

EPIC OF  
SURVIVAL:  
Twenty-Five  
Centuries of  
Anti-Semitism

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# 24

## Intensification of Jew-Hatred in Russia: The Protocols of the Elders of Zion

As a result of the defeat inflicted upon Russia by Japan, and the upsurge of revolutionary unrest in the country, the Black Hundreds intensified their anti-Semitic agitation. In order to persuade the frightened czar to approve the use of extreme terror, the Russian Secret Service in 1905 published a second edition of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* which supposedly contain irrefutable proof that the Jews were to blame for the crisis in Russia.

The *Protocols* had been printed in the winter of 1902-1903 by Sergey Nilus, a fanatical mystic, under the title of *The Antichrist as an Imminent Political Possibility: Protocols of the Meetings of the Zionist Sages*. The 1905 edition, printed in *Tsarskoe Selo*, the czar's residence, was entitled *The Great in the Small: Antichrist as an Imminent Political Possibility*. The *Protocols* were not invented by Nilus; he merely translated them from the French. Their history is complex and has several origins which are not connected with each other. We shall present them *seriatim*.

*Origin 1.* "A Dialogue in Hell" ("*Dialogue aux Enfers*"). In 1864, Maurice Joly, a liberal French lawyer, wrote a little book called "A Dialogue in Hell between Montesquieu and Machiavelli," in which he satirized Napoleon III of France, who was a cynical opportunist and a swindler and who tried to buttress his power by a variety of

dishonest methods. Joly introduced the spirits of two famous philosophers engaged in calm discussion. One was the very popular Italian, Niccolò Machiavelli, who died in 1527. His writings, which became a guide for all the world's dictators, deal with the problem of how a ruler can maintain his power. William Ebenstein in his book *Great Political Thinkers* wrote:

A ruler must try to make himself beloved of his subjects. This is necessary in order to keep his power. But if a ruler is faced with the choice of being "good" and well-liked or of frightening and terrorizing his people, then the latter is a much better course of action, because it is more effective.<sup>1</sup>

According to Machiavelli, the greatest sin a ruler commits is not in being inhuman but in losing his power. Machiavelli's fellow discussant is another famous philosopher, the French encyclopedist, Montesquieu, who died in 1755. Also a student of the problems associated with power, he believed that "power corrupts." Rulers must not be given too much power. Of course, in order to govern, a ruler does need a certain amount of power, but this power must be controlled by law. The people, said Montesquieu, elect their representatives to a parliament, which creates the laws, and the ruler must govern in accordance with those laws.

In the "Dialogue," Machiavelli has the most to say about the way a ruler should govern. Montesquieu offers comments on and questions the morality and legality of means used to attain his end. Machiavelli replies that he is not afraid of the people for he would control all the news services and the press and confuse them, raise false issues, and deceive them. "But won't the people catch on?" Montesquieu insists. Machiavelli replies that he would terrorize the people and put several of their leaders in prison, guillotine a few, and the rest will tremble for their lives.<sup>2</sup>

Joly's book was printed in Belgium anonymously. After a number of copies had been sold, the police caught on to the content of the text and it was not difficult for them to find the author. In 1865 Joly was arrested, fined, and sentenced to fifteen months in prison.

*Origin 2.* Hermann Goedsche, a German anti-Semite, who had lost his position in the postal service over some forged signatures, wrote several short stories under the pseudonym of Sir John Retcliffe. His specialty was the sensational story, into which he often wove lies

about Jews. When he came upon Joly's "Dialogue," he wrote a tale about a midnight meeting of twelve rabbis in the Old Prague Cemetery. Each rabbi came from a different Christian country and they reported on their progress in gaining more power in the Christian countries.

Goedsche's story was translated and published in Russia in 1872 under the title, "The Jewish Cemetery in Prague: A Meeting of the Representatives of the Twelve Tribes of Israel." The most important passages in the story were copied straight from Joly's "Dialogue." In this version, the chief rabbi makes a speech in which he recommends that the Jews seize power and terrorize the *goyim*. Each representative reports on what the Jews are doing in his country in the effort to dominate the Christians more rapidly and completely. One reports that the Jews in his country have concentrated all the national wealth in their own hands. A second reports that the Jews accept as surety only forests and fields, with the intent of taking over the whole country. A third reports that the Jews in his country are gradually gaining control of the railroads, the mines, the dwellings, the cities. Another reports that the Jews are beginning to take over leading government posts, the better to control the Christians politically.<sup>3</sup> Still another rabbi boasts that the Jews in his country have already taken over the press and all the news media and can now report only what they wish the *goyim* to know. A rabbi from an industrial country boasts that the Jews there have become masters of commerce and industry. Another reports that the Jews in his country are the leading attorneys and legislators; and another states that the Jews are preparing to disrupt the Christian religion and take away the Church's right to educate Christian children. Yet another rabbi claims that the Jews in his country are manufacturing new deadly weapons with which the *goyim* can kill each other off in the wars the Jews are planning. All the reports thus had the style and content of Machiavelli's program. In 1891, when the czarist government was fanning the anti-Semitic flames in Russia, G. V. Butmi, a Black Hundreds leader, reprinted Goedsche's horror story.

*Origin 3.* Around 1860 a converted Jew, Jacob Brafman, reported to the police that the organization of the Jewish community was working against the government. The document remained in the files of the St. Petersburg police.

*Origin 4.* Somewhere around the middle of the 1890s a police

official in St. Petersburg, Pyotr Rachkovski, went to Paris to look for a connection between the Jewish *Kahal* and the *Alliance Israélite*. He brought back a document in French, which was evidently a copy of the original *Protocols*.<sup>4</sup>

In the tumultuous year of 1905, when the *Protocols* were reprinted, they also appeared in the czarist newspaper *Znamye*, whose editor was then P. A. Krushevan, organizer of the 1903 pogrom in Kishinev.<sup>5</sup>

In the 1905 edition Nilus included the speech of the chief rabbi at the meeting in the Prague Cemetery (invented by Goedsche). The rabbi says:

It is already 1800 years that we Jews . . . have been waging a war against the Cross. . . . They persecuted us, degraded us, made us suffer horrible deaths, but our people have survived and are spread throughout the world . . . because the whole world belongs to us and we shall inherit it.<sup>6</sup>

In 1907 the *Protocols* were published in a new edition. It is interesting that in the forewords to the various editions, other sources are listed as origins of the *Protocols*. In the 1905 edition, Nilus relates that he received them from a woman, who stole it from a leading Freemason in France. The foreword of the 1907 edition says that the *Protocols* were stolen from an important Zionist leader in France. This foreword is different from the others in another significant way. It says:

The statement made in a previous edition that the name "Elders of Zion" should not be confused with the Zionists is not correct. The *Protocols* are actually Zionist documents. Zionism was originated by the Jewish prince, Dr. Herzl, in 1896 and is widespread among Jewish intellectuals. . . . The truth is that the Jews maintain Zionism only as a pretext. In actuality the Zionist institutions are a revolutionary organization which is secretly led by the Jewish Labor Bund.

In a new edition in 1911, Nilus declares that the documents reveal the Jewish program for dealing with the *goyim*. The *Protocols*, Nilus falsely asserts, are the speeches which Theodore Herzl made at the Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897.

In 1918 the White Guard general Denikin published the *Protocols* in Novochoerkask, the site of his headquarters, and spread them

among his troops and the civilian population. Afterward, the *Protocols* were published in Rostov-on-Don by the White Guard general Wrangel, whose officers distributed the books among the people in all the surrounding cities and villages. When these officers later scattered throughout the world, they "favored" the peoples of Western Europe and America with copies of the poisonous documents.

In France several anti-Semitic groups were active at that time, most of them led by the Catholic Church, which was resentful because a number of Jewish deputies in parliament had voted with the liberals to abolish the exclusive right of Catholic monks and nuns to teach in the public schools. In addition, the more serious newspapers in France played up the "Jewish Protocols," reproducing entire paragraphs. From France the *Protocols* were picked up and published in Arabic in Beirut, Damascus, and Cairo.<sup>8</sup>

In Germany, Count Ernst Reventlow, who later became one of the leaders of the Nazi Party, published the *Protocols* in several editions. The former Kaiser Wilhelm, who had lost his throne, greeted the *Protocols*, as he had the anti-Semitic "Foundations of the Nineteenth Century" by Chamberlain.<sup>9</sup> General Ludendorff, who together with Hitler carried out the Munich putsch in 1923, also endorsed the *Protocols*.

In 1923 two more editions of the *Protocols* were published in Germany, this time by Alfred Rosenberg, who later became Hitler's close co-worker. In the foreword Rosenberg accused the Jews of having started the First World War and of selling Germany out to her enemies.

In England an anti-Semitic group known as "The Britons" published the *Protocols* in 1920. In addition, major newspapers such as the *London Times* and *The Spectator* took these absurd forgeries seriously, quoting lengthy passages and printing articles about them under banner headlines. The *Morning Post* used the headline "Cause of World Unrest." These articles were then reprinted in the United States by Henry Ford in a book called *The Jewish Peril*. The *Protocols* themselves were published by Henry Ford in his *Dearborn Independent*. This newspaper at that time had no more than 20,000 readers, but the sensation of the *Protocols* soon brought the number up to around 300,000. In 1927 Henry Ford recanted and forbade the use of his name in connection with this material.<sup>10</sup>

Several million copies of the *Protocols* were printed and distributed in the United States from 1919 to 1923. The quota system which

Congress adopted in 1921 to limit Jewish immigration was, aside from the fear of bolshevism, also influenced by these forgeries.

### *The Protocols Exposed*

In 1920 the European correspondent for the *New York Times*, Herman Bernstein, made a study of Goedsche's sensational story about the rabbis at the Prague Cemetery and recognized the motif of the *Protocols*. In a brochure, "The Story of a Lie," he showed that the "reports" of the rabbis were almost verbatim copies of the words which the *Protocols* put into the mouth of a rabbi or of Theodore Herzl. The brochure was printed in February 1921. Six months later the *London Times* printed a full expose of the forgeries by its correspondent in Constantinople, Philip Graves.<sup>11</sup> His friend, Count Radichev, the former liberal deputy in the Duma, now an emigrant in Turkey, had been in southern Russia in 1918-19, in the area conquered by General Denikin. He had read the *Protocols* and they had struck him as pure fabrications. How and when the forgeries had been invented, he did not know.

In 1919 Radichev bought an old library that belonged to a former officer of the Okhrana (Russian Secret Police). Among the books, he found one in French, with a torn title page on which the word "Enfers" and the date, 1865, were still legible. Reading the book out of curiosity, he recognized both the style and the language as similar to the *Protocols*. Entire passages of the forgeries were copied from this book.

Despite frequent exposure as forgeries, the *Protocols* were continuously reprinted. In Germany, ten million copies were issued during the Hitler years; in 1935 they were assigned as compulsory reading in the public schools. Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and the *Protocols* were displayed prominently in every household.<sup>12</sup> In the Arab countries today the *Protocols* are still very popular. King Faisal of Saudi Arabia used to present his guests with copies, translated into many languages.<sup>13</sup>

In brief, the content of these forgeries is as follows: The Jews are planning to conquer and rule the non-Jewish world. The Jews are a small people, but very powerful: they control all the gold and all the banks in the world. They own the press and the news media and deliberately disseminate false news in order to create chaos and confusion. It is the Jews who bring about economic crises and unemployment, discontent, and rebellion among the people. In this

way they are really the instigators of revolution. Their policies lead the nations to wage continuous warfare and kill each other off. Mercy is foreign to Jews. Nothing is forbidden to them and they commit every crime known to man. Their main objective is to destroy all the *goyim* and rule the world.

Below are a few brief excerpts from the twenty-four *Protocols*.

1) We [the Jews] are now the most powerful force in the world because we are invisible. We are concealed, but we are here and we are continually adding to our strength, until eventually we shall become so powerful that the *goyim* will never again be able to conquer us.<sup>14</sup>

2) The governments of the world use a very important method of maintaining their power: they control the thoughts of their peoples through the press. Freedom of the press has become sacrosanct. The *goyim*, however, do not know how to make use of this means. Today we are the masters of the press everywhere; through the press we rule. We have also acquired complete control of all the gold in the world; while it has cost us oceans of blood and tears, it was worth it. We have suffered many casualties, but every one of our casualties is worth a thousand *goyim* in the eyes of God.<sup>15</sup>

3) The nations have a problem with their workers. So we come to the enslaved proletariat and propose that they become socialists, anarchists, communists. . . . We support all these groups, as we preach in our Masonic lodges. . . . In reality, we are interested . . . in the killing of the *goyim*.<sup>16</sup>

4) In order that our accumulated wealth may work to our best advantage, it is necessary to create industrial and commercial monopolies. . . . To ruin their industries we shall infect the *goyim* with a hunger for luxuries which will swallow up all their wealth and bankrupt them. . . .<sup>17</sup>

Following is a comparison of Joly's "Dialogue" with the *Protocols*:<sup>18</sup>

*Dialogue*

Has politics anything to do with morals?

This word "justice" itself, by the way, do you not see that it is infinitely vague?

*Protocols*

The Political has nothing in common with the moral.

The word "right" is an abstract thought and proved by nothing.

I am less preoccupied by what is good and moral than by what is useful and necessary.

What forms of government would you apply to societies in which corruption has stolen everywhere, in which morality has no guarantee?

Machiavelli: . . . Who makes the sovereigns?

Montesquieu: The people.

Machiavelli: It is written: Per Me regnat. Which means literally: God makes kings [Through Me kings reign].

To all internal agitation, he must be able to respond with a foreign war; to any imminent revolution, with a general war.

What is essential is the use against one's enemies of all the arms they could employ against you.

I would institute . . . huge financial monopolies, reservoirs of the public wealth, on which depends so closely the fate of all the private fortunes that they would be swallowed up with the credit of State the day after any political catastrophe.

Let us, however, in our plans, direct our attention not so much to what is good and moral as to what is necessary and useful.

What form of administration rule can be given to communities in which corruption has penetrated everywhere?

Per Me reges regnat. "It is through me that Kings reign." And it was said by the prophets that we were chosen by God Himself to rule over the whole earth.

We must be in a position to respond to every act of opposition by war with the neighbors of that country which dares to oppose us.

We must arm ourselves with all the weapons which our opponents might employ against us.

We shall soon begin to establish huge monopolies, reservoirs of colossal riches, upon which even large fortunes of the *goyim* will depend to such an extent that they will go to the bottom together with the credit of the States on the day after the political smash.

The Jewish historian, A. Tcherikower, who gathered material about the role of the *Protocols* in the Ukraine during the Civil War of 1918-21, reports that from the early part of the century, when the *Protocols* first appeared, until 1918, the forgeries were barely known there. It was not until the civil war following the Bolshevik revolution that they were widely disseminated and led to attacks on Jews.<sup>19</sup>

With the pogroms of 1905-1906 a period of reaction set in, its tone provided by the *Soyuz* (Union of the Russian People) and its shock troops the gangs of thugs organized by the Black Hundreds. In

*Anti-Semitism in Germany*

A quip current in early twentieth century Germany divulged that "every decent German is an anti-Semite." There was an element of truth in it. Jews had no access to positions in government or institutions of higher learning. A Jew who earned the title of "professor" was given the title but not a chair on the faculty. In Socialist circles, which by the end of the nineteenth century were quite prominent in Germany, anti-Semitism was officially combatted as being a concomitant of political reaction. But like other sections of the population, the Socialists also were impatient with the "stubbornness" of the Jews in maintaining their own identity. Karl Kautsky, a leading Socialist theoretician, argued that the Jews are not a nation and must therefore assimilate with the rest of the population, and the sooner the better, for them and for society.<sup>19</sup>

Assimilation was widespread. The Yiddish language had been forgotten. Jewish religious worship was almost completely Reform. Education in the public schools was free of any "Jewish values." Most German Jews considered it beneath them to associate with Jews from Eastern Europe. The finest complement you could pay a Jew in Germany was to tell him that he looked like a "real" German. Many Jews converted in order to secure government positions. In 1904 some five hundred Jews were converted in Berlin alone. In 1905-1909 about 25 percent of all Jewish marriages in Germany were mixed. In the larger cities the number was closer to 50 percent. The German Jews themselves did not attempt to combat anti-Semitism, except for publishing several apologetic pamphlets showing that anti-Semitism is a "mistake." Jewish national life was suppressed and denigrated. Only isolated Jews were active in the Zionist movement, which had already captured the imagination of large sections of East European Jewry. Most assimilated German Jews were fearful that Zionism would hurt their image as loyal citizens. Ludwig Geiger, editor of the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, a Jewish newspaper, wrote anti-Zionist editorials averring that the government had a right to deprive Zionists of their citizenship rights because "Zionists are not good German citizens."<sup>20</sup>

Werner Sombart (1863-1941), a German historian and author of *Modern Capitalism*, wrote that the Capitalist system originated in the early Middle Ages, and that most of the important initiators and developers of the system were Jews; this, he asserted, was because they were better equipped to do it, owing to a special characteristic

which they possess, a characteristic which is odious to the "Nordic race." Sombart welcomed the new Jewish nationalism in Eastern Europe, while he castigated the German Jews who were stubbornly trying to gain access to government positions.

The new anti-Semitism is a product of the conflict between the Jews and those around them. This conflict always grows more acute after efforts at closer relationships. It will grow weaker when the Jews stop pushing themselves into Christian society.<sup>21</sup>

Sombart's theory that Jews "originated" capitalism is essentially anti-Semitic. This theory has been assiduously advanced by Jew-haters of every stripe, including Adolf Hitler. It is true that as an urban element in society, deprived of all the conventional ways of earning a living, Jews participated in the new mercantilism in order to survive. But the Jews did not "invent" capitalism. In 1934, when Hitler was already ruling Germany, Sombart was professor of history and economics in Germany and published his "German Socialism" in which he argued for the Nazi program of excluding Jews from the nation's economic and cultural life.

In 1914 there were approximately 600,000 Jews in Germany, of whom 100,000 served in the armed forces. Twelve thousand German Jews were killed in World War I.<sup>22</sup> This did not modify the attitude of the Junker government toward Jews one iota.

With the continuing inflation, a drastic political reaction set in. The lost war, coming after the illusory faith in the German *Reichswehr*, the tremendous number of casualties, the war-maimed on the streets, the hunger and privation which the German people suffered during the protracted war, the destitution resulting from the inflation, and above all, the wounded pride after the defeat—all this raised in every section of German society a mood of desperation and revanchism. Dozens of nationalist groups and sects sprouted at this time with diverse political programs; but they all had one common feature: anti-Semitism.

The program of one such group, which called itself by the grandiose name of National Socialist Party, was a vague mixture of chauvinism, socialism, and anti-Semitism. One member of this group was a demobilized, disturbed soldier named Adolf Hitler. Hitler's ravings in the beer saloons, to the effect that Germany had not been defeated but betrayed from within, by the Jews, began to attract attention and followers. This in turn encouraged him further.

In the spring of 1923 he organized a *Putsch* against the Weimar Republic, an abortive attempt which was easily put down. During the year he spent in prison, Hitler wrote *Mein Kampf*, in which he outlined his plan for putting Germany back on its feet. Several times in this book he cited the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which had been translated into German in 1920 and printed in 100,000 copies.

In *Mein Kampf* Hitler concluded that as the first step, Germany must rid itself of the Jews. He assures Germans that they have the full moral and historical rights to rule the lower Slavic races of the East. His ideas were not new: the Jews sold out Germany to its enemies. Jews are internationalists, bankers, Communists, and such. Jews are a misfortune for the pure and noble German race. They corrupt the German blood. Democracy is a Jewish idea. There is no true equality. The German people must abolish the Versailles Treaty and the Jewish Weimar Republic.<sup>23</sup>

This program of the "hero" Adolf Hitler, who went to jail for his beliefs, a program which offered both consolation for the defeat of the German army and a hope for revitalizing the German nation, attracted many followers, and their number multiplied manifold during the crisis that struck Germany and the entire Capitalist world in 1929.

During the late 1920s, when the grip of inflation eased, Jews in the free political atmosphere of the Weimar Republic achieved economic and social position that had not been accessible to them before the war. At the same time, anti-Jewish feelings grew stronger, and during the economic crisis of 1929-33 the Jews found themselves the targets of a deadly anti-Semitic barrage.

Hitler's raving "solutions" hypnotized millions of Germans. The Socialist and Communist parties in Germany were at loggerheads as they separately tried to counter the success of the Nazis. Street fights broke out in the cities between Nazis and leftists. In 1930, when unemployment in Germany rose to 40 percent, Nazi representation in the Reichstag jumped from twelve to one hundred and seven. The number of Nazi followers increased daily, accompanied by attacks on Jews in the streets, on trolleycars, in synagogues, in homes. Nazis demonstrated against Jewish businesses, smashed windows, pillaged, agitated for boycotts. In September 1931, as Jews in Berlin were leaving a synagogue, the Nazis began a pogrom in the center of the city. The cry of "Germany Awake—Death to the Jews!" resounded through the capital.

In 1931 the Nazis organized the Storm Troopers, who put on

brown shirts, sewed swastikas on their sleeves, and lived in their own camps, as if they were part of an army. While the Nazis lost votes in the election of 1933, German political leaders, alarmed by the prospect of a left wing victory, hastened to put the reins of government into the hands of that archenemy of humanity, Adolf Hitler.<sup>24</sup> On 30 January 1933 President Hindenburg appointed Hitler Reichschancellor. A few weeks later, after the Nazis had burned down the Reichstag building and blamed it on the Communists, Hitler proclaimed himself dictator and outlawed all the other political parties.

In May 1933 a book burning was organized in the center of Berlin, where all German works written by Jews or former Jews were thrown into the flames. When the League of Nations characterized the Nazi acts as "barbarism," Hitler withdrew from the organization and began building up the Reichswehr. The leaders of England and France did nothing to stop him. On 15 September 1935 the Nazis convened a conference at Nuremberg to compile a special code of anti-Jewish statutes. The Nuremberg Laws decreed that Jews could no longer be citizens of Germany, that the Aryan blood of the Germans was to be kept pure, that marriages between Germans and Jews were forbidden, that Jews were forbidden to employ female German servants in their homes, that Jews could no longer hold public office or occupy any position wherein they would supervise Germans. The Nazi code was to remain forever as a bulwark against the "lower Jewish race."<sup>25</sup>

In municipal buildings, in public squares all over Germany, one could read, in giant letters, the worst anti-Semitic utterances of the leading Jew-haters in German history, particularly Treitschke's slogan: "The Jews are our misfortune." Doors of hotels and restaurants proclaimed: "Jews Not Welcome Here!" The Jews of Germany found themselves more deeply entrapped as the Nazi mass murderers readied the cruelest disaster in Jewish history.

### *Jews in Austria (1914-38)*

After the St. Germain peace treaty in 1919, there were approximately 200,000 Jews in the truncated Austrian state, 175,000 of them in Vienna alone.<sup>26</sup> The racist Pan-Germanism captured the imagination of the six million Germans in Austria. The unemployment and starvation of the early 1920s gave rise to Jew-baiting in the Vienna beer halls, streets, churches, and universities. Boycotts and physical

assaults inevitably followed. During the 1920s, when Nazi groups were springing up in Germany, the anti-Semites in Austria became more blatant. Attacks on Jewish students increased. The anti-Jewish boycott intensified.

Premier Dollfuss, who would not permit an *Anschluss* with Germany, was assassinated in 1934 by Nazi thugs. The anti-Jewish campaign grew worse. Catholic priests again became active in disseminating anti-Semitism. By the beginning of 1937 many Austrian Jews were desperately seeking a place of refuge, but America, Palestine, Argentina, were all closed to Jewish immigration.

In February 1938, Hitler summoned Premier Schuschnigg to Germany and ordered him to appoint Nazis to his government, otherwise the German army would occupy Austria.<sup>27</sup> Schuschnigg hesitated. On 13 March 1938 the Nazi armies invaded Austria, completed the *Anschluss* and made Austria a province of Germany. Very soon thereafter, Hitler's deputy, Göring, came to Vienna and announced that Austria must become *Judenrein*. The brutalities of the Austrian Nazis toward the Jews of Vienna outstripped even those of their German mentors. Many Austrian Jews fled to Palestine and entered illegally by one means or another.

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## Anti-Semitism and Hitler's Final Solution

The flareup of Jew-hatred in Germany and all of Europe in the last quarter of the nineteenth century was not a sudden phenomenon. Though not the only cause, the seeds of bigotry which the Church had sown in Europe throughout the centuries were still bearing fruit. Martin Luther's sixteenth century teaching—"The Jews have been our misfortune for 1400 years"—had never been retracted. The unspeakable bestiality known as Hitlerism was actually an offspring of the union between medieval religious Jew-hatred and nineteenth century racist German nationalism.<sup>2</sup>

Hundt-Radowski, one of many anti-Semitic pamphleteers in the nineteenth century, wrote: "Killing a Jew is not a crime; but it only causes a commotion and becomes inconvenient."<sup>3</sup> He proposed, instead, castrating all male Jews, placing Jewish women in brothels, and deporting the rest to England to be used on plantations.<sup>4</sup> The composer Richard Wagner said: "Emancipation from the yoke of Judaism appears to us the foremost necessity."<sup>5</sup> And Adolf Hitler, noting in his diary that Wagner belonged in the same category with Frederick the Great and Martin Luther, added: "Whoever wants to understand National Socialist Germany must know Wagner."<sup>6</sup>

Theodor Fritsch (1844-1933), in his *Anti-Semite's Catechism*, listed ten racist commandments, among which are:

Thou shalt keep thy blood pure. Avoid all contact with the Jew and keep him away from thyself and thy family, especially thy daughters, lest they suffer injury of body and soul.<sup>7</sup>

During the Hitler years this catechism, under the title of *Handbook on the Jewish Question*, was reissued in millions of copies and, together with *Mein Kampf*, became the new German "gospel."

The Jews did not expect this resurgence of anti-Semitism nor did they take it seriously. The Germans, after all, were a civilized people. Given time and education, this unjustified hatred would disappear. But it did not disappear. Apart from all the other causes of anti-Semitism, the need for a scapegoat never vanished. Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria became a political issue, a vote-getter; it became legitimate and respectable, and its poison spread rapidly through the German body politic. In 1890, 47,500 Germans voted for anti-Semitic candidates; in 1901, 461,000 voters elected sixteen anti-Semites to the Reichstag.<sup>8</sup>

With the exception of the Social Democratic Party, which condemned the dissemination of anti-Semitic propaganda, not one group in Germany remained free of Jew-hatred. In the 1912 elections to the Reichstag the Social Democratic Party drew a large number of votes, and it appeared that anti-Semitism in Germany might be on the decline. By 1916, as the war dragged on, voices were heard blaming the Jews for all of Germany's troubles.

Adolf Hitler was born in 1889 in a small Austrian town not far from the German border. His father, a local politician of the anti-Semitic stripe, had been an illegitimate child, reportedly the son of a Jewish father. When Hitler was fourteen, his father died. A friend of Hitler's recalled that at this age he was already an avid reader of the anti-Semitic press and acquainted with Wagner's writings. Two years later Hitler quit school. As a young man, Hitler considered himself an artist. When he showed his work to the people at the Vienna Academy, they rejected it. His mother, who had been supporting him, died in 1908. Through 1913, Hitler stayed in Vienna, living from hand to mouth. It was a time when anti-Jewish propaganda could be heard on all sides, and Hitler absorbed it all.

At the time there was a political struggle between two German nationalist groups—Schonerer's Pan-Germanism and Lueger's Christian Socialists. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler discusses the difference between these two systems of Jew-hatred. Lueger's anti-Semitism, he said, stems from religious concepts, not "pure racial science." This was a foolish approach, Hitler believed. Conversion had always been an escape route for Jews. A Jew could permit himself to be sprinkled with a little holy water, stay alive, and keep his stolen wealth.<sup>9</sup>

When World War I broke out, Hitler was in Munich. He volunteered for army service. On the French front he was wounded, and in 1918, while he was in the hospital, the war ended in defeat for Germany. When he left the hospital, Hitler returned to Munich and launched his campaign against the Marxists and the Jews, who had "sold out" Germany. Soon after the suppression of the Communist uprising in Munich he was given a job by the army as a propagandist against Marxism and radicalism.<sup>10</sup>

In his new position, Hitler made the acquaintance of some "important" people. One of them was Alfred Rosenberg. Born of German parents in Latvia in 1897, Rosenberg attended the Russian Technological Institute in Riga. In 1918, when the Germans retreated from the Ukraine, he went back to Germany with them. Alfred Rosenberg, the "intellectual" among the anti-Semitic leaders, wrote "scholarly" articles about nationalism, about the *Protocols*, about the race question and about *Lebensraum* for Germany. Fluent in the Russian language, he became an authority on Soviet affairs and wrote *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*, in which he "proved" that the Jews are the backbone of Bolshevism and democracy.

In 1920 Adolf Hitler already knew how he wished to solve the "Jewish problem." In a reply to a letter, he wrote: "Anti-Semitism must not become an emotional issue. . . . Rational anti-Semitism must lead to disposing of the Jews altogether."<sup>11</sup> In *Mein Kampf* he stated:

The Aryan race is the source of human cultural development. The very existence of world civilization depends on the purity of the Aryan race. The obstacle to a pure Aryan race is the Jew. The Jew spreads disease, plagues. Jews are bacilli which poison the blood of other peoples. It is the Jews who have spread syphilis in Germany. The Jews are parasites, bloodthirsty leeches that degrade the Aryan race. The Jews strive to rule the world and enslave the nations.<sup>12</sup>

As examples of his "truths" Hitler pointed to what "the Jews had done in Russia." Through Russian bolshevism, he argued, the Jews are obviously planning to become the rulers of the world in the present century.<sup>13</sup>

From 1923 to 1930 unprecedented inflation in Germany, unemployment, together with unbridled nationalism, drove masses of working people and middle class citizens into the embrace of Nazi ideology. The larger anti-Semitic groups numbered four hundred

and thirty throughout the country, with seven hundred periodicals. The young people in particular were swept up by the hate-mongering. In 1921 two-thirds of all the students in institutions of higher learning elected active anti-Semites to lead them.

In June 1922 Walter Rathenau, a Jew and a minister in the Weimar Republic, was murdered by a Nazi. Attacks on Jews in the streets multiplied. Hitler's speeches, his "evidence" from the *Protocols* that the Jews were preparing to destroy Germany and the world, his threats about Jewish bolshevism, and his charge of Jewish responsibility for all the misfortunes of Germany all caused a volcanic eruption of Jew-hatred. The German Socialists, Communists, and liberals, fought against Hitler's political program, but not against the spreading anti-Semitism.

In the Reichstag elections of 1923 the Nazi party drew 800,000 votes. Seven years later they received 16.5 million, or 37 percent of all the votes cast. In 1932, the votes were divided as follows: Nazis, 14 million, 33 percent; Socialists, 9 million, 20 percent; Communists, 7,600,000, 17 percent; Catholic Party, 7 million, 15 percent; Monarchists (who supported Hitler), 4 million, 9 percent; the other 6 percent were divided among the smaller parties.<sup>14</sup>

Realizing that the Nazis had lost almost 2.5 million votes to the leftist parties, the ruling Capitalist circles of Germany turned the government over to the National Socialists on the pretext that they were the largest single party. On 30 January 1933 Hitler became Reichschancellor. In March, ten days after the Reichstag fire, 15,000 opponents of the Nazis, leading Socialists, Communists, liberals, and Jews, had already been arrested. On 14 July 1933 Hitler declared the Nazi Party the only legal party in the country.<sup>15</sup>

Earlier, in April, a boycott was announced against all Jewish businesses in Germany. Hoodlums in brown shirts took up positions outside of Jewish stores and allowed no one to enter. All Jews were dismissed from posts in courts, universities, public schools, newspapers, theaters, trade unions, the postal service, banks, railroads, and hospitals. Albert Einstein was declared a "cultural Bolshevik." Jewish children were expelled from schools. Books written by Jews were removed from libraries and thrown into bonfires in many cities in Germany.

In answer to protests throughout the world, Hitler accused the Jews of spreading lies to hurt the German economy. Hermann Göring, governor of Prussia, summoned Jewish leaders and warned them that he would hold them personally responsible if they did not deny the "lies" that Jews were spreading abroad. On 30 March 1933

the following telegram was sent by the Jewish community in Berlin to the American Jewish Congress:

According to newspaper reports, atrocity and boycott propaganda against Germany is continuing overseas, apparently in-part also by Jewish organizations. As Germans and Jews we must enter a decisive protest against this. The dissemination of untrue reports can only bring harm, affecting the reputation of our German fatherland, endangering the relations of the German Jews with their fellow citizens. Please try urgently to see to it that every atrocity and boycott propaganda is halted.<sup>16</sup>

From the Storm Troops, Hitler's aides selected the "best" Nazis and created the Schutzstaffeln (SS).<sup>17</sup> Placed over the SS was one of Hitler's most trusted watchdogs, Heinrich Himmler, who considered Hitler the greatest man of all time. In 1930, one year after he was appointed, the SS numbered 3,000. In 1933, when Hitler came to power, it numbered 50,000; in 1939, 250,000. The most trustworthy executioners were selected for the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD), the special Security Services.

The SD had a handpicked detachment of "experts" on the Jewish problem. In 1934 they were joined by an "expert" on Zionism named Adolf Eichmann.<sup>18</sup> Another group of loyal Nazis, those with even more sadistic leanings, were selected for the *Totenkopfverbänd* (Death's-Head Organization), the security police for the concentration camps. In February and March 1933, when the prisons began to bulge with political prisoners and Jews, Himmler constructed concentration camps, the first of them near Dachau. At the end of that year there were several such camps in Germany, with 25,000 prisoners.

In Prussia, Göring established his own secret police, the *Geheime Staats Polizei* (Gestapo). In 1934 the Gestapo became part of the SS under Himmler. As head of the Gestapo, Himmler appointed one of his own aides, Reinhardt Heydrich, whose bloodthirsty treatment of the Jews exceeded that of the SS.

Toward those Jews who wanted to leave Germany, the SS at first had a more lenient approach; they wanted the Jews to emigrate. "Assimilationists" were arrested and warned. However, when the Arab Mufti came to Berlin in 1936, the situation changed. In 1937 Hitler's foreign minister announced that his government was opposed to making a Jewish country out of Palestine.<sup>19</sup> One year before that, Hitler had made a speech in which there were clear signs of what he had in mind for the Jews: