RUSSIA IN 1825

I. CONTRAST WITH RUSSIA IN 1533 (accession of Ivan IV)

Far cry from the tiny principality of 300 years before.

Then was:
- Small in territory, population.
- Part of former territory occupied by enemies -- Tatars, Poles, Lithuanians.
- Not even all of the Russian people included in it, much less all the Ukrainians and Belorussians.
- Economy -- backward. Little contact with the outside world.
- Military Power -- not one of the great powers. Backward in military technology.
- Culture -- low level. Little contact with such developments as the Renaissance, Reformation, etc. Isolated by 240 years of the Mongol yoke.
- Government -- Unstable. Struggle for power between Tsar & nobles. About to break apart in Civil War.

By 1825 almost all of this had changed:

II. TERRITORY NOW VAST.

- Stretched from the Baltic to the Pacific, from Arctic Ocean to the Black Sea and Caspian Sea.
- Largest country in the world.
- Largest population in Europe.

- Included most of Poland, all of Finland, Baltic coast, From Turkey -- Black Sea coast, Caucasus.

- In 1533 Russia was threatened by the possibility of being swallowed up by Poland. Now the picture reversed. Poland, Lithuania had disappeared; been gobbled up by Russia.

III. MILITARY POWER.

- Considered the No. 1 power in the world.
- The conqueror of Napoleon. Huge armed might, which threatened to dominate all of Europe.
- Feared by the rest of Europe.

- Trying to set up puppet states in the Balkans (like after W.W.II)
IV. RUSSIA NOW A PART OF EUROPE.

In 1533 was hardly in any sense a part of Europe. But by 1825 --
Territorially -- far into heart of Europe.
Diplomacy -- Alex I had been dominant figure for decades.
Culture -- Upper classes Europeanized.
No longer merely imitating, importing.
Creating original literature, art, science, etc.

V. ECONOMY. Still backward, but:

-European trade -- wheat, as well as old commodities like furs.
-Industrialization -- beginning slowly.
-Important in European economy.

VI. DYNASTY FIRMLY ESTABLISHED.

No more palace revolutions after attempt of 1825.

VII. MOBILITY. Under Ivan IV later had been
an unruly element.

No longer a challenge to the throne. Subservient.
Servants of the tsar.

Privileges had increased greatly.

Medieval relationships -- still had privileges, position which they
had lost in France, England, some other countries.

VIII. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN IVAN THE TERRIBLE AND ALEXANDER I.

Ivan IV: Little known about him; what Europeans did know horrified them.
Seemed to Europeans a barbaric beast, a madman.

Alexander I: One of the leading figures of the age. A European gentleman
Cultured, civilized. Active in European affairs.
VIII. PEASANTRY. — less freedom than in 1533. Serfdom — had been abolished in some countries — England, France. Would not be abolished in R. until 1861. The chief problem of 19th c. Russia.

IX. THE GOVERNMENT. — much larger, more bureaucratic, systematized than in 1533. But still: 1. Autocracy
Archaic, inefficient.
No constitution
No elements of democracy.
Reactionary
Opposition to new ideas.

X. OPPOSITION
Beginnings of revolutionary movement.
Decembrists.

XI. NATIONALITIES. Since 1533, many non-Russian peoples had been conquered. Russians only a little over 50% of pop.
Nationalism spreading among minorities.
Discontent.
Soothing cauldron of social, religious, national animosities.