



Alexander III
Manifesto of April 29,
1881

We proclaim this to all Our faithful subjects: God in His ineffable judgment has deemed it proper to culminate the glorious reign of Our beloved father with a martyr's death, and to lay the Holy duty of Autocratic Rule on us.

Submitting to the will of Providence and the Law on the inheritance of Sovereignty, We assume this burden in a terrible hour of universal popular grief and terror, averring before the countenance of the Most High that, imparting this Authority to Us in so difficult and troublesome a time, He will not withhold his All-powerful help from us. We also aver that the fervid prayers of the pious people, which is celebrated in all the world for its love and devotion to its Sovereigns, will draw Divine blessing down upon Us and upon the labor of governing that lies before Us.

Our father reposing in God, having assumed from God the Autocratic power for the benefit of the people in his stewardship, remained faithful even unto death. It was not so much by stern orders as by goodness and kindness, which are also attributes of power, that He carried out the greatest undertaking of His reign--the emancipation of the enserfed peasants. In this he was able to elicit the cooperation of the noble [serf-] holders themselves, who always quick to the

summons of the good and honorable. He established Justice in the Realm and, having made his subjects without exception free for all time, He summoned them to take charge of local administration and public works. May His memory be blessed through the ages!.

The base and wicked murder of a Russian Sovereign by unworthy monsters from the people, done in the very midst of that faithful people, who were ready to lay down their lives for Him--this is a terrible and shameful matter, unheard of in Russia, which has darkened Our entire land with grief and terror. But in the midst of Our great grief, the voice of God orders Us courageously to undertake, in deference to Divine intention, the task of ruling, with faith in the strength and rightness [*istina*] of autocratic power. We are summoned to reaffirm that Power and preserve it for the benefit of the people from any encroachment.

Courage to the hearts, now overcome by confusion and terror, of our faithful subjects, who all love the Fatherland and have from generation to generation been devoted to the Hereditary Tsarist Power! Under its shelter and in unbroken union with it, Our land has more than once experienced great tumults and passed, with faith in the God who ordains its fate, through grievous experiences and misfortunes and on to new power and glory.

Dedicating ourself to Our great Service, we appeal to Our faithful subjects to serve Us and the State truly and faithfully, so that the foul treason which shames the Russian land may be uprooted, faith and morality be reaffirmed, children be reared rightly, falsehood and spoliation be exterminated, and order and justice be imparted to the activities of the institutions given to Russia by her Benefactor, Our Beloved Father.

Alexander

St. Petersburg, 29 April 1881

Translated by Daniel Field

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