



**Emma Goldman, *My Disillusionment In Russia*
(London: C. W. Daniel Company, 1925)**

**PREFACE
(REVISED)**

To Second Volume of American Edition *



THE annals of literature tell of books expurgated, of whole chapters eliminated or changed beyond recognition. But I believe it has rarely happened that a work should be published with more than a third of it left out and--without the reviewers being aware of the fact. This doubtful distinction has fallen to the lot of my work on Russia.

The story of that painful experience might well make another chapter, but for the present it is sufficient to give the bare facts of the case.

My manuscript was sent to the original purchaser in two parts, at different times. Subsequently the publishing house of Doubleday, Page Co. bought the rights to my work, but when the first printed copies reached me I discovered to my dismay that not only had my original title, "My Two Years in Russia," been changed to "My Disillusionment in Russia," but that the last twelve chapters were entirely missing, including my Afterword which is, at least to myself, the most vital part.

There followed an exchange of cables and letters, which gradually elicited the fact that Doubleday, Page Co. had secured my MSS. from a literary agency in the good faith that it was complete. By some conspiracy of circumstances the second instalment of my work either failed to reach the original purchaser or was lost in his office. At any rate, the book was published without anyone suspecting its incompleteness.

The present volume contains the chapters missing from the American edition, and I deeply appreciate the devotion of my friends who made the appearance of an additional volume possible in America and this complete edition possible in England--in justice to myself and to my readers.

The adventures of my MSS. are not without their humorous side, which throws a peculiar light on the critics. Of almost a hundred American reviewers of my work only two sensed its incompleteness. And, incidentally, one of them is not a "regular" critic but a librarian. Rather a reflection on professional acumen or conscientiousness.

It was a waste of time to notice the "criticism" of those who have either not read the book or lacked the wit to realize that it was unfinished. Of all the alleged "reviews" only two deserve consideration as written by earnest and able men.

One of them thought that the published title of my book was more appropriate to its contents than the name I had chosen. My disillusionment, he asserted, is not only with the Bolshevik but with the Revolution itself. In support of this contention he cited Bukharin's statement to the effect that "a revolution cannot be accomplished without terror, disorganization, and even wanton destruction, any more than an omelet can be made without breaking the eggs." But it seems not to have occurred to my critic that, though the breaking of the eggs is necessary, no omelet can be made if the yolk be thrown away. And that is precisely what the Communist Party did to the Russian Revolution. For the yolk they substituted Bolshevism, more specifically Leninism, with the result shown in my book--a result that is gradually being realized as an entire failure by the world at large.

The reviewer referred to also believes that it was "grim necessity, the driving need to preserve not the Revolution but the remnants of civilization, which forced the Bolshevik to lay hands on every available weapon, the Terror, the Tcheka, suppression of free speech and press, censorship, military conscription, conscription of labour, requisitioning of peasants' crops, even bribery and corruption." He evidently agrees with me that the Communists employed all these methods; and that, as he himself states, "the 'means' largely determines the 'end'"--a conclusion the proof and demonstration of which are contained in my book. The only mistake in this viewpoint, however--a most vital one--is the assumption that the Bolshevik were forced to resort to the methods referred to in order to "preserve the remnants of civilization." Such a view is based on an entire misconception of the philosophy and practice of Bolshevism. Nothing can be further from the desire or intention of Leninism than the "preservation of the remnants of civilization." Had my critic said instead, "the preservation of the Communist dictatorship, of the political absolutism of the Party," he would have come nearer the truth, and we should have no quarrel on the matter. We must not fail to consider the Bolshevik *continue* to employ exactly the same methods to-day as they did in what the reviewer calls "the moments of grim necessity, in 1919, 1920, and 1921."

We are in 1925. The military fronts have long ago been liquidated; internal counter-revolution is suppressed; the old bourgeoisie is eliminated; the "moments of grim necessity" are past. In fact, Russia is being politically recognized by various governments of Europe and Asia, and the Bolshevik are inviting international capital to come to their country whose natural wealth, as Tchicherin assures the world capitalists, is "waiting to be exploited." The "moments of grim necessity" are gone, but the Terror, the Tcheka, suppression of free speech and press, and all the other Communist methods of former years *still remain in force*. Indeed, they are being applied even more brutally and barbarously since the death of Lenin. Is it to "preserve the remnants of civilization" or to strengthen the weakening Party dictatorship?

My critic further charged me with believing that "had the Russians made the Revolution à la Bakunin instead of à la Marx" the result would have been different and more satisfactory. I plead guilty to the charge. In truth, I not only believe so; I am certain of it. The Russian Revolution--more correctly, the Bolshevik methods--conclusively demonstrated how a revolution should not be made. The Russian experiment has proven the fatality of a political party usurping the functions of the revolutionary people, of an omnipotent State seeking to impose its will upon the country, of a dictatorship attempting to "organize" the new life. But I need not repeat here the reflections summed up in my concluding chapter.

A second critic believes me a "prejudiced witness," because I--an Anarchist--am opposed to government, whatever its forms. Yet the whole first part of my book entirely disproves the assumption of my prejudice. I defended the Bolshevik while still in America, and for long months in Russia I sought every opportunity to cooperate with them and to aid in the great task of revolutionary upbuilding. Though an Anarchist and an anti-governmentalist, I had not come to Russia expecting to find my ideal realized. I saw in the Bolshevik the symbol of the Revolution and I was eager to work with them in spite of our differences. However, if lack of aloofness from the actualities of life means that one cannot judge things fairly, then my critic is right. One could not have lived through two years of Communist terror, of a régime involving the enslavement of the whole people, the annihilation of the most fundamental values, human and revolutionary, of corruption and mismanagement and yet have remained aloof or "impartial" in the critic's sense. I doubt whether the latter, though not an Anarchist, would have done so. Could he, being human?

In conclusion, the present publication of the chapters missing in the first edition comes at a very significant period in the life of Russia. When the "Nep," Lenin's new economic policy, was introduced, there rose the hope of a better day, of a gradual abolition of the policies of terror and persecution. The Communist dictatorship seemed inclined to relax its strangle-hold upon the thoughts and lives of the people. But the hope was short-lived. Since the death of Lenin the Bolshevik have returned to the terror of the worst days of their régime. Despotism, fearing for its power, seeks safety in blood-shed. As timely as in 1922 is my book to-day.

When the first series of my articles on Russia appeared, in 1922, and later when my book was published in America, I was bitterly attacked and denounced by American radicals of almost every camp. But I felt confident that the time would come when the mask would be torn from the false face of Bolshevism and the great delusion exposed. The time has come even sooner than I anticipated. In most civilized lands--in France, England, Germany, in the Scandinavian and Latin countries, even in America the fog of blind faith is gradually lifting. The reactionary character of the Bolshevik régime is being realized by the masses, its terrorism and persecution of non-Communist opinion condemned. The torture of the political victims of the dictatorship in the prisons of Russia, in the concentration camps of the frozen North and in Siberian exile, is rousing the conscience of the more progressive elements the world over. In almost every country societies for the defense and aid of the politicals imprisoned in Russia have been formed, with the object of securing their liberation and the establishment of freedom of opinion and expression in Russia.

If my work will help in these efforts to throw light upon the real situation in Russia and to awaken the world to the true character of Bolshevism and the fatality of dictatorship--be it Fascist or Communist--I shall bear with equanimity the misunderstanding and misrepresentation of foe or friend. And I shall not regret the travail and struggle of spirit that produced this work, which now, after many vicissitudes, is at last complete in print.

EMMA GOLDMAN.
August, 1925.

* The second volume, as explained in this preface, was issued under the title of "My Further Disillusionment in Russia." It is printed here because an explanation is necessary to avoid confusion on account of differences in publication of the American and English editions.