

The Ghost of 1917: A Warning from the Past

By Lev Neymotin

I read the review in today's WSJ, "**March 1917, Book 4**": *Solzhenitsyn on Russia's Moment of Crisis* with a chill down my spine. Not because I learned something new, but because it confirmed what I already feared deep in my bones. Solzhenitsyn—my intellectual and moral beacon—tried for decades to warn the West. His words are now echoing louder than ever. The parallels between Russia on the eve of the Bolshevik seizure of power and what is unraveling in America today are too many, too sharp, and too deadly to ignore.

I come from a family that paid the price for that so-called revolution—murdered, imprisoned and sent to Gulag, and broken under a regime that promised liberation and delivered only chains. So I do not speak lightly.

Here are the parallels, one by one, as I see them today:

1. Collapse of Moral and Institutional Authority

1917 Russia: The Tsar abdicated. Kerensky's Provisional Government—weak, chaotic, indecisive—tried to govern a collapsing empire while appeasing radicals. The army disintegrated. The bureaucracy rotted. Nobody believed in anything.

2020s America: Our institutions are discredited, our leaders paralyzed or corrupted. Respect for courts, police, the Constitution itself—is mocked, undermined, and fading fast. Bureaucracies no longer serve the people; they serve narratives and agendas. Universities produce ideology, not knowledge. Sound familiar?

2. Mob Rule Masquerading as Social Justice

1917 Russia: Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, anarchists, and opportunists flooded the streets screaming slogans of equality while tearing down the fabric of society. Mobs overran cities, tore down statues, renamed everything, and targeted the "privileged."

Today in America: Riots are called "mostly peaceful protests." Mobs loot in the name of "equity." Monuments to Washington and Lincoln are defaced. DEI bureaucrats and media enforcers silence dissent. Truth is no defense. We are living in the soft phase of a Cultural Revolution.

3. Weaponization of Language

1917 Russia: Language was hijacked. “Peace, Land, and Bread” sounded noble—but it masked a reality of terror, starvation, and war. Labels like “bourgeois” became death sentences.

Now: Words like “misinformation,” “domestic extremism,” “systemic racism,” and “threat to democracy” are used to crush debate. Free speech is redefined as “violence.” Biology is declared “hate.” Opposing viewpoints are treated as criminal threats. This isn’t just Orwellian—it’s Leninist.

4. Destruction of National Identity

1917 Russia: Russia was “deconstructed.” Class warfare replaced patriotism. Internationalism replaced tradition. The Church was ridiculed and stripped of its influence.

In the U.S. today: Children are taught to hate their history. The flag is suspect. “America First” is treated like a slur. Christianity is mocked while every imported ideology is elevated. Our cultural foundations are being dynamited by the same kind of utopian fanatics who destroyed Russia.

5. Elite Cowardice

Kerensky’s 1917: Educated elites—journalists, academics, politicians—stood by, rationalizing the revolution, thinking they could “ride the tiger.” They believed they could control the Bolsheviks. Fools.

America’s ruling class today: Tech oligarchs, corporate boards, and Ivy League intellectuals think they can co-opt the radical left for profit or prestige. They think the mob won’t come for them. They are as wrong as the Russian aristocrats who ended up in basements or camps.

6. The Engineered Collapse of Order

1917 Russia: The revolutionaries knew that chaos was their best ally. So they sabotaged the war effort, broke the economy, and spread lies.

Today: Open borders. Weaponized inflation. A demoralized military. Censorship dressed as “fact-checking.” Constant racial division. It’s not incompetence—it’s deliberate destabilization by those who believe crisis will bring them power.

7. Weak Government at the Edge of the Abyss

Kerensky's Fatal Flaw: He was a centrist trying to placate extremists. He thought reason could tame radicalism. Instead, he was swept away.

Today's Democrats: The Biden administration behaves like a Potemkin presidency, propped up by bureaucrats and handlers, paralyzed by ideology and fear. Meanwhile, the real power lies in unelected agencies and Silicon Valley platforms. The people know it. And they're angry.

Where Is the Counterforce?

Here I must speak plainly. Trump, for all his flaws, is no Kerensky. He is not afraid to name enemies. He doesn't play the appeasement game. His enemies are the same bureaucratic class that toppled Kerensky and enthroned Lenin—not in Russia, but in today's America. That's why they fear him. That's why they must destroy him.

Solzhenitsyn warned: "Live not by lies." We are drowning in lies now, fed to us daily by a machine that calls itself "democracy." But this isn't democracy. It's the edge of a new Bolshevism—this time woke, digital, and global.

Let me be clear. The October Revolution didn't just kill millions in Russia. It set fire to the 20th century. It gave birth to Gulags, Maoism, North Korea, Cambodia. That fire is smoldering again. And if we don't stop it now, we will live to see its flames devour what remains of Western freedom.

This isn't a warning from a historian. This is a scream from someone whose family *lived* through the nightmare once already.

Never again. Not here.