Power After Revolution

Examine criticisms of revolutionary change and centralized planning.

TOT.C.1.6 "Examine the criticisms of the ideas of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Explain how violent revolution tends to undermine the rule of law and may empower those more capable of oppression. Describe how state ownership of means of production..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two ways violent revolution can weaken legal protections. Circle two ways control of production can give leaders power over people, then number each cause-and-effect link you find.

Who Holds Power?

1. In the 1800s, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels argued that factory owners gained wealth from workers' labor while workers had little control over their jobs. They called for workers to replace capitalism with a society that would eventually have no economic classes. They expected a struggle between classes and supported revolution, not merely small reforms. Critics ask who would hold power while the old system was being replaced. If revolutionary leaders claim to speak for every worker, they may dismiss workers who disagree. A promise to end exploitation, critics argue, does not by itself prevent a new ruling group from forming.

2. Russia offers a warning about how a revolution can unfold. After the Bolsheviks seized power in 1917, civil war followed, and the new government used arrests and violence against opponents. Leaders argued that harsh measures were needed to defend the revolution. Yet when armed groups decide who counts as an enemy, courts and ordinary legal protections can lose their force. People skilled at commanding troops or secret police may gain influence over people who favor debate and compromise. Critics say this pattern can leave citizens less able to challenge abuse, even when the revolution promised them greater freedom.

3. Later, the Soviet government took control of most major industries and used central plans to set production goals. Officials could decide which factories received materials and which goods were made. This concentration of economic power gave political leaders ways to reward supporters and punish dissenters, including through control of jobs and supplies. Plans also limited the choices of workers and businesses, and officials could silence criticism rather than admit mistakes. Critics link such sweeping state control to authoritarian rule, especially when independent courts, elections, and a free press are weak. Public ownership of some services, however, does not automatically produce a dictatorship.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What danger do critics see when revolutionary leaders claim to speak for every worker?

2. According to the passage, how can deciding who counts as an enemy weaken the rule of law?

3. Why might violent revolution empower people capable of oppression rather than people who favor debate?

4. How did central planning give Soviet leaders power to restrict individual freedoms?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A fictional country has overthrown its ruler in a violent uprising. Its new leaders want one ministry to own every farm and factory and set all production targets. Write a five-sentence advisory note explaining one danger from the uprising and one from the economic plan, then proposing two different safeguards and explaining how each would help.

ANSWER KEY

Power After Revolution

HIGH SCHOOL · TOT.C.1.6

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two ways violent revolution can weaken legal protections. Circle two ways control of production can give leaders power over people, then number each cause-and-effect link you find. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What danger do critics see when revolutionary leaders claim to speak for every worker?	**Leaders may dismiss workers who disagree and become a new ruling group.**
2	According to the passage, how can deciding who counts as an enemy weaken the rule of law?	**Armed groups can treat opponents as enemies instead of respecting courts and ordinary legal protections.**
3	Why might violent revolution empower people capable of oppression rather than people who favor debate?	**During conflict, people who command troops or secret police can gain influence, leaving citizens less able to challenge abuse.**
4	How did central planning give Soviet leaders power to restrict individual freedoms?	**Officials controlled production, materials, jobs, and supplies. Leaders could use that control to reward supporters, punish dissenters, and limit workers' and businesses' choices.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Your leaders need limits on their power as they rebuild the country. After the uprising, armed groups might label critics as enemies and punish them without a fair trial. If one ministry controls every farm and factory, it could deny jobs or supplies to people who disagree. Independent courts could require evidence and protect the rights of people accused of opposing the government. Allowing farms and businesses to make some production decisions would reduce the ministry's power over people's livelihoods.

Accept other passage-supported explanations of how violence weakens legal protections or how centralized control can restrict choices and dissent. For the advisory note, look for two distinct, plausible safeguards with an explanation of how each addresses a stated danger.