. This laid the foundation for a conspiracy involving key figures like Defense Minister Dmitry Yazov, Premier Valentin Pavlov, and others.

Gorbachev's Attempted Compromises:

Facing Kryuchkov's complaints about instability, Gorbachev attempted appeasement by enhancing KGB powers and appointing Boris Pugo as Minister of Internal Affairs. Foreign Secretary Eduard Shevardnadze's resignation in protest warned of an impending dictatorship. Gorbachev reluctantly appointed Gennady Yanayev, and his Cabinet formed the State Committee on the State of Emergency GKChP).

Escalation and Misjudgment:

In June 1991, Premier Pavlov sought extraordinary powers, and Moscow Mayor Gavriil Popov informed U.S. Ambassador Jack F. Matlock Jr. about an impending coup. However, Gorbachev, mistakenly assuming his Cabinet's innocence, downplayed the risk, reversing Pavlov's request and humorously declaring, "The coup is over."

Preparations and Unravelling:

On July 29, discussions involving Gorbachev, Boris Yeltsin, and Nursultan Nazarbayev aimed to replace hardliners. Kryuchkov, having surveilled Gorbachev, learned of this through an electronic bug. Yeltsin prepared for a coup by establishing a secret defence committee and a "reserve government" in Sverdlovsk.

Coup Day - August 19, 1991:

On August 17, the GKChP members met at a KGB guesthouse, deciding to introduce a state of emergency on August 19. The plan involved forming a State Emergency Committee and pressuring Gorbachev to sign relevant decrees or resign, believing this pact would prevent the Soviet Union's breakup.

Timeline:

Date	Description
December 1990	Tensions escalated as the leader of the Russian republic, Boris Yeltsin, increased his rhetoric against central Soviet institutions amid discussions of a new union treaty to loosen the bonds of the USSR. Hard-liners spoke out against the country's dissolution. Gorbachev tried in vain to pick a middle course between two sides.
March 8	The Kremlin unveiled a draft union treaty. The document offered the republics greater sovereignty, granting them control of economic and cultural development and allowing them to establish diplomatic ties, sign international treaties, and join international organisations. A new name for the country was to be discussed, excluding the words Socialist and Soviet. Despite the conciliatory language, six of the USSR's 15 republics chose to ignore a referendum on the issue. Undeterred, Gorbachev continued work on the treaty.
August 18	Gorbachev and his family, along with a small clutch of Politburo and senior government officials, arrive at the presidential dacha in the Crimea for his annual vacation. They demanded that Gorbachev sign a decree declaring a state of emergency or resign. Gorbachev refused to do either.

	<p>The officials confiscated the codes needed to launch the Soviet Union's nuclear weapons, the so-called "nuclear briefcase." Gorbachev and his family were in effect under house arrest.</p>
<p>August 19</p>	<p>The coup goes public</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 04:00 General Igor Maltsev orders the Crimean Airport to close. Warships are anchored near Kap Foros, which is located near the summer villa of president Mikhail Gorbachev. - 05:57 A State of Emergency is declared in all of the territory of the Soviet Union. All the power is under the State Committee on the State of Emergency. - 10:40 The freedom of press is dissolved. - 10:45 President Boris Yeltsin condemns the coup and encourages a general strike. - 12:00 Tanks are driven near the Kremlin and Red Square. People gather near the Parliament Building of the Russian Soviet Federation to give support to Yeltsin and build barricades around the Parliament Building - 14:00 U.S. President George H. W. Bush condemns the coup. - 16:10 Boris Yeltsin declares himself the legal Head of State of Russia. - 17:00 The State Committee on the State of Emergency holds its first press conference in the Foreign Ministry Building. Gennadi Yanayev announces that President Gorbachev is sick and is staying in Crimea.
<p>August 20</p>	<p>The repercussions of the world</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 00:30 U.S. President George H. W. Bush calls the coup leaders in an effort to restore Gorbachev to power. - 01:00 Tens of thousands of people demonstrate near the Russian Parliament Building to protest the coup. - Anatoly Sobchack, Mayor of Leningrad, and Valeriu Muravschi, Moldavia's premier, denounce the coup and show support for Yeltsin. - 15:00 European Economic Community halts all economic aid en route to the Soviet Union. - 16:00 President George H. W. Bush gives his support to Boris Yeltsin by telephone, supporting the return of Gorbachev to power. - 19:50 Ukraine's Parliament condemns the coup

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 20:00 Yeltsin takes control of all Russian troops under his command and establishes a night curfew. - 21:00 State Committee on the State of Emergency's member Defence Minister Dmitry Yazov resigns because of health reasons. - 23:10 Estonia declares restoration of its independence. - 23:10 Moscow people protest the coup.
August 21	<p>The protests of the people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 00:01 Tanks are not able to break the barricades in the front of the Russian Parliament Building. Three civilians were shot in a Moscow skirmish. - 02:21 Civilians form a human chain in front of the Russian Parliament Building. Arrest warrant issued for Yeltsin. Some tanks defect to Yeltsin's side. - 09:20 Latvia genera strike - 11:50 Mikhail Gorbachev refuses to return to Moscow at the behest of the coup leaders. Yeltsin also refuses to travel to Crimea to get Gorbachev back to Moscow. - 13:00 Uzbekistan threatens to leave the Communist Party. - 13:15 Coup leaders flee Moscow. - 13:29 Yeltsin was mandated by the Soviet Russian Parliament to arrest the coup leaders. - 13:39 Military cadre agree to pull all troops from Moscow - 14:59 Coup leaders escape to Crimea - 16:13 Some coup leaders are arrested in Sverdlovsk, Byelorussia. - 16:15 Supreme Soviet's Defense Committee declares the emergency over. - 16:29 Two members of the State Committee on the State of Emergency, KGB's Kryuchkov and Defense Minister Yazov travel to Crimea to meet Gorbachev. - 17:00 Soviet troops pull out from Lithuania. Press censorship is lifted. - 17:10 Supreme Soviet announces that Gorbachev is President of the Soviet Union again. - 18:30 Gorbachev leaves Crimea - 18:59 Coup leader Vice-President Gennadi Yanayev returns to the Kremlin - 20:17 Four coup leaders are located at Gorbachev's summer villa in Crimea.

Aftermath	Within days, the USSR's republics would declare their independence, and by December, the USSR formally ceased to exist. Gorbachev resigned as a leader without a country.
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Global Reactions:

Western Bloc and NATO countries including Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, South Korea, the United Kingdom, the United States, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy condemned the coup and supported the progression of the Soviet Union into democracy.

Communist States including the CPUSA (Communist Party of the USA), Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, China, Congo, Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam and Yugoslavia supported the coup and condemned Gorbachev for his liberal policies.

Questions to Consider:

- How will this affect my country's/party's stance?
- Should I encourage or discourage this coup?
- What will I gain and lose from this?

Character Information:

The Soviet Union Government

Mikhail Gorbachev

The last president of the Soviet Union (1990–91). Both as general secretary and as president, Gorbachev supported democratic reforms. He enacted policies of glasnost (“openness”) and perestroika (“restructuring”), and he pushed for disarmament and demilitarisation in eastern Europe. His economic and political problems led to a 1991 coup attempt by hard-liners who held him hostage in his dacha. In alliance with Russian president Boris Yeltsin, Gorbachev quit the Communist Party, disbanded its Central Committee, and shifted political powers to the Soviet Union’s constituent republics Gorbachev did not act nor heed the concerns of anyone, not the coup members nor those who warned him of the coup.

Boris Yeltsin

Boris Yeltsin played a pivotal role during the August 1991 coup attempt in Russia, opposing communist hard-liners who sought to overthrow Mikhail Gorbachev. Yeltsin, then president of the Russian Republic, confronted the coup leaders with a dramatic speech in Moscow, successfully thwarting their efforts. This event marked a turning point in Russian history, reinforcing Yeltsin's commitment to democratic reforms and the transition to a market-based economy.

Alexander Rutskoy

Alexander Rutskoi, a former air force officer distinguished in Afghanistan, played a key role in supporting Yeltsin during the August 1991 putsch. Promoted to major-general, he became Yeltsin's Vice-President in June 1991.

Ivan Silayev

Ivan Silayev played a crucial role during the August coup in 1991, serving as the chairman of the Committee on the Operational Management of the Soviet economy.

Ruslan Khasbulatov

An economist by training, Khasbulatov was a close ally of Yeltsin in the dying days of the Soviet Union. The two resisted the August 1991 coup together. Khasbulatov was appointed speaker of the Russian parliament -- called the Supreme Soviet -- after the Soviet Union's fall in 1991 by then-president Yeltsin. But Yeltsin and Khasbulatov quickly became political rivals, with the power struggle culminating in the 1993 October revolt when Yeltsin sent tanks to storm the parliament building. Khasbulatov was briefly imprisoned after the rebellion. He was amnestied in 1994 but his political career was over.

Col Gen. Konstantin Kobets

Born in Kiev, this individual held various military roles from 1970 to 1987, including deputy commander and chief of signal troops. Notably, in 1990, he became a people's deputy of the RSFSR and headed a group of deputies from the Armed Forces. In January 1991, he was appointed Chairman of the RSFSR State Committee for Defense and Security, later leading the State Committee for Defence until September 1991. He briefly served as Minister of Defence of the RSFSR in August 1991, and despite subsequent changes, continued in defense-related roles until March 1992.

Gen. Yevgeny Shaposhnikov

Yevgeny Shaposhnikov, born near Aksay, Russia, graduated from Kharkov Higher Military Aviation School in 1963. Rising through the Soviet Air Force ranks, he served as the air force commander in Germany (1987–1989) and became commander-in-chief in

July 1990. In August 1991–February 1992, Shaposhnikov held the position of Minister of Defence of the Soviet Union, overseeing the military during the dissolution. He recognized the Belovezhsky agreement, marking the end of the USSR, and temporarily commanded the Armed Forces until January 1992. The Ministry of Defense then transitioned to the main command of the CIS Armed Forces. Shaposhnikov was acknowledged as the head of the Ministry of Defense in the Decree of the President of Russia in January 1992.

Lt. Gen. Pavel Grachev

In December 1990, Grachev led Soviet airborne troops, and by August/December 1991, he became the Soviet Union's First Deputy Minister of Defence during its breakup. In the early-to-mid-1990s, Grachev, a close friend of President Boris Yeltsin, served as the Russian Federation's Minister of Defence from May 1992 to June 1996. He played a role in the 1991 Soviet coup attempt and supported Yeltsin during the 1993 Russian constitutional crisis, earning praise as "the best defense minister of the decade" in November 1994.

Maj Gen. Alexander Lebed

From 1988 until 1991, General Lebed served as the commander of the 106th Guards Airborne Division. He was a key figure in rallying military support against the coup.

Communist Coup Members

Gennady Yanayev

Gennadiy Yanayev, initially appointed as Vice-President of the Soviet Union in 1990, played a pivotal role in the August Coup of 1991. This coup, led by Yanayev and seven others, aimed to curtail Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms. Yanayev assumed the presidency under false claims of Gorbachev's illness, announcing the coup on national television. However, his visibly shaky demeanor led to speculation of intoxication. Yanayev was arrested on August 22, 1991, charged with treason, and later pardoned in 1994 during a blanket amnesty for conspirators.

Valentin Pavlov

Prime Minister Pavlov initiated the 1991 Soviet monetary reform to curb the flow of Soviet rubles from abroad. In June, he sought a power transfer from the President but later joined a coup attempt in August to prevent the Soviet Union's disintegration. Following the failed coup, Pavlov was arrested and later found employment in the post-Soviet Russian banking sector.

Vladimir Kryuchkov

The main organiser of the abortive coup against Mikhail Gorbachev in August 1991.

Oleg Baklanov

Baklanov was a member of the group of eight Soviet officials that placed Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev under house arrest in August 1991. He was deputy chairman of the presidential Defense Council at the time.

Marshall Dmitry Yazov

Yazov was the defence minister of the Soviet Union 1987 and 1991, and took part in the August 1991 coup attempt against Gorbachev. He supported a group that tried to take over the Soviet Union just four months before its collapse in 1991 and placed Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev under house arrest.

Marshall Sergey Akhromeyev

On December 7, 1988, the same day that Gorbachev announced substantial troop reductions, Akhromeyev resigned from office. He later became the second of three Soviet officials to commit suicide in the wake of an unsuccessful takeover of the central government by hard-liners.

Col Gen. Nikolai Kalinin

Nikolai Vasilyevich Kalinin, a Red Army Colonel general, led the Soviet airborne from 1987 to 1989 and later became the commander of the Moscow Military District. In 1991, he supported a failed coup d'état attempt, leading to his removal from command. Kalinin passed away on March 7, 2008, one day before his 71st birthday.

Col Gen. Albert Makashov

In 1989, Makashov was elected to the Supreme Soviet. He ran in the 1991 presidential election as an "independent nationalist", obtaining 3.74%. He then supported the Soviet coup d'état attempt that took place later in the same year. During the October crisis of 1993 he was in charge of the defence of the White House. He organised a people's army which, on 3 October, stormed the police cordons, seized the Moscow Mayor's office and attempted to seize the Ostankino Tower.

Outside Observers***Pres. George H. W. Bush***

In July 1991, President Bush signed the START I treaty in Moscow, reducing US and Soviet nuclear arsenals. The next day, he delivered a speech in Ukraine cautioning against "suicidal nationalism," criticized as the "Chicken Kiev" speech. Amid the failed August coup against Gorbachev, Bush supported him, condemning the attempt and contributing to the acceleration of the USSR's collapse.

Jiang Zemin

Jiang Zemin, general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party and president of China. Jiang presided over China as Communist allies in the Soviet Union fell apart. By the end of the year -- after an aborted coup and a period of turmoil -- Gorbachev had resigned and the USSR had dissolved. Beijing saw the change as affirmation of its approach to governing: reforming the economy while maintaining strict political control.

Leonid Kravchuk

In August 1991, the Soviet Union faced a critical moment as a coup against President Mikhail Gorbachev failed. Ukrainian parliament, led by Leonid Kravchuk, voted for independence on August 24, 1991, and this decision was later affirmed by a referendum on December 1. Kravchuk became Ukraine's first president, and shortly after, he, Boris Yeltsin, and Stanislav Shushkevich signed an agreement officially dissolving the USSR.

Mikalay Dzyemyantsyey

Mikalay Dzyemyantsyey, a Belarusian politician and former chairman of the Belarusian Supreme Soviet, was replaced by Stanislav Shushkevich after supporting the leaders of the August 1991 coup against Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. He passed away on 10 July 2018 at the age of 88.

Mintimer Shaimiev

On June 12, 1991, Shaimiev was elected President of the Tatar Soviet Socialist Republic and as President issued a declaration during the attempted coup of August 1991 in Moscow supporting the position of the Emergency Committee. In March 1992 he held a referendum on Tatarstan's sovereignty during which 62 percent of the voters cast their ballots in favour of sovereignty.

Edgar Savisaar

On 3 April 1990, Savisaar became the head of the transitional government (the prime minister, in current terms) of Estonia. His term of office included finding widespread support for the people's representatives in Toompea, both domestically and abroad, and the peaceful restoration of independence on 20 August 1991. On 30 January 1992, the

government of Savisaar resigned due to the conflicts resulting from the economic crisis, hyperinflation, and shortage of goods. Considering the legal continuity of the independence of Estonia, it was the 34th Government of the Republic

Ivars Godmanis

The Prime Minister of Latvia from 1990 to 1993. His focus was primarily on Latvia's difficult economic transition from planned to market economy.

Vytauta Landsbergis

A Lithuanian politician and former Member of the European Parliament, he was the first Speaker of Reconstituent Seimas of Lithuania after its independence declaration from the Soviet Union. He is a founding signatory of the Prague Declaration, and a member of the international advisory council of the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation.

Questions to Consider:

- What are the benefits of the success of the coup?
- What are the consequences of the coup?
- How will the success/failure of the coup affect your country's interests?
- How will the public react to the coup?
- Why should the coup be encouraged/dissolved?

Recommended Websites to Use:

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