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# The Top of Society

Vladimir Platonenko

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The frequent references to Prigozhin and the convicts he recruits have led many to ask: “Who is the boss in Russia’s house?” and a correspondingly unpleasant answer. But does this apply only to Russia?

The Danish, I emphasize, Danish, not Russian, writer Hans Scherfig wrote (in the novel “Scorpion”): “the tops of society and the dregs of society are one class”. And he was absolutely right.

Who were medieval knights and kings? Robbers and gang leaders, brigands and crooks in a modern way. Who were the first capitalists? Former robbers who let the loot go to waste, or their accomplices, financial crooks, etc. etc. Morgan was a pirate, Ford hired gangsters to fight the labour movement, Rockefeller’s oil story has been written about so much that I don’t even want to give references, it can be easily found on the internet via any search engine. All sorts of stories about the Panama Canal and other “construction of the ages” are also well known.

Who are today’s politicians? Deceivers who with the help of controlled or bought media give distorted information about themselves, promising people one thing and doing another which in criminal law is called a word “swindle”.

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The only difference between Russia and the “civilized world” is that in Russia everything is more straightforward, more obvious and more solid. Whereas in neighbouring Ukraine the president was chased away for ordering the dispersal of a protest camp and the beating of its participants, in Russia the authorities get away with far greater outrages due to the greater power of the punitive authorities and the greater oppression of the people. In the Russian Federation, if you like, power has reached its finality, its completeness. No wonder Putin considers the aforementioned Ukraine a “sub-state” – its officials and law enforcers do not have the same kind of power as in Russia.

B. Shalamov wrote that blatars despise “porchaks” (people who grew up outside the informal world, though became criminals), precisely because there may still be something human in a “porchak”, while there is nothing human in a blatar, and never has been. Similarly, Putin despises the Ukrainian state for not being able to trample, humiliate and mock the Ukrainian people the way the Russian state trampled and mocked the Russian people. And to resent the word “under-state” in Putin’s mouth is like resenting the word “under-bloodsucker” in the mouth of a ghou, or the word “cleaner” in the mouth of a crook.

As for Putin’s relationship with the West, it can be likened to that of a mugger to a crook or a pickpocket. A thief and a crook can do as much harm to people as a bandit with a gun, but unlike the latter, they do it without getting their hands dirty with blood. Yes, this position is as hypocritical as that of the Inquisitors, who burned rather than beheaded heretics so as not to shed blood. A person who has been stolen or robbed can lay hands on himself, starve to death, fall ill and find no means of medical treatment... But this does not prevent thieves and crooks from feeling like aristocrats of the underworld and from despising robbers and murderers. The latter pay them back in the same coin. Similarly, the “civilised” politicians de-

spise Putin for his cynicism and he despises them for their hypocrisy.

And yet all of them: the hypocritical thieves, the cynical bloodsuckers, the cynical hypocritical half-bloodsuckers – all of them equally despise the people at whose expense they live and who are nothing more than fodder for all of them. The people are left to choose between them. People usually prefer thieves to thieves (as a cow prefers a milkmaid to a butcher), although, if you believe Russian opinion polls, some prefer bloodsuckers. True, it’s difficult to believe such polls, politically speaking, but who knows, maybe some people do prefer bloodsuckers, there are masochists after all...

In any case, it is a choice between two evils. At that, the lesser evil getting rid of the greater one often becomes the lesser one. Same old dairymaids drive the poor cows to slaughter (witnesses say that they beat them on udders with a crowbar). And the only way to change the situation is to start solving everything themselves, without any top management. Then the scum will be easier to deal with. Otherwise they will continue to rule the people themselves. Even if they switch to civilized speech and start referring to laws. They will not stop being scoundrels and living at the expense of honest people.