

28/10/1905
Chief Ministers Office

Your Majesty,

I am writing to you today not as a friend but as your Chief Minister, I would not be doing my duty if I did not inform and express the urgency of our current situation. I sent you a letter on the 22nd of October but that was much too brief and I have thought about the issues and have come up with a new and alternate plan which will stabilize our government but also divide the classes back to how it was. But first we must look back at the events that unfolded that got us to this Crossroad.

January 9th 1905,

- [1] Over 120,000 protestors marched towards your winter palace; reports say that they were demanding higher wages and shorter hours. Captain Alexander Udinov was in charge of seeing that order was kept. At the head of the march was Father Georgy Gapon, a priest that spent time illegally forming workers unions in the factories of St Petersburg. Their demands were unreasonable, they did not realise that our government cannot just start rising wages and start falling behind in production, and I was the previous Finance Minister I myself saw to the planning of the government's spending and that was not a priority. The mob began to get more aggressive, began to shout louder, 'we want the Tsar!' they were reported to be increasing their pace towards the palace. At approximately 11.00 before noon the Commander fired 2 warning shots, these were met by the mob starting to charge at the small unit.
- [2] Commander Udinov had to protect the Palace. There was no other choice but to fire into the crowd. The Commander ordered his troops to fire below their waists to reduce casualties. They just kept coming; the Cossacks were then ordered to subdue the crowd with necessary force. The official reports were 97 dead and just over 300 injured. But what was published in the papers were that over 4,000 were dead, what preposterous dishonesty!

After the crowd was dispersed Father Gapon was arrested and taken in for interrogation, I just received a report yesterday that Father Gapon is actually Nikolai Zykov provocateur for the Okhrana the investigation is still being carried out.

- [3] That Sunday lit the flames of the people, the outcome was national all over the Empire reports came in of Doctors, Lawyers, Teachers all disowning the proceedings of that day.
- [4] One of the worst backlashes was the assassination of your uncle Sergei on the 4th of February. The people took to striking in almost every major city.
- [5] If they wanted change in wages and working hours then why did they stop working? No work means no money, no money means no pay and this contributes to the economy declining. They simply do not know the consequences of their actions. The next event on the calendar was the Russo- Japanese war.

September 5th 1905,

- [6] I led a delegation of officials, to declare peace with the Japanese in the East. That war was one that cost us not only financially but also it hurt our government's popularity. Your intentions were good and they were to benefit the whole of Russia but the Japanese were too greedy, too power hungry. We were there just as peace makers for Japan and China, tensions reached a point where we had to intervene. This is what the papers don't tell the public, they twist and lie making us look like the evil doers! Our Navy was sent in to support the peace-making efforts and was met by bad weather causing them to run straight into Japanese defences causing many of our ships to sink. This was a grave day in our history. This was a major let down for our people, they turned to hating the government for this war, a war they fully supported to begin with.
- [7] To spare us anymore costs and troubles we had no choice but to let the two Eastern powers sort out their differences. Our forces are beginning to arrive home now.

[8] There was also trouble in our military even before the war in June, our new ship the Potemkin was out at sea and we had letters from the Commander that new crates of meat was needed to replace the worm infested ones. And they were being sent out but then we got reports that they had mutinied against the commander. How dare they disrespect their superiors like that? They were meant to keep order in the unrested city of Odessa, instead they fled to Romania! I hope they get hanged for cowardice!

September 23rd 1905,

[9] This was a day that our good God had made, but not a good day for us. On this day reports came flooding into my office of the printers in Moscow going on strike, this of course at the time wasn't a major deal to me or my ministers. But as the October Sun continued to shine on Russia things got worse and worse, those illiterate fools driving the trains went on strike! They crippled the entire railway network, again the populace don't see how doing this deducts income and growth from our economy. Their striking won't have any meaning if they have no money to work for. Only 2 days ago on the 26th the workers in St. Petersburg workers set up a soviet. They say that it is an alternate form of government; do they really think a bunch of dirty factory scrubbers can really run a country? Those Menshiviks are claiming that they control the soviet, therefore controlling the city but our infiltrators say that there is no real leadership within the soviet.

[11] My Dear Tsar in my previous letter I wrote of conforming to the tide of change allowing 'Freedom' to become the new face of our government. I must apologise, I showed weakness, after what they have cost us as a nation I have changed my views against them. I still require you to appease the wishes of the people, but only for a short period of time. We must give them something to hold on to while we wait, something to satisfy them while we wait. I have drawn up a Manifesto, this will please the middle class citizen but leave the working class and peasants out. The Manifesto includes:

- Having an elected Duma
- Un-banning political parties
- Civil Rights
- Law must pass through the Duma

[12] I believe this will be enough to keep them content you must issue this on the 30th of November. The people will think that we have reformed our government and have heard their voices. After the issuing of this then we watch as the two classes begin to separate, the middle class will return to work happy that a constitutional monarch has been set up, while the working class return to work empty handed. From here is where we need to be careful. The Bolsheviks a more upfront and in your face party will certainly threaten an armed uprising, but you see by this time the army will have returned, your battle hardened, and loyal troops. This is when you strike; crush all those who revolted against you, put down the St Petersburg soviet, arrest all its key members. Crush the peasant uprisings in the countryside, show no mercy my Tsar. They need to know where the authority lies. Who controls Russia. By the end of November this revolution will be nothing but a memory.

So you must quickly issue the Manifesto in order to keep your government intact. Reform now, repress later.

Sergei Witte

Chief Minister