

THE LITTLEST ENEMIES:  
CHILDREN IN THE SHADOW OF THE GULAG

Deborah Hoffman

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From the Introduction

*"The Littlest Enemies* gives voice to these all too often forgotten victims, as well as providing some glimpses into the lives of children caught on the wrong side of the class divide of the revolution in the more immediate post-revolutionary years. The children have left their trace in history within letters, "criminal" dossiers, and, later, first-hand accounts. Their stories serve not only to tell us about the darker aspects of the "Soviet experiment," but to remind us that children are often the forgotten victims of punitive, transformative, or military policies that states officially aim at adult populations. Wars, civil wars, "strategic" bombings, deportations of "illegal aliens," and mass incarceration all have an impact, direct or otherwise, on children. In this respect, the Soviet Union was not exceptional, however massive the scope and impact of its repressive policies. The oft-repeated "Thank you Comrade Stalin for our happy childhood" assumes within this context a new and tragically ironic meaning for the children of the gulag."

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This book is recommended for library collections at colleges and universities, as well as larger public library systems.