

## **"The Emancipation of the Russian Serfs, 1861: A Charter of Freedom or an Act of Betrayal?"**

### **Introduction**

**Q1: What were basic features of serfdom?**

**Q2: What was the connection between serfdom and the motivation of the czars as absolute rulers?**

### **Why was it necessary to end serfdom? AND Alexander II's role**

**Q3: What attitude of the west is presented that reinforced maintaining the status quo by some groups in Russia?**

**Q4: What weaknesses in Russian society existed that were blamed on the existence of serfdom?**

**Q5: Why was Russia's defeat in the Crimean War such a motivating factor for emancipation?**

**Q6: Why were allowing the landowners input into the reform process a beneficial political move for Alexander II? What can you immediately guess would be a foreseeable problem?**

### **Betrayal of the Peasants?**

**Q7: In what ways was the emancipation of the serfs a betrayal of the peasants? What were the economic and social issues?**

### **The Significance of Emancipation**

**Q8: What was Alexander's ulterior motive for emancipation?**

**Q9: What was the precarious balance that Alexander had to maintain politically in his attempt to reform? Why did this lead to an overall failure of the reforms?**