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**IN THE LAND OF COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIP**  
**(Labour and Social Conditions in Soviet Russia To-day)**

# IN THE LAND OF COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIP

(Labour and Social Conditions in Soviet Russia To-day)

BY

ANATOLE V. BAIKALOFF



*'Le courage est de chercher la vérité  
et de la dire.'* JEAN JAURÈS

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## INTRODUCTION

VERY often I have been asked by some of my English friends why Russian Socialists maintain such a hostile attitude towards the Soviet Government. It is contended that the Bolsheviks are building up Socialism in Russia; that they are reorganising Russian economic and social life in accordance with the ideals and interests of the Russian working classes; and that it is the duty of every sincere and conscious Socialist not to hamper the activities of the Bolsheviks, but to put aside what small differences of opinion there may be and help the Bolsheviks in their strenuous work for the benefit not only of the Russian, but also of the International proletariat.

This book presents my reasoned and detailed explanation why we, the Russian Socialists, are so bitterly opposed to the Soviet régime, why we are convinced that the Bolsheviks are the worst enemies of the Russian working classes, and why we consider the policy the Soviets are pursuing to be most detrimental to the interests of the Russian people and the International Labour Movement.

I shall consider myself fully rewarded for my labours if this book provides mental food for those sincere and honest men and women in the British Labour and Socialist Movement who still cherish illusions about Russian Bolshevism.

In writing this book I have tried to avoid any conclusions not fully supported by evidence supplied by the Bolsheviks themselves. I have tried to describe present labour and

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social conditions in Soviet Russia as if I did not know anything about them beyond that stated on the subject in the official Soviet Press. This explains the large number of quotations from the Soviet publications given in the book.

It has cost a good deal of trouble and labour to collect and piece together all this evidence. It is scattered in many Soviet publications, and most of the facts which give a true idea of present Russian conditions are found on the back pages of Soviet papers, set in the smallest type.

Some readers may wonder why the Bolshevik censors allowed such outspoken criticism of the Soviet regime to appear in the official Press. The explanation is that the Bolshevik journalists and writers, while criticising separate shortcomings and irregularities, never attempt to take the broad view and say that not individual Soviet officials, but the very system of political and economic dictatorship, is responsible for the dreadful conditions under which Russian workers live and toil.

Besides, if the Soviet Press did not reveal, from time to time, some of the most revolting crimes and offences well known locally, how could it be expected that anybody would read the Soviet papers at all? And the Bolsheviks want their papers to be read, as the Press is the most mighty weapon of their propaganda. Thus, willy-nilly, they must sacrifice some space in their papers to criticism of their regime; otherwise their papers would become absolutely dull and uninteresting.

Thus, though the Soviet Press cannot be considered an absolutely reliable source of information on Russian conditions, much can be learned from it if only one takes the trouble to dig deep enough, and to make a thorough -

## INTRODUCTION

sometimes a wearisome and prolonged – search for the truth among masses of pure propaganda.

I may as well mention here that this book would probably never have been written but for the invaluable collaboration of my old friend, Mr. H. W. Lee, for many years secretary of the old Social-Democratic Federation, afterwards editor of *Justice*, and now of the International Department of the Trades-Union Congress, who most kindly undertook to revise my manuscript and correct my not altogether classical English style. I am also obliged to him for many hints and suggestions which his wide journalistic experience and thorough knowledge of international relations prompted him to make, and which proved most useful to me.

ANATOLE V. BAIKALOFF.

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