BEFORE YOU READ

Interpreting the Source

Czar Nicholas II of Russia was forced to abdicate, or give up, his position as emperor of Russia. He announced his departure in a speech on March 2, 1917. The new government was ready to announce its existence and its principles that same day. A cabinet of officials was formed, and they announced their ideals in the Russia publication Izvestiia. These rules were supposed to be followed closely. However, because the leaders believed they were temporary, no real decisions were ever made. A group of people called the Bolsheviks eventually took over from the original cabinet.

Reader’s Dictionary

amnesty: a government pardon
agrarian: having to do with agriculture
abolition: to end slavery
Constituent Assembly: a group of democratically elected officials
suffrage: the right to vote
militia: regular citizens organized for military service
organs: small groups that specialize in doing a certain job
Petrograd: St. Petersburg; capital of the Russian Empire

Guided Reading

The committee of men appointed to be leaders of the new Provisional Government were to follow the principles or guidelines listed below.

From the Public Announcement of the Formation of the First Provisional Government, March 2, 1917

1. An immediate and complete amnesty in all cases of a political and religious nature, including terrorist acts, military revolts and agrarian offences, etc.

2. Freedom of speech, press, and assembly, and the right to form unions and to strike and the extension of political freedom to persons serving in the armed forces limited only by the demands of military and technical circumstances.

3. The abolition of all restrictions based on class, religion, and nationality.

4. The immediate arrangements for the calling on the Constituent Assembly on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage and secret ballot, which will determine the form of government and the constitution of the country.

5. The substitution of a people’s militia for the police, with the elective officers responsible to the organs of local self-government.

6. Elections to the organs of local self-government are to be held on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage and secret ballot.
7. Those military units which took part in the revolutionary movement shall be neither disarmed nor withdrawn from Petrograd.

8. While preserving strict military discipline on duty and during military service, the soldiers are to be freed from all restrictions in the exercise of those civil rights which all other citizens enjoy.

Source: [www.firstworldwar.com](http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/firstprovgovt.htm).

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**Document-Based Questions**

**Directions:** Use information from the primary source to answer the questions below.

1. **Listing** What are four freedoms that will be given to the people under the Provisional Government?

2. **Identifying** What group will replace the police in the new organization?

3. **Describing** How will elections to the new self-governments be held?

4. **Speculating** According to these provisions, will the people be treated fairly under the new government? Why do you think that?