



**14 September 1911**

**The day Pyotr Stolypin was  
assassinated**





## **Stolypin:** Nicolas II's second chance

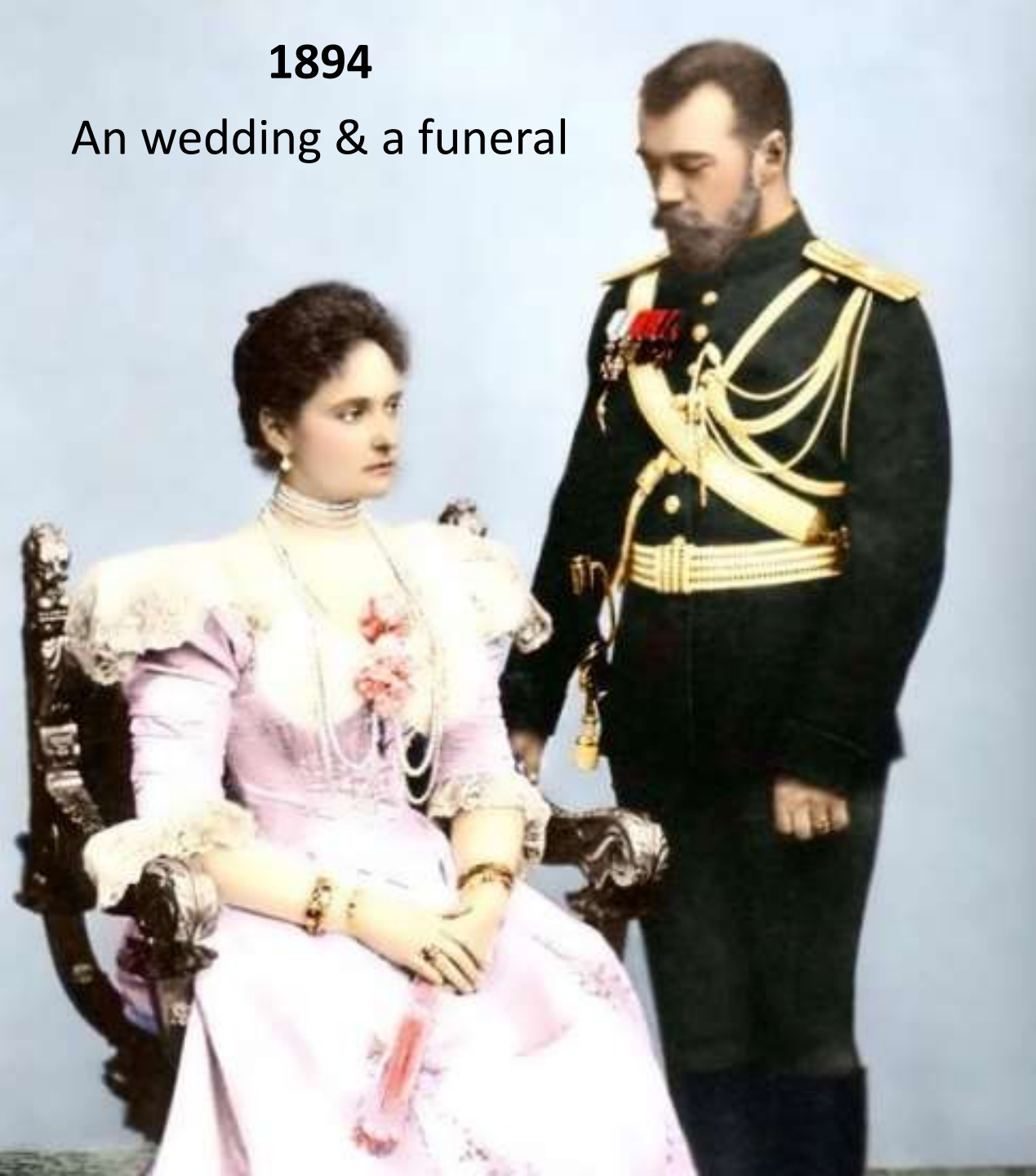
Appointed **Minister of the Interior** in May 1906 & **Prime Minister** in July

A passionate monarchist: a target for revolutionaries

Detested by ultra conservatives hostile to change

**1894**

**An wedding & a funeral**



**Nicolas, Czar of Russia at 26**







Nicolas II – **Autocracy** to remain at  
the core of the Russian political  
system

Reforms: *“foolish daydreams”*

Urgent modernization of Russia  
needed





**A growing working class – 26 million**  
(Russia's population: 126 million in 1898)







**The Industrial Revolution**  
**Social changes – Introduction of new technologies**

**=**

**Rising tensions (bourgeoisie vs. working classes)**

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**Resentment towards the capitalist system**

**=**

**The formulation of revolutionary doctrines**

**The use of violence**





## 1902: the creation of the **Socialist-Revolutionary Party**

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Party's Manifest: the path to Socialism is blocked by the Russian autocracy

The overthrow of the Czar & redistribution of the land to the peasants through the use of terror

Manifest: the central strategy of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party until 1909

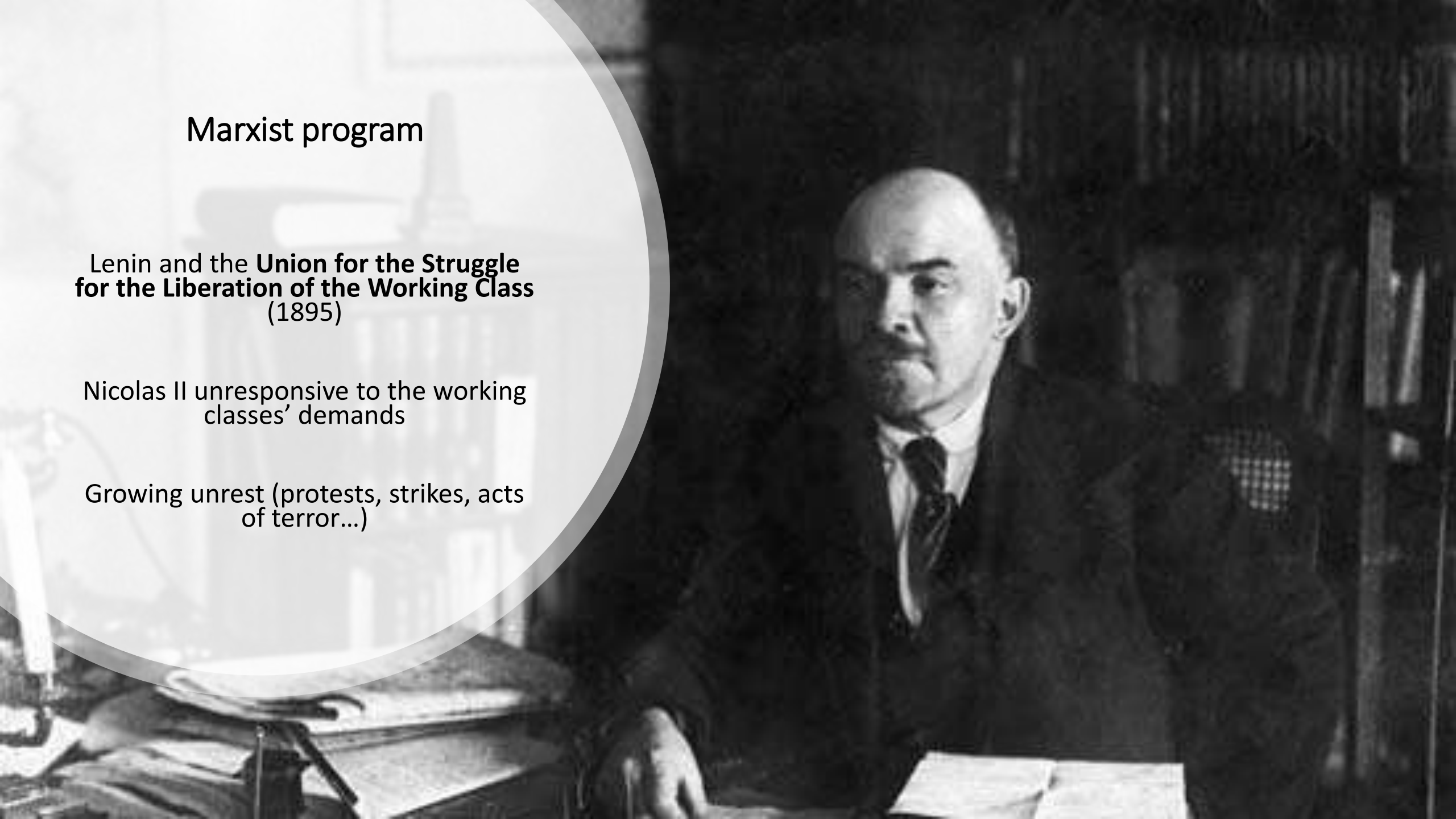


## Marxist program

Lenin and the **Union for the Struggle  
for the Liberation of the Working Class**  
(1895)

Nicolas II unresponsive to the working  
classes' demands

Growing unrest (protests, strikes, acts  
of terror...)







Aleksandr Ulyanov (Lenin's brother) :  
the need to fight autocracy through  
acts of terror ("terrorist faction")

*"Terrorism is the only form of struggle  
created by the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the only  
form of defense at the disposal of a  
minority"*



**1904:** the assassination of  
Vyacheslav von Plehve  
(Minister of the Interior &  
Director of the Imperial police)







**1905:** the assassination of Grand-Duke Sergei (Nicolas II's uncle)





A happy family life

A comfortable life in the country  
(**Alexander Palace** – Tsarskoe Selo)


Imperial couple increasingly out of  
touch and isolated









A black and white photograph showing a woman and four young girls standing in a row outdoors. They are all wearing white, long-sleeved dresses. The woman is in the center, looking down at her hands. The girls are on either side of her, also looking down. The background shows a large tree and a building with a porch.

Alexandra's growing  
mysticism

Alexandra turned to  
clairvoyants, faith-healers  
(charlatans)





Nicolas and Alexandra  
increasingly out of touch  
and **isolated**







30 July 1904: the birth of  
Alexis

8 September: Alexis diagnosed with  
hemophilia

Alexandra inherited the disease from  
her grand-mother (Queen Victoria)





Decision to hide Alexis' condition

A state secret = growing isolation (private sphere)

Very few knew









# The Russo-Japanese War: a disastrous conflict for Russia

Personal dislike for Japan

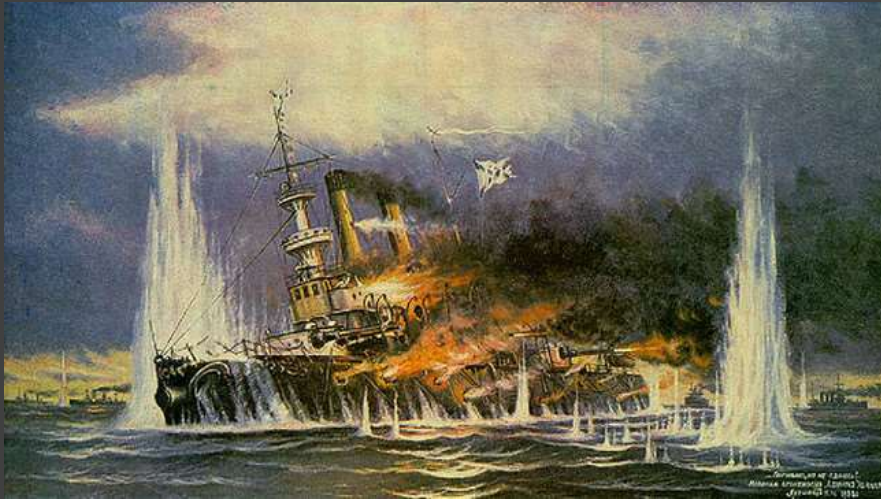
Japan's military power dismissed

Support from Kaiser Wilhelm II





## The humiliating defeat of Tsushima





*Bloody Sunday*  
(St-Petersburg, 1905)

Peaceful demonstration (150 000 workers and peasants)

5 000 victims

Father Georgi Gapon: call to all Socialist parties to use *“dynamite and bombs, collective and individual terror”*







## The Revolution of 1905

A period of violence & uncertainty

Strikes

The first **Soviets**






## The October Manifesto

The promise of basic civil rights, freedom of the press...

An elected parliament ("*Duma*")





27 April 1906:  
the  
inauguration  
of the first  
*Duma*





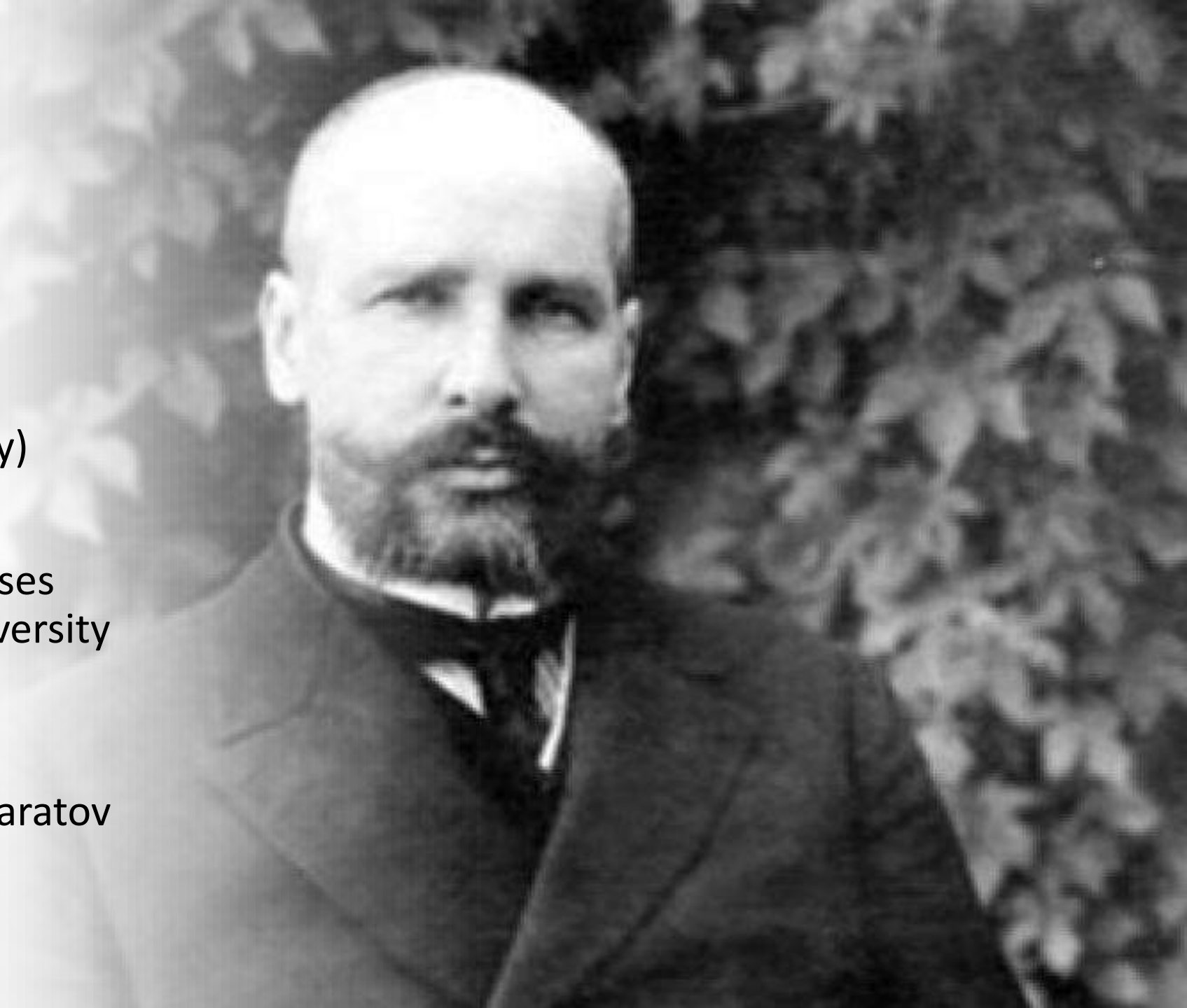


Stolypin appointed  
Prime Minister

Born in **1862** (rural nobility)

Understanding of rural masses  
(studied agriculture at the University  
of St. Petersburg)

**1903**: appointed governor of Saratov





**1903:** appointed governor of  
**Saratov** province

Successful in suppressing violent peasant  
unrest (1905)

Summoned to St. Petersburg (1906)

**Priority:** to restore law and order before  
introducing necessary reforms



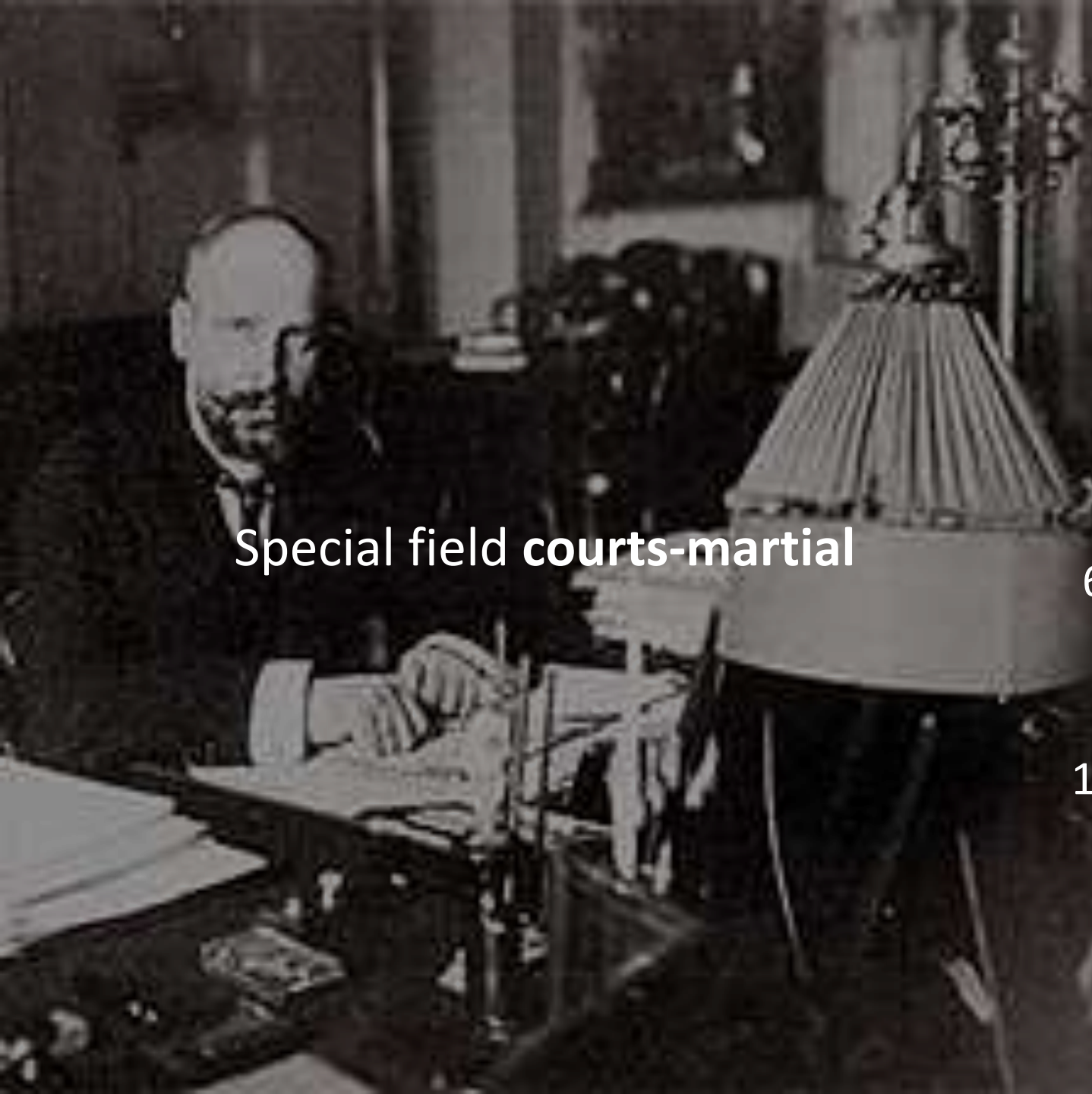




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Special field **courts-martial**



600 death sentences by hanging  
(*"Stolypin's necktie"*)

1 600 high ranking officials & civil  
servants killed by acts of terror

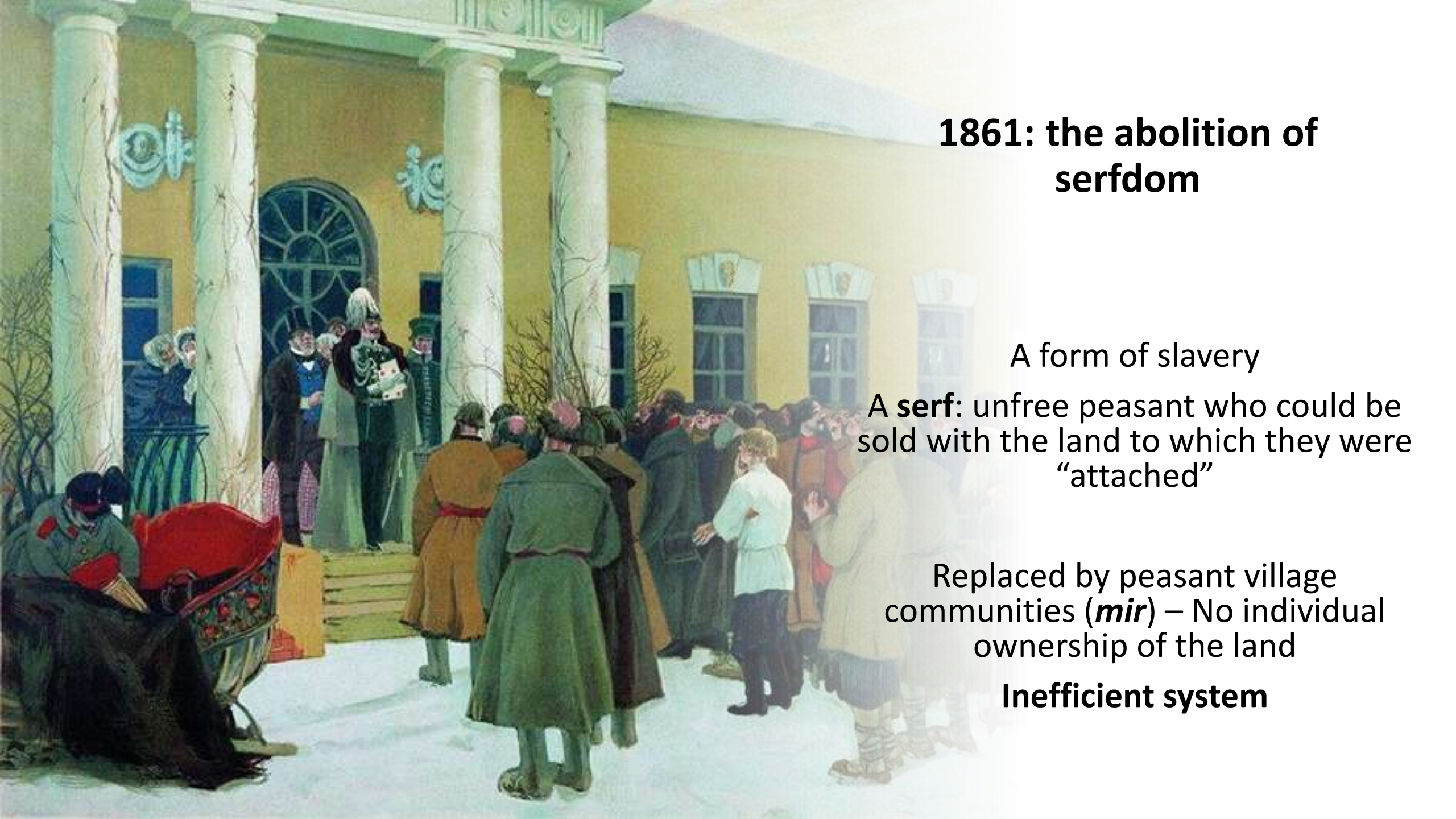


12 August 1906

Assassination attempt: Stolypin's  
summer house targeted by the  
Bolsheviks (32 dead)







## 1861: the abolition of serfdom

A form of slavery

A **serf**: unfree peasant who could be sold with the land to which they were “attached”

Replaced by peasant village communities (***mir***) – No individual ownership of the land

**Inefficient system**



A black and white portrait of a man with a full, dark beard and mustache, looking slightly to the right. He is wearing a dark suit jacket over a light-colored shirt and a dark tie. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape.

## 1. Agrarian reform

The communal system overturned & the introduction of the concept of **private property**

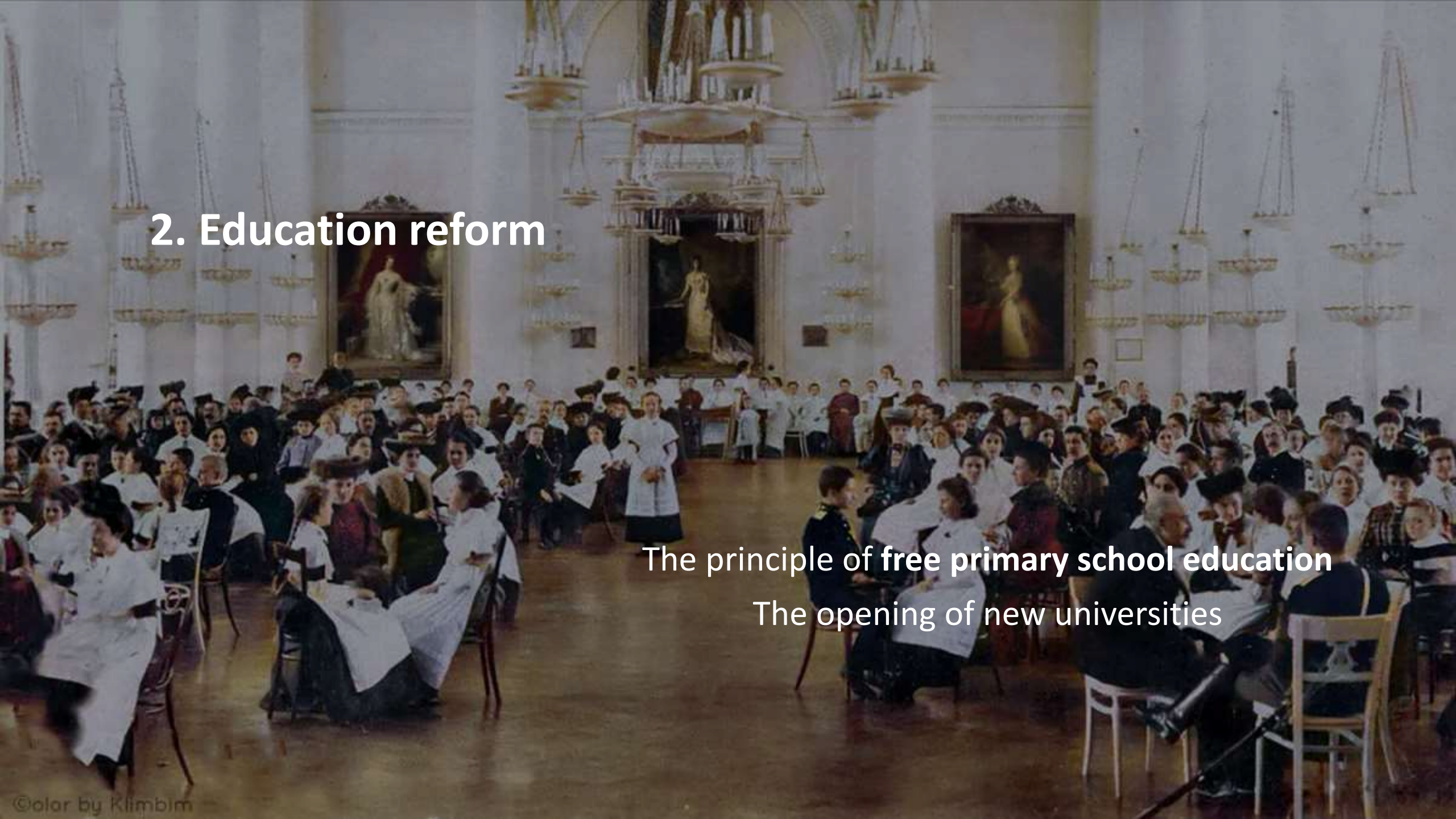
**Colonization** of Siberia encouraged

9 million peasant families owned land by 1914



## 2. Education reform

The principle of **free primary school education**  
The opening of new universities





### 3. Industrialization intensified

Russia as an industrial power by 1913 (steel, textile, oil...)





## Nicolas II: from support to hostility

*"I cannot tell you how much I have  
come to like and respect this man"*

(Nicolas II to his mother, October 1906)

Wanning support over time

Nicolas II jealous of Stolypin's prestige





## Reactionary circles at court

The existence of a *Duma* contrary to the essence of autocracy

Stolypin seen as a traitor and secret revolutionary conniving with the *Duma* to steal the czar's political prerogatives



## Czarina Alexandra

A powerful enemy





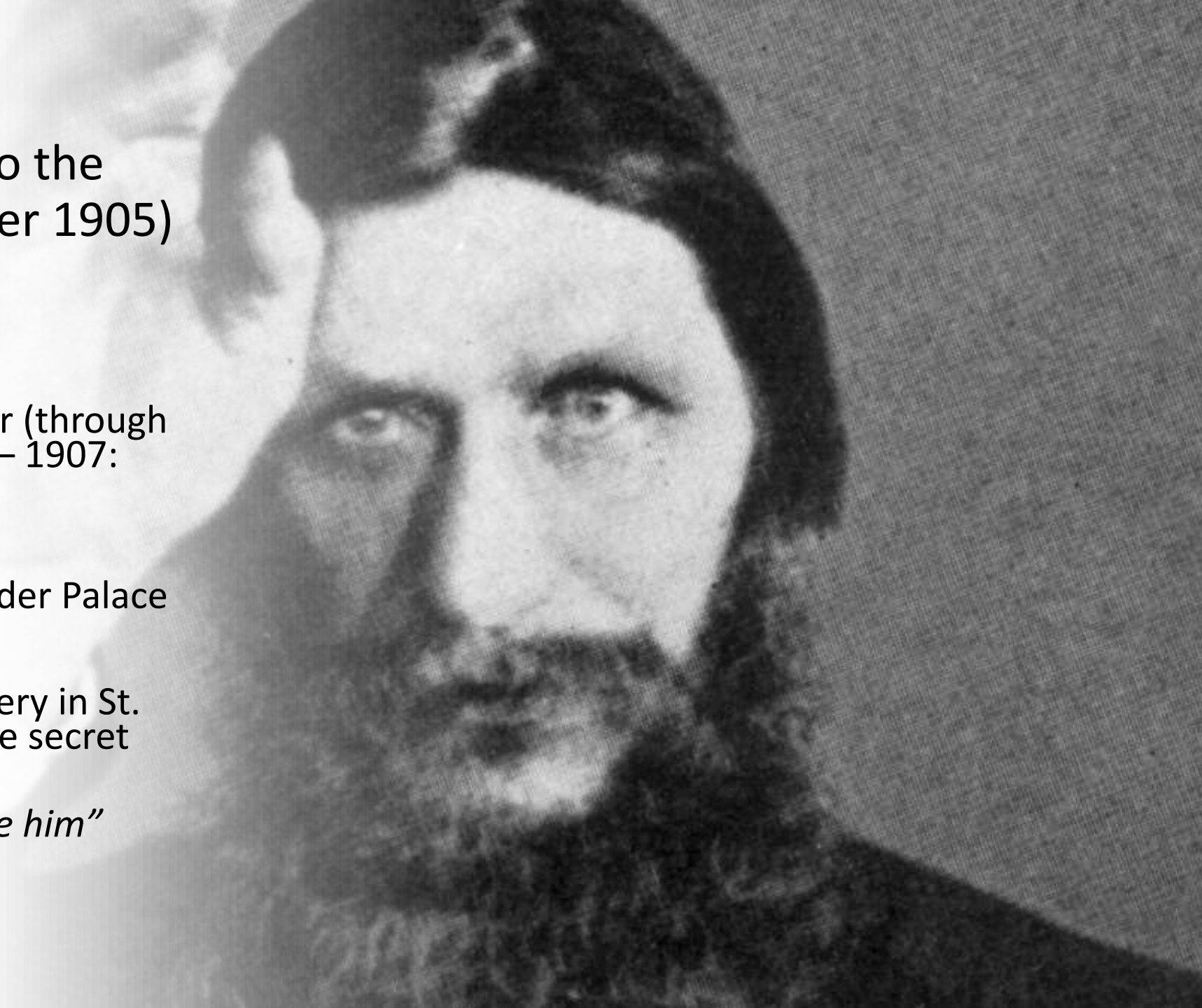
**Rasputin** introduced to the  
imperial couple (November 1905)

A « *messenger of God* », a healer (through  
hypnosis & common sense!) – 1907:  
aspirin discarded

Growing presence at the Alexander Palace

A life of scandals and debauchery in St.  
Petersburg (surveillance by the secret  
police)

*“He is hated because we love him”*  
(Alexandra)



Rumors: the imperial family  
discredited

Nicolas II perceived as a puppet in the  
hands of his wife & Rasputin







Growing criticism

Rasputin systematically defended by  
Alexandra

Rasputin: a threat to the monarchy  
(Stolypin)

Stolypin unaware of Alexis' condition



A damning report

Investigation

Conclusions presented to Nicolas II

Rasputin banished from St Petersburg  
by Stolypin

Alexandra's hatred towards Stolypin



General Kurlov appointed head of the *Ohkrana* (political police)

Known for his incompetence  
An enemy of Stolypin

Rasputin allowed to return to St. Petersburg  
Stolypin to resign





The image shows a detailed view of a classical building's facade. It features a large central archway containing a statue, flanked by smaller arches and columns. The architecture is highly ornate with decorative carvings and a curved roofline. The sky is clear and blue.

**September 1911:** Stolypin to accompany Nicolas II to Kiev

Kurlov in charge of security (2 000 policemen and guards)  
Stolypin left unprotected!



A black and white portrait of Dmitry Bogrov, a man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a suit and tie. He is looking slightly to the left of the camera.

Dmitry Bogrov

## The assassin

Wealthy Jewish family from Kiev

Sympathies for the Socialist  
Revolutionary Party

AND

A police informant

Hatred for Russian elites since Kiev  
pogrom (1905)

A black and white portrait of Dmitry Bogrov, a man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a suit and tie. He is looking slightly to the left of the camera.

Dmitry Bogrov

The assassin

Why Stolypin?

A Russian politician working actively  
**to reform** Russia and its autocratic  
regime

Bogrov informed the local police of a  
plot against... Stolypin!



A black and white portrait of Dmitry Bogrov, a man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a suit and tie. He is looking slightly to the left of the camera.

Dmitry Bogrov

The assassin

Bogrov's mission from the police: to spot potential assassins at the opera house

Easy access to Stolypin







Stolypin mortally  
wounded

Died 5 days later

Nicolas II's indifference

**Vladimir Kokovtsov**



A new prime minister

Immediate task: to prevent a  
pogrom against the Jewish  
population





## A visit to Livadia

*"I notice that you keep on making comparisons between yourself and Stolypin. You seem to do too much honor to his memory and ascribe too much importance to his activities and his personality... I am sure that Stolypin died to make room for you, and this is all for the good of Russia."*

(Czarina Alexandra to Kokovtsov)



The end of a crucial period  
for Russia

The last attempt to transform Russia's  
autocracy

State violence + reforms

Real economic breakthrough (rubble  
amongst the strongest currencies in  
1913)

Budget surpluses

A reformed education system



## Nicolas II: from support to hostility

Nicolas II never fully supported  
Stolypin's political reforms

Autocracy must remain at the core of  
Russia's political system

An increasingly tense relationship



## 1911-1914: a strange period for Russia

Growing social & political unrest behind  
deceiving successes  
An increasingly dangerous foreign policy  
Personal problems





## Dealing with Alexei's hemophilia

A mentally unstable Alexandra (manic depression)

**Manic depression:** periods of abnormally-elevated happiness followed by periods of deep depression)

The growing political influence of Rasputin



Vladimir Kokovtsov

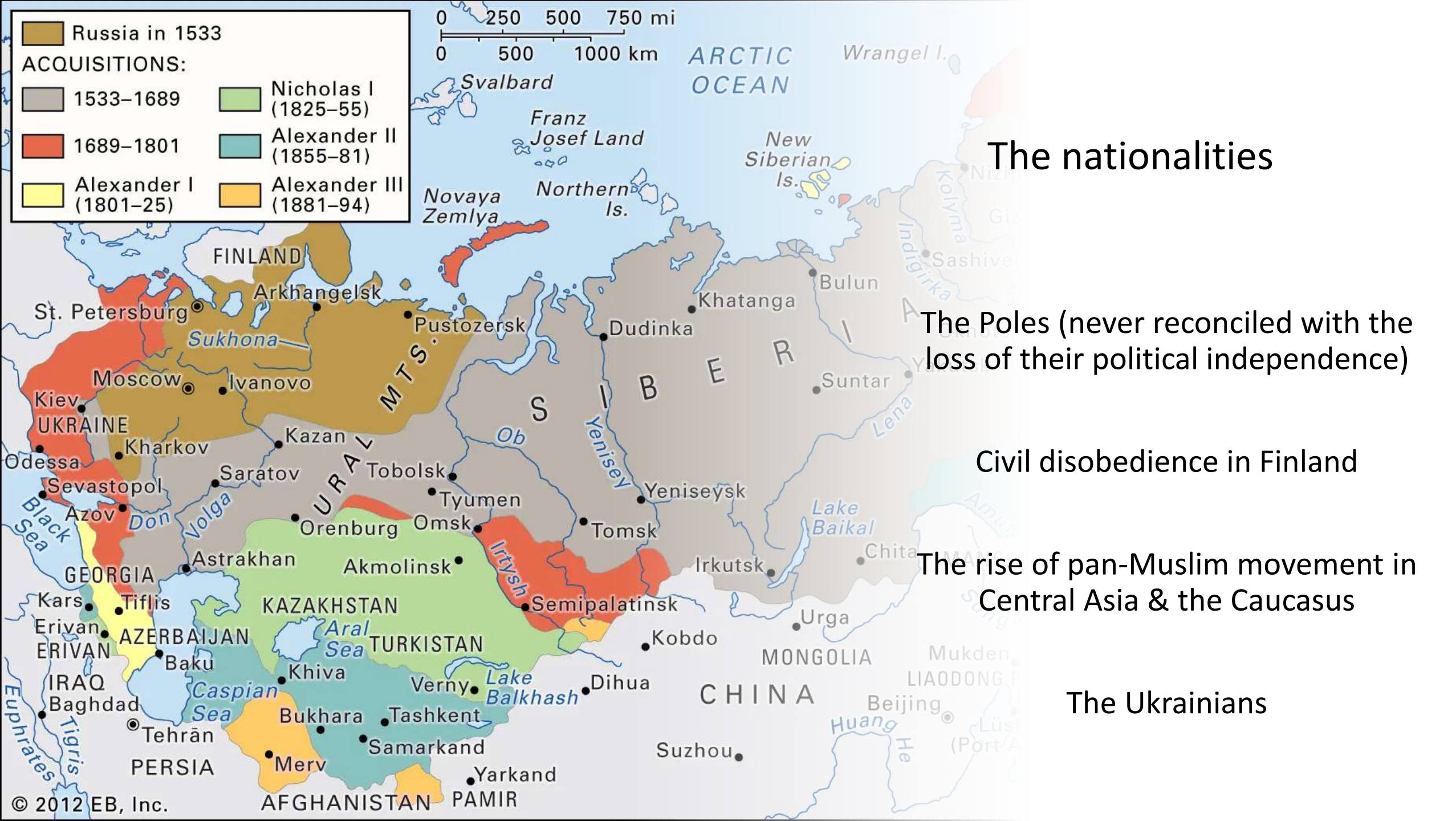


1913: Kokovtsov dismissed

Unable to protect the imperial  
family's reputation or cope with  
political & social unrest

1.5 million strikers in 1913







## Ukraine split between **Austria-Hungary** (Pro-European West) & **Russian Empire** (East)





## Pro-European West

The emergence of the first  
**Ukrainian nationalist movements**  
(Lemberg – Lviv & Czernowitz)

Ukrainian culture & language  
protected and encouraged within  
Austrian-Hungarian empire

Imperial Russia: fear of Polish and  
Western Ukrainian influence





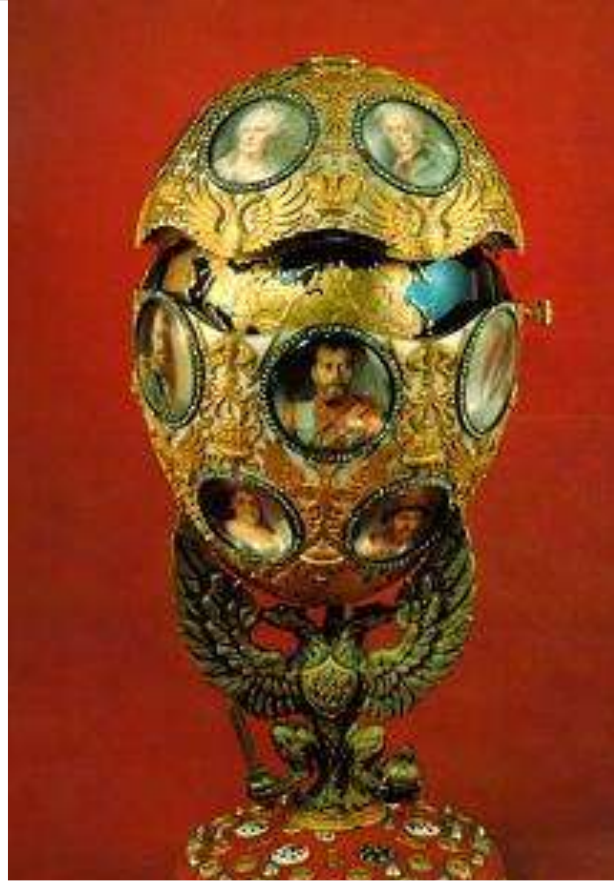
1914

A new ultra-conservative prime minister: Ivan Goremykin

His appointment approved by Rasputin (*"Our Friend"*)





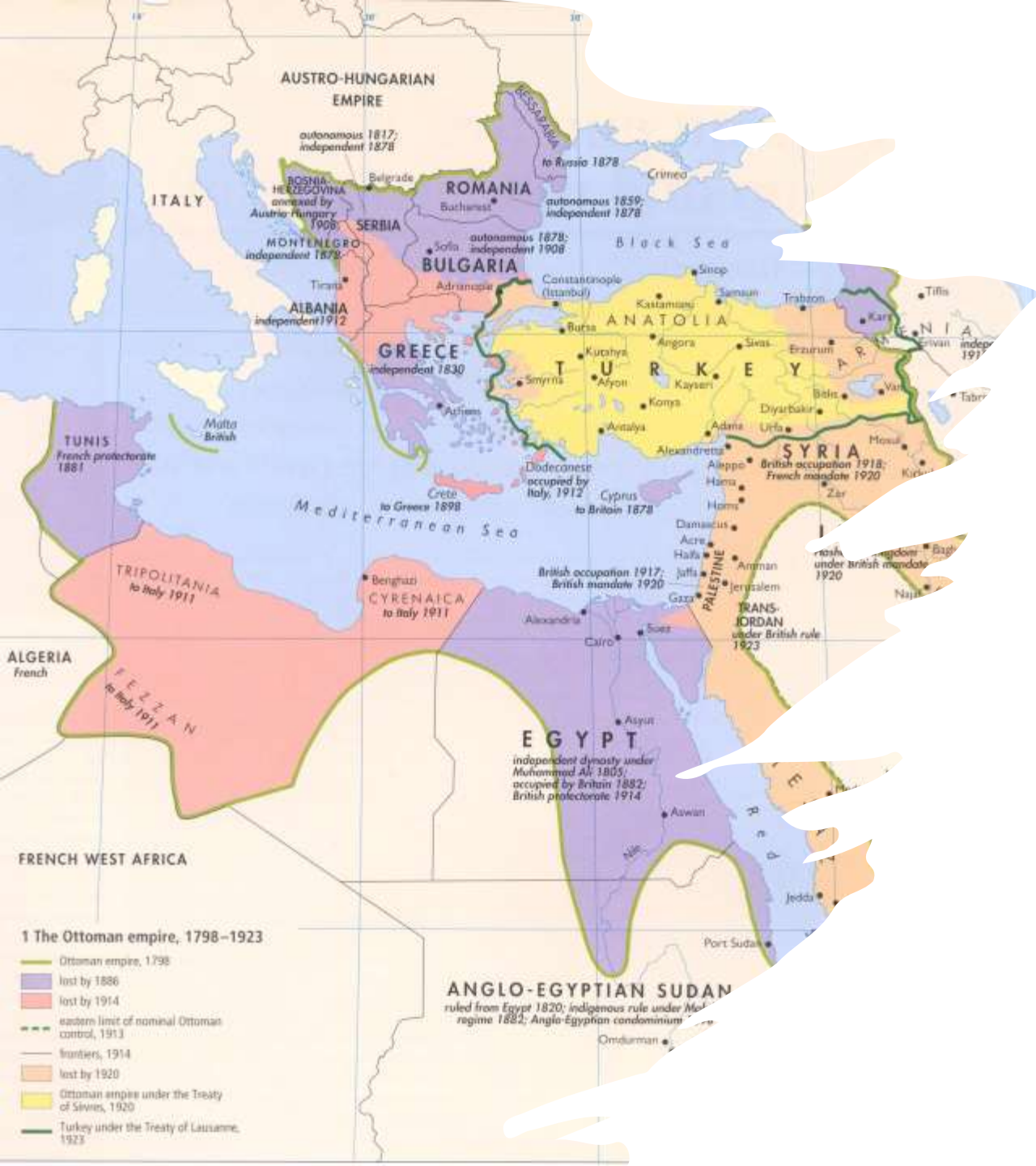


A prevailing atmosphere of melancholy  
Alexandra's first public appearance in St. Petersburg since 1905  
False reconciliation



# The decline of the Ottoman Empire

Austria-Hungary and Russia: a **battle of influence** in the Balkans



**Bosnia-Herzegovina occupied (1878) then annexed by Austria-Hungary (1908)**



Russia unable to react (Russian defeat against Japan & revolution – 1905)

Stolypin's role in maintaining peace in Europe:  
Serbia forced to negotiate with Austria-Hungary

War to be avoided at all cost







Peter I of Serbia: in search of allies (France & Russia)





## The Balkan Wars (1912-1913)

**What foreign policy for Russia?**

Russian support to anti-Ottoman coalition (First Balkan War)

Serbia vs. Bulgaria (Second Balkan War)

Russia to preserve its relations with Serbia





## The Russo-French alliance

Cornerstone of Russian diplomacy  
in Europe

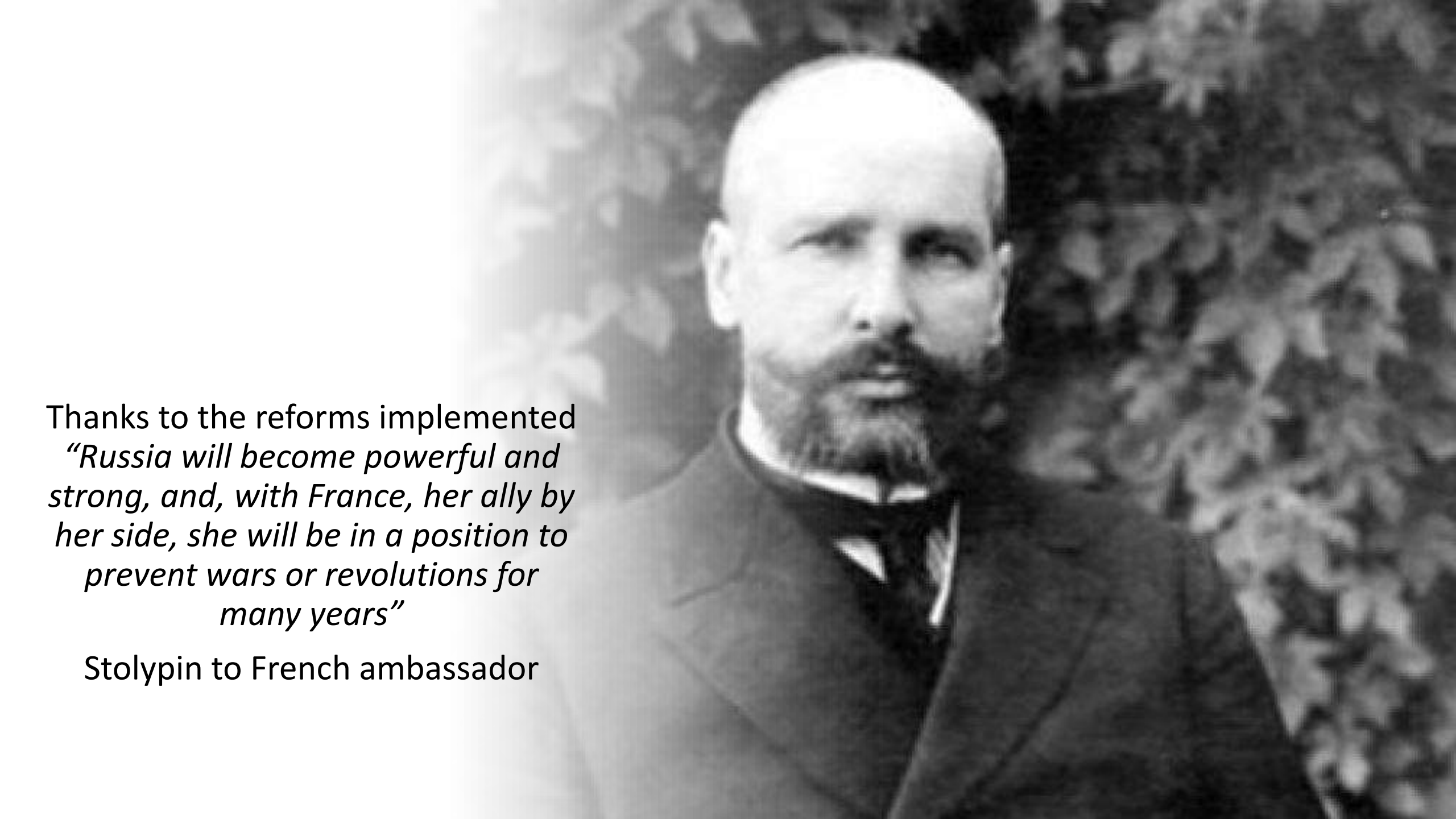
Nicolas II convinced Russia is  
ready for war

**23 July:** a military parade (60 000  
men) to impress the French  
President

The *Russian steam roller* gave  
comfort to the French







Thanks to the reforms implemented  
*“Russia will become powerful and  
strong, and, with France, her ally by  
her side, she will be in a position to  
prevent wars or revolutions for  
many years”*

Stolypin to French ambassador





**28 June 1914:** the assassination of Franz Ferdinand and his wife