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The New People's Library · VOLUME II

THE JEWISH QUESTION

by

GEORGE SACKS

LONDON
VICTOR GOLLANCZ LTD

1937

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INTRODUCTORY

THREE YEARS AGO I wrote a book which dealt with the problem of anti-Semitism. I had to devote the first chapter to proof that there really was a Jewish question. To-day I am spared this necessity. There is not a corner in Europe or America into which this question does not obtrude. There is, with one exception, hardly a country under the sun where a Jew is safe from insult at the hands of a considerable section of its inhabitants. Indeed, there has been so much discussion, so many brawls, and so many angry recriminations over the whole issue that Jews, who had begun to thank their stars that the twentieth century had brought them emancipation, are becoming accustomed to the idea of being classed as a major problem of world-civilisation along with unemployment, disarmament, and the future of the League of Nations. As to non-Jews, their attitude, when it is not violently partisan, is similar to that of Mr. George Bernard Shaw, who refused an invitation recently to attend a dinner in honour of the late Mr. Israel Zangwill, because he felt that it would inevitably degenerate into a discussion of the Jewish question. The clamour of the anti-Semites and the friends of the Jews bores them.

A glance at any representative newspaper over a period of, say, a month or two would establish the following facts. Jews are regarded with dislike, and even open enmity, in several large countries in Europe, and every available method, including physical coercion, is being

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used to make it so uncomfortable for them that they are making frantic efforts to escape. Nazi Germany is of course the chief exponent of this policy with Poland, Rumania and Austria not far behind. Not a single country in Europe or America is willing to receive refugees from these areas. Great Britain, the Dominions, France, and the United States, hitherto regarded as asylums for the persecuted, find themselves with extremely vocal anti-Semitic political groups of their own. In the case of Great Britain, Sir Oswald Mosley's Fascists, whose chief stock-in-trade is anti-Semitism, have been the cause of special legislation ostensibly designed to restrict their activities. Palestine, so far from being a National Home for the Jews, enforces rigid limitations on their entry. Conditions resembling the Middle Ages are being reproduced with amazing fidelity. With one difference: it was possible then to escape from one hostile region to a friendlier atmosphere. To-day there is nowhere to go. The Jew can no longer wander. Immigration restrictions, discriminatory legislation, and currency limitations, which keep him from taking his money (assuming that he has any) out of the country, all keep the Jew effectively immobilised in countries where he is plainly shown that he is not wanted.

There is no need to enlarge on this point. It is clear that Jews once again face a period in history when they are confronted with a problem peculiar to themselves. In common with the rest of humanity, they are beset with the anxieties of our epoch—the threat of war, of unemployment, and the agonising uncertainty of what to-morrow will bring. But, for good measure, they carry the load of their Jewishness, a load which makes them appear friendless intruders in a world which is united, it seems, in one thing at least—its hatred of the Jew.

Now, if this were a problem affecting Jews only, if it

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were a domestic issue involving the liberty and happiness of them alone, there would be little necessity to raise an outcry when all humanity trembles on the brink of disaster. There are only sixteen million Jews throughout the world. If they are oppressed, so are millions and millions of Indians, negroes, and Chinese. If they are denied the privileges of citizenship in Germany, they share that distinction with innumerable other people. Six and a half million natives are to all intents and purposes disfranchised in the country of that doughty champion of democracy, General Smuts. There is restriction of liberty and misery enough in this world. In this respect the Jews are not a peculiar people.

But anti-Semitism has a special and wider significance for non-Jew as well as Jew. Its implications have a bearing on issues which may determine the future of mankind. It is for this reason that a study of the Jewish question transcends in importance the lot of the Jew. Those who are bored with the subject will discover that it is not one that can permanently be shelved.

If we are to have any clear understanding of the importance of the Jewish question in its relation to the future of civilisation—and the whole thesis of this essay is that primarily the Jewish question is not a Jewish question—we shall have to use some sort of scientific method in our study. The difficulty is that the social sciences, unlike the natural sciences, lack a scientific methodology. A research worker investigating the action of an extract of pancreas on diabetic patients in Toronto may have his observations confirmed or denied in Tokio or Cape Town. The political, religious, or moral convictions of the research worker will not enter into the results of the experiments. The work of Zondek on the female hormones is accepted by the German scientists who never raised a finger when their Nazi Government

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made it impossible for him to continue his work in Germany. And now that he works in Palestine they will still follow the results of his researches, even if they believe that the "international Jew" is their misfortune. Apparently there is an internationalism which still fulfils a useful purpose.

In the field of social science, however, the prejudices of the investigator are not so easily kept out. Imagine a German professor of anthropology faced to-day with the problem of writing a paper on the origins of the "Aryan" race. Two years ago he might safely have said that the Japanese people were completely "non-Aryan," and as such, of course, were an inferior people. To-day, when they are allies in the fight against Bolshevism, the unfortunate man would be highly unpopular if he said so. So he ends up, probably, by writing instead on the cranio-facial index of the Jew, and proves triumphantly that no Jew is fit to be a professor of anthropology.

Fortunately, the problem we are discussing lays itself open to scientific discussion. I know that we live in an epoch in which we are exhorted to think with our "blood" and to distrust the scientific method. But I shall assume that there are still a number of people whose minds are pervious to logical statement and argument, and it is to these that this book is addressed.

Briefly, the method I propose to adopt is to dissect the contemporary phase of anti-Semitism fully. I shall not attempt to argue the rights and wrongs of the situation. I shall take for granted that there is a widespread feeling against Jews in almost every country in the world, that in some countries they are undergoing active persecution, in others strong groups are calling for legislation against them (Poland, South Africa, Rumania, Austria, Palestine), that free entry into many

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countries is not allowed them, and that many millions are being warned that the present state of world unrest is due to the machinations of the Jewish people. On the basis that such a state of affairs exists (and no one can seriously deny that it does) I shall endeavour to show what results are likely to flow from it.

From an examination of the present position we shall briefly review the past phases of anti-Semitism. An attempt can then be made to discover the essential cause of the disease, and, if possible, to indicate the cure.

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TAKING THE FACTS as they are, without committing ourselves to any view as to whether the condition of things is justifiable or not, we shall see that certain sequelæ are inevitable. Agitation against Jews is widespread. Feelings ranging from dislike to open hostility are discernible throughout the world. What must be the results?

To begin with, non-Jews must become increasingly Jew-conscious. Up to recently there existed a convention in English-speaking countries that it was not quite the thing to stress the Jewish origin of a man or woman if, for any reason, they came up for discussion. Thus at the time of the Marconi scandal it was only Hilaire Belloc and the Chestertons who pointed out that some of the chief actors were Jews. Almost without exception, the London Press ignored this fact. Even so recently as 1934 the sensational series of London arson cases which were the subject of headlines in the world Press were written up without the fact being mentioned that the criminals were Jews. In the United States, well-known Jewish gangsters might ornament the front pages, but their race was seldom mentioned. Famous Jews remained equally anonymous as far as their racial origin was concerned. When the first flight of German Jews from Nazi Germany occurred, many realised for the first time the number of well-known Germans who, under the new dispensation, were apparently not Germans.

But now that the whole question is exposed to the

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full glare of publicity this must alter. Even those who take up a kindly and tolerant attitude to Jews will not be able to forget that their Jewish friends and acquaintances are Jews, for the simple reason that others will not allow them to forget it. The consequence is that every Jew and Jewess will be under a microscope. Whether they are conscious of it or not, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Germans, and Americans will view their Jewish neighbours with a heightened consciousness of their existence. And, since it is a very human failing to generalise from the particular ("I take people as I find them"), opinions on the Jewish question will vary as to the experience which each observer has had of Jews with whom he is familiar.

Fundamentally, of course, there is nothing strange in this. For instance, most Scotsmen in the central and western industrial areas of Scotland and the inhabitants of Liverpool have very definite opinions on the "Irish Question." These places have large Irish Catholic minorities which in a predominantly Protestant environment are sharply demarcated from the majority. Opinions on Irishmen differ greatly here from the more romantic notions which the rest of the country has derived from a study of the stage and literary Irishmen and the caperings of Mr. Bernard Shaw. The fact that Liverpool and Scotch Irishmen are almost exclusively industrial workers, with a depressed standard of living, does not prevent the non-Irish citizen of these parts from making the most sweeping generalisations about Irishmen in general. Many instances of a similar nature occur elsewhere—the Chinese in California, Polish workers in France, and the Indians in Natal. What makes the Jewish example exceptional is its universality. It is not restricted to a small area of one country, but involves almost every country under the sun.

The first effect, then, which we might anticipate from the present world-wide publicity on the Jewish question is a process of crystallisation out of Jews in each community as a group to be noticed; in fact, to be stared at.

The criteria which we adopt in judging an individual vary within the most absurd limits. We may like a man to-day whom we might loathe if we met to-morrow. But one thing is certain: if we set out to judge in a highly critical mood, the chances are that we shall dislike more than we like, and our judgments will be harsher.

So that the given specimen of Jew under the microscope is likely to have his motives, his conduct, and his manner of living subjected to a fiercer scrutiny than his non-Jewish neighbour. Something which may be regarded as a mild eccentricity in the latter is likely to be looked upon as characteristic of a race in the former. Suppose the Jew concerned is a prominent industrialist or financial magnate and the observer happens to dislike the breed, it is easy to see that he will inveigh against Jews on the grounds that they are exploiters, sweaters of labour, and so on. If Jews take part in revolutionary organisations, or Jewish names figure in connection with strikes or labour unrest, the conclusion that Jews are an "alien" body glorying in "subversive" activities becomes equally plausible. The opprobrium varies, of course, with the point of view of the critic. What may be regarded as a highly commendable quality by one may be detested by another. But we find here one explanation for the curious fact that the anti-Semitic Press makes the most conflicting accusations against Jews. They are, for example, frequently attacked on the ground that they are financial wire-pullers and money-grabbing capitalists. Yet they are as frequently condemned for being Communists. And the incongruity of

the two complaints is not noticed, since it is perfectly easy to point to Jews in both categories, each category being anathema to a different group.

The reflective reader, if he analyses his own reactions, will admit that the impulse to generalise when there is a ready-made tendency to be critical is a very human failing. If he goes to a restaurant and sees an overfed Jew making an exhibition of himself, he does not say, "Look at that unpleasant fellow." He is much more likely to say, "Why do they allow Jews in here?" He might not be so ready to condemn the whole race for the sins of an individual if, to use a medical term, he were not sensitised to Jews.

Obviously the opposite process occurs too. Where the Jew concerned happens to pass the test with flying colours, when, in fact, he turns out to be a "Jew—but very nice," the judgment may be founded on equally unsubstantial evidence. But the generalisation will lead to an opposite conclusion. One might think that the two processes would cancel themselves out. But, even if there were as many nice Jews as not-nice Jews, we would still be faced with the fact that a large number of non-Jews remained firmly convinced that Jews were an unpleasant people. And they are quite enough to keep the ball rolling.

Under such conditions the literature of previous anti-Semitic periods will be revived, with a greater chance of receiving attention than in a relatively quiet time. Old stories of the depravity of Jews, of ritual murder and of deep plots to destroy Christianity and Christians, will circulate more readily among audiences awakened to the presence of sinister strangers in their midst.

This, then, is the first result we expect from the publicity which the Jewish problem is receiving throughout the world. Revolutionary parties set out to make the

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workers class-conscious. Fascist parties, almost without exception anti-Semitic, set out to make the world Jew-conscious. The consequence is a highly critical outlook on Jews and a tendency to regard them as strangers. You cannot have prolonged discussions about a Jewish problem without developing a conviction among many people that the Jew is not as others are.

Now let us see what the effects on the Jews are likely to be. If the process tends to make others Jew-conscious, it must make the Jew self-conscious. Faced with what seems to him to be world-wide hostility, his own reaction must be to retire into his shell. Obviously sixteen million Jews are not going to accept the view of themselves that their Fascist enemies propagate. For, it may be proper to say here, Fascist parties deny that there can be such a phenomenon as a perfectly acceptable Jew. It would be unreasonable to expect Jews to agree with them. Their reaction must induce them to close their ranks, to achieve solidarity, and to mistrust even the kindest approach.

This is putting the matter in general terms. Granting that Jews face a situation where they are likely to believe that almost every nation's hand is raised against them, how are they likely to respond? In Germany to-day they are not allowed to enter universities which formerly were open to them. Their entrance into the professions is thus limited. Practice in the medical and legal professions is hemmed in by restrictions. Jewish workers are given work only when it is impossible to do without them. Jewish physicians, lawyers, painters, cinema artists, scientists, shopkeepers, cattle merchants, skilled and unskilled workers, are leaving Germany in large numbers. The only possible explanation must be that they are unable to exist in Germany. If this goes on long enough, what will happen? Those Jews who are unable to go elsewhere

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will be forced to live by forming a close community. Jewish doctors will have to rely on Jewish patients, and Jewish workmen on Jewish custom. Gradually the social ostracism of Jews will make them live in areas which are exclusively Jewish. Jewish ghettos will arise in which a life remote from the outside Gentile world will be lived—a world in which love, friendship, research, study, commerce, and craftsmanship will take on a tradition alien to the world from which the Jews are excluded. The Jews will be strangers.

I may summarise thus far by saying that the present acute anti-Jewish feeling will stimulate those who have never given the matter much thought to regard Jews with a keenly critical and slightly hostile interest. Even in those countries where the intensity of feeling is not so active (England, America), the Jews are likely to feel the repercussions, and will become fearful of what may happen to them. Sir Oswald Mosley's march into the East End was ominous enough to alarm English Jews, in spite of the fact that most of them had been saying, "It can't happen here." They find themselves pilloried in the Fascist Press; they become the subject of leading articles in *The Times*; newspaper posters display scare headlines: "Attack on the Jews"; questions are asked in Parliament and public bodies pass resolutions of protest. It must come as a rude shock to their complacency to find themselves discussed as a "problem," as if they were some peculiar form of blight attacking the crops of the country.

The net result of the interplay of these factors on Jew and non-Jew is to establish a barrier between them, to demarcate the Jews as strangers, to bind Jews together more strongly, to make them mistrust the approaches of even those who would be friends, and so strengthen the accusation that they are "exclusive." Jews everywhere

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will be reminded of their identity. From this conclusion more important considerations arise. The social problem breeds political complications, and it is here that we shall see how important the Jewish question is to the non-Jew.

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THIS, THEN, IS THE POSITION. You have in various countries Jews who are unpopular with an appreciable section of the people. Their conduct is watched with unfriendly eyes, and they excite suspicion and fear if they become prominent in spheres which carry weight and influence. Imagine the temptation presented to a political party which sets out to exploit the situation! It is a politician's dream of heaven. Let us see how it works.

The technique is simple, and is on the way to standardisation. The anti-Semitic party raises the cry that the Jews are a menace to the national well-being. It points to the undeniable fact that Jews are prominent in the Press, theatres, industry, and professions of the country. “These people are strangers, unassimilable aliens, and exert an influence on our national life out of all proportion to their numbers. We must curb their power.” If any of the established parties attempt to counter this propaganda by appealing to “the liberal principles which are the heritage of our country,” they are immediately taunted with being in the “hands of the Jews.” If newspapers point out mildly that many Jews have rendered great service, they are promptly referred to as the “Jewish Press.” If prominent men in public life appeal for tolerance, they are accused of being in the pay of the Jews. Since the attacking party is

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appealing to sentiments which exist already as a strong undercurrent in the minds of an appreciable number of people, it is bound to gain a fair amount of support. The other parties which are on the defensive have to make it clear that they are not unduly influenced by Jews. They must show that they hold no brief for the Jews. If they attempt in any way to curb the anti-Semitic group, it immediately invokes something which it quaintly calls “free speech.” This baffles the ruling party, for, somewhere in its own bag of tricks which it refers to as its “party platform,” there is a clause indicating that it approves of “free speech.” To be able to expose the swindle it would have to understand the problem thoroughly. Since it does not, it is forced to stand helplessly whilst the Jew-baiters make the pace.

Eventually the pace becomes too hot, and in self-preservation mild anti-Semitic legislation is passed, or perhaps in dissociating itself from the maligned Jews too forcibly the ruling party appears to lend substance to the criticisms of the avowed enemies of the hated ones. But by now the fat is in the fire. With this move they strengthen the case of the anti-Semites, because a number of people, hitherto impervious to anti-Jewish propaganda, are now persuaded of the urgency of the “menace.” These become more susceptible to the full-blooded programme of the extremists. The older parties lose their grip, and you have all the ingredients now for a first-rate vicious circle.

A variation of these tactics may consist in linking the Jew with doctrines which are highly unpopular—the favourite one, of course, is Communism. But there are many approaches to the same goal—party power. It may be possible to gather working-class support by pointing to the Jewish firms who sweat their employees or the Jewish bankers and finance houses which “influence”

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foreign policy. Or it may be possible to gain financial support from business men and small traders by suggesting that Jewish competition would be eliminated if the party were placed in power. Non-Jewish professional men may be attracted by the cry that Jews are filling the best positions. In general it is easy to see that at certain periods, such as the present, when the Jewish question looms largely on men's minds, a priceless opportunity is created for a political group determined to work scientifically on an existing prejudice. Here again, the more the matter becomes a political issue the more the Jews become cut off from other citizens and the more their remoteness is emphasised the more readily they become a political issue. Ultimately the climax is reached where they cease to have any political significance at all, and, as in Germany and during the Middle Ages, they become immured in their ghettos—a shadow people, unknown, unhonoured, and unsung.

I have described this process in vague and general terms. Let me be more specific. Sir Oswald Mosley's party was originally not anti-Semitic. In its prentice days he and his party protested loudly that they had no designs on Jews. In my book written three years ago I predicted that it would be quite impossible for him to avoid the temptation to exploit anti-Jewish feeling. Anyone interested in the clinical course of anti-Semitism would find interesting research material in a study of the British Fascist Press over a period of the last few years. The present anti-Semitism of the B.U.F. (now the National Socialist and Workers' Party) has developed slowly, till the entire bias of its propaganda is anti-Semitic, in spite of the prominence at the moment of its “National Socialist” platform. The “National” Government and the Labour Party are attacked for being pro-Jewish, and their Press is labelled the “Jewish

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Press.” Soon we shall hear that Mr. Anthony Eden and Mr. Neville Chamberlain are Jews, and that their real names are Cohen and Levy.

Along with this new orientation has gone a corresponding growth in the mass basis of the Fascists. This cannot seriously be denied, even if it is fashionable to belittle the support which Sir Oswald has in the country.

Clearly a study of Dr. Goebbels has improved Sir Oswald's propaganda machine. And the method is being used with success by the Iron Guard Fascists in Rumania, by the Austrian Nazis, by the Polish Fascists, by the Hungarian Fascists, by de la Rocque and Doriot in France, by Vargas in Brazil, and Malan in South Africa.

Anti-Semitism is of enormous value to a party looking for power in the internal politics of a country. But its value does not cease here. It is of the greatest assistance in external politics. It is in this field that a most interesting development has occurred—something which is (I believe) quite unique in the annals of anti-Semitism. It has been clearly demonstrated in the last few years that skilful use of anti-Jewish propaganda may be of tremendous help in foreign policy, and can create conditions for the achievement of aims which might otherwise be accomplished with difficulty. The history of the last few years is rich in examples which prove this.

The Nazi régime began its career under a cloud as far as foreign reaction to it was concerned. Many felt that the trick of setting fire to the Reichstag in order to outlaw opposition parties was a little too crude. True, elections had been won on forged letters by perfectly respectable parties before this. And later an overwhelming victory was to be won on the slogan of “collective security and disarmament,” which subsequently, in a moment of “appalling frankness,” would be admitted to

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have been a deception. Nevertheless, the destruction of trade unions, the confiscation of their property, the crushing of opposition parties, and the open violation of treaties which began when the Nazis gained power brought them an unfavourable Press in foreign countries.

Among Liberal and Labour parties elsewhere there was open hostility. Anti-Fascist parties were formed. Boycotts were instituted, and protests and demonstrations were the order of the day. It was at this stage that the Foreign Department of the National Socialist Party stepped in. From its headquarters in Hamburg contacts were made with groups in other countries which were known to be anti-Semitic. In some cases these were obscure and impotent sects. Funds were sent them; literature, in the form of pamphlets and scurrilous cartoons which had proved effective in Germany itself, was poured into the United States, France, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Austria, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa, Canada, and Australia.

Wherever anti-Nazi groups were formed and boycott of German goods advocated, these Hamburg-inspired groups put forward counter-propaganda to suggest that Jews were behind the whole agitation, and that the real interests of the country concerned were being butchered to make a Jewish holiday. Anti-Nazi groups were said to be Jewish organisations (frequently Jewish-Communist, the new hyphenation of Hitler and Rosenberg). Nazi Germany (these “patriotic” groups asserted), which yearned for peace, which threatened no country, which was concerned only with the regeneration of the German people, was being pursued by the venom and hatred of the “international Jewish-Communists,” and these mischief-makers were exploiting otherwise well-intentioned men and women in their desire to embroil the German Government and its people in war.

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I have said that one of the results of the mass anti-Semitism of to-day is that in every country there is an appreciable number of individuals who regard Jews as aliens. Faced with such propaganda, is it surprising that many of them begin to wonder if they are being used as catspaws in a private quarrel between Jews and Germans? The same tactics which place political parties accused of being under Jewish influence on the defensive obviously neutralise the efforts of anti-Fascist bodies in other countries. They have to answer the jeers that they are financed and aided by Jews. Since it is quite obvious that any Jew worth his salt should be anti-Nazi, there is always some truth in this accusation.

The net result of all this is that the German régime may get support in the most surprising places, and criticism which ordinarily might hamper its activities abroad is stifled by what is, to all intents, a branch of its own party. It is a brilliant scheme for which full credit must be given to the strategists of the German National-Socialist Party. For an expenditure of comparatively little money they have strong groups in all countries acting as propagandists for Nazi principles in domestic and foreign policy.

For the moment we may leave this aspect of the question. It is enough to establish that, at a time when anti-Semitism is rampant, valuable openings present themselves to political parties who are prepared to use it as a weapon.

One other point must be touched on before we end our research on the events which we may reasonably expect to follow from the present phase of the relationship between Jews and their neighbours. Since the Jews are nowhere welcome, and since immigration restrictions are being hastily enacted against their entry into most countries, it is not surprising that they should turn with

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greater ardour to Palestine as a home of their own. Jews who previously were content enough to regard themselves as citizens of the countries in which they dwelt will quite naturally snatch at Zionism when their status of citizenship elsewhere is questioned. We may expect to see, then, greater enthusiasm for Zionism, intensified propaganda for Palestine as the National Home, and more desperate efforts to safeguard their status in that country.

I have, thus far, not discussed the rights or wrongs of anti-Semitism. I have not attempted to account for the present wave of anti-Semitism. I have merely assumed that it exists, and examined its repercussions. But certain conclusions have emerged. The demarcation between Jew and Gentile will be accentuated. Differences between them will be increased. The Jew will tend to keep more to himself. Assimilation will be retarded. Anti-Semitism will be a useful political weapon.

Now let us assume that the intensity of feeling, for some reason or another, dies down. People begin to tire of Jew-baiting. The antagonisms, the hatreds fade. A kindlier atmosphere exists. But memories of the present period must remain. Suppose that by some miracle Nazi Germany rescinded the Nuremberg decrees and disposed of the “Aryan paragraph.” It would be long before German Jews completely forgot their experiences of the nineteen-thirties, or Jews elsewhere the insults, the anxieties, and material losses which they had sustained as a result of what is going on to-day. The literature of hate would persist. German children will not easily forget that they were taught to believe that Jews drink the blood of young Christian children for sacrificial purposes. Nor will German maidens readily forget the warnings against racial pollution which follows on marriage to a Jew. Herr Hitler's *Mein Kampf* in its

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million editions will not all be destroyed. Copies will circulate for a long time to come.

So that, in spite of a cessation of propaganda and the readmission of Jews to the privileges of citizenship, an undercurrent of anti-Jewish feeling is bound to persist for a considerable period. The Jews themselves will be suspicious and apprehensive of a possible recrudescence of the trouble, and the Gentiles will be wondering innocently why the Jews are so sensitive and so reluctant to give up their clannishness. Funny stories about Jews will circulate, always prefaced by the remark: “You don’t mind a story against yourself, do you?” Underneath all the heartiness and the “Some-of-my-best-friends-are-Jews” patter there will remain the uneasiness and discomfort of a time lag between previous events and present conditions.

But, given a long enough period of peace, it is easy to see that the problem would solve itself. Gradually Jews would begin to realise that there were no hostile feelings against them, that they were accepted on a footing of equality, and that they were no longer strangers in the midst of an established society. They would begin, as has happened before, to shed their exclusiveness, to intermarry, and to play an equal part in the destiny of their country. With confidence restored, they might even face the world without apologising for their existence. But one thing is obvious: if at any time, for some reason or other, the question should become acute again, if somehow or other the status of the Jew should be challenged again, the ingredients for a first-class row could always be disinterred from the dust-heap of history. There would have to be a very long period of peace for this not to occur.

If we look back at the history of the Jews we see that this is exactly what has happened throughout the ages.

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It is a story of repeated febrile periods occurring in cycles, alternating with years of comparative quiet. Peace has reigned occasionally for a long time. Moslem Spain gave the Jews a respite for almost two and a half centuries—the “Golden Age,” it was called—until Christianity from the West drove the Moors out of Spain and brought with it the prevalent European attitude to Jews. Sooner or later something seems to happen which disturbs the serenity of Jewish-Gentile relationship. If we could define this “something,” we should be able to solve the whole mystery. This catalytic agent which sets off the explosion is the obvious clue to the problem.

It is stupid to assume that at certain periods millions of people suddenly go mad and want to bite the nearest Jew. Yet if one reads the ponderous tomes which deal with anti-Semitism one feels that this is what their authors would like us to believe. With slight changes to allow for differing social conditions, the story is always the same. A period of comparative peace is followed by a violent eruption. The explanation cannot be accounted for by sun-spots. There must be a solid and valid reason.

Now, it is really not very difficult to isolate the factor responsible for the febrile periods. In fact, it is inherent in the story as far as we have gone. We have seen how the cumulative effect of each such febrile period is to establish the Jew as the stranger. And, indeed, this is perhaps the most important aspect of the problem. For the Jew is the *consistent* stranger. Many racial groups have undergone a time during which they were strangers. And even now there are small transplanted minorities which are miniature “Jewish problems.” The French-Canadians, the Irish in Scotland, the Chinese in California, and the Indians in Kenya and Natal are examples of this. But no other tribe, race, group, or what you will except the Jews enjoys the doubtful distinction of being either

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strangers or potential strangers throughout the world and throughout its history.

So far there is nothing original or helpful in our conclusion. What I have said many others have said. Xenophobia—dislike for the unlike—has often enough been given as the explanation for Jew-hatred. But when is xenophobia most likely to show itself? When are distrust and suspicion of the stranger most likely to arise? And the answer is: when the foundations of the community are uncertain, when insecurity threatens, when vested-interests are being challenged; when, in short, the old order is too old, revolution is in the air, and a new phase of the class struggle is on.

This is a way of stating the problem which has no validity unless it can be subjected to scientific proof. Before we turn to this, however, it is imperative that we define our terms.

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I HAVE USED THE WORDS "class struggle," and, since they are fundamental to my argument, I must make clear what is meant by them. Properly speaking, this is outside the scope of my essay, but, as an understanding of this much misunderstood phrase is pivotal, a digression becomes essential.

The word "class" means a group or section of a community of human beings. One may divide a community into all kinds of groups. It is possible to distinguish between individuals who are red-haired and those who are not red-haired. One may talk of the rich and the poor classes of a given country, or of the upper classes and the lower classes, or of the class which drinks whisky, and the class which drinks beer and the class which drinks both. But, long before the founders of scientific Socialism made the words "class struggle" notorious, men had begun to use them in a definite and restricted manner to divide up society into specific groups. It is in this restricted usage that the words are employed to-day.

Instead of any of the above arbitrary divisions, the classes are graded in relation to their economic function in society. Since those who use the term are generally people who, for one reason or another, are interested in social forms, they must have certain conventions to compare—say, the structure of feudal Britain to that of the modern British Empire. If they divided the people of

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Britain into those who drink beer and those who do not, they might find themselves in possession of statistics of value to brewers but of small importance to the social historian who wished to know how the British Empire grew out of feudal Britain. What he is primarily interested in is *how the work of society is accomplished* in differing periods, and why the sun never sets upon the British Empire in the twentieth century whereas it cast its warming glow for a limited time only on the Britons of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

To do this the social historian has to know that in feudal times a class of Briton—the serfs—tilled the fields and produced the food which kept them alive. But they also tilled the fields of the feudal lord in return for protection, and as tribute to his overlordship. The class of feudal lords organised the military defence of their territory, supplied soldiers to the princes, kings, and clerical authorities, and ruled in the name of these dignitaries.

Trade was carried on by a class of people—merchants—whose rights and privileges were restricted by the feudal nobility. Commodity-production—i.e. production of commodities for exchange on the market—was in its infancy. The community was almost self-supporting, each family more or less producing the necessities of life for itself. In the Britain of to-day, though the feudal landowners still exist, shorn of a great deal of their power, the trading class, which lives entirely by producing goods to be sold on the market, now holds almost supreme power in the State. The serfs have gone. A number of them are represented by landless agricultural labourers, and the rest driven from the lands which they once owned form a new class—the workers in factories, mines, transport and distributive organisations. It will

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be seen that since the modern workers, unlike the serfs, have no means of providing themselves with the food which they require, they are utterly dependent on the landowners and industrialists for the wages which they use to procure the means of existence.

The trading class, the owners of the mines and factories, need raw materials from other countries, as well as markets all over the world to sell the multitudinous products which modern machinery enables them to turn out in profusion. In order that they should be assured of a regular and cheap supply of raw materials and extensive markets, it is essential for them to acquire political and, if necessary, armed control of other countries. Hence great armies and navies, and an empire built up by conquest and pillage. The class structure of Britain is due to the altered conditions under which Britons live to-day, just as the class structure of feudal Britain harmonised with the feudal mode of life. Our machines are necessary to us and to our way of life, and they have been evolved because of this necessity, but civilisation could be industrialised only when feudal society was destroyed. This meant that the class which held the power in feudal society—the feudal lords—had to be supplanted by the new trading and mercantile class. But the feudal ruling class did not yield their power to the manufacturers and traders without protest. It took a revolution in England and the execution of a king before the new class could usurp power. It meant bloody revolution in 1789 to achieve it in France. It necessitated a series of revolutions in 1848 all over Europe. Russia had to wait till February 1917 for its short-lived bourgeois-democratic revolution. (All these revolutions are referred to as bourgeois-democratic, for it was through them that the bourgeoisie—the industrial and trading class—got *their* democracy.) This violent series of breaks with feudalism was as

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necessary to human advancement as slavery was to primitive communal life. In the same way the replacement of the feudal State by the capitalist State was a forward and necessary step.

So that when we use the term "class struggle" to describe the tug-of-war between rival groups in a given society we are using a term which helps us to understand the movement of history. After all, we do know that, roughly, for 900 years (A.D. 400-1300) the whole of Western Europe had a definite pattern of life: each country—with local variations, it is true—showing certain large groups of people engaged in specific functions, with a definite class influencing its political destiny. In each of these countries this ruling class or group was made up of feudal lords and absolutist monarchs. And we have the evidence of our senses that present-day Europe shows a different picture. The manufacturing and trading class, which had precarious privileges only in the feudal State, is to-day the most powerful in the State. We know that the most important function of the modern State is to look after the interests of its trade—to help its factories to keep going and to find markets for their products.

This change did not take place as a miracle overnight. It occurred slowly over a period of many years. We have the evidence of our history-books that revolutions did take place in each country in Europe, of which the net result was that a new class came to power, and that the struggle between the rival classes was a long-drawn-out affair in the course of which the common people (the serfs and apprentices) were drawn in, as well as the writers and poets of the age. What is the use then, of accusing Communists of "preaching the class war" and of "setting class against class"? They don't invent classes. They merely describe a process in history.

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How, for example, is it possible to understand ancient Roman and Greek civilisation without knowing that the workers who tilled the fields, built roads, aqueducts, and public buildings, were slaves? Slavery was necessary at that time to provide the leisure which produced the philosophers, playwrights, and poets of that splendid age. Nevertheless, the workers were enslaved, and the ruling class of patricians which controlled the military structure of Rome and Greece were able to keep them in subjection only because they were in a position to use force.

The slave State was replaced by the feudal State probably because it became progressively harder to feed growing populations with the wasteful and inefficient labour of slaves who required taskmasters to stand over them while they worked. It must slowly have become obvious that it was wiser to give the slave some stake in his labour; and so the slave became the serf who owned his strip of land but paid tribute to his feudal lord in corn and cattle.

Those who deny the class structure of society are like the man who, on seeing a hippopotamus for the first time, said: "I don't believe it." And those who pretend that the class struggle was invented by Communists out of the baseness of their minds either do not understand or wish to understand.

It is obvious that the interests of a ruling class are not those of the ruled. I have said that the institution of slavery was a revolutionary step forward in history, but if anyone had explained to the slaves of Athens and Rome that their enslavement was a necessary process he would have had a very hot reception. The slaves did not appreciate this. Hence slave rebellions. The peasantry of feudal Europe who had their common lands enclosed, and were taxed so that they were driven to

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seek employment¹ in the town workshops, would have derived small comfort from the knowledge that the industrialisation of Europe demanded this. They resented it. Hence peasant wars and revolts. It may be necessary for the capitalist system that the wages of workers in mines and factories should be low, but they do not see it in this light. Hence strikes and industrial unrest. The capitalist employer cannot afford to go on producing if he cannot sell his commodities at a profit, and, with the best will, he must economise on his cost of production or he must close down. He may love his workers; he may be a highly estimable person; but he must think of *his* wife and children before he considers the fate of the wives and children of his workers. It may be true to say, as many do, that the interests of employer and worker are interlocked, and that the one cannot

¹ It is always easier to understand past history if we can link it up with contemporary events. The process of making a peasantry into a reservoir for industrial labour is beautifully exemplified in the Union of South Africa.

In 1894 Cecil Rhodes introduced the Glen Grey Act, which provided for individual quit-rent tenure of native holdings as opposed to the tribal ownership of land. It also imposed a hut-tax. He said:

"It is our duty as a Government to remove these poor children from this life of sloth and laziness and to give them some gentle stimulus to come forth and find the dignity of labour."

Now, watch the "gentle stimulus" in action. I quote from the *Cape Argus* of February 25th, 1937:

"The scheme announced by the Minister of Finance last night, under which native tax defaulters may be given the option of working on national roads instead of going to gaol, is regarded in the Lobby as the biggest advance in social reform of recent years. Although the broad principle of the scheme has been accepted by the Government, the details are still a matter of negotiation between the State, the Provincial Councils, and the National Roads Board.

"If a satisfactory arrangement is reached it will practically put an end to what is commonly regarded as a scandal—the treating of native tax defaulters as criminals. Every year thousands of natives are sent to prison for not paying their taxes, and,

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suffer without making the other suffer, but it is wrong to assume that the world will come to a full stop if there are no employers. Production has taken place before in history without employers, and in Soviet Russia to-day production is actually and relatively greater than in most capitalist States without benefit of employer.

I hope I have established that throughout history there have been class conflicts based on the class structure of developing society. This was recognised many years before Karl Marx and Engels came on the scene. Quacks and charlatans may talk of the wickedness of "preaching the class war," and of how the interests of a nation demand that there should be no class strife. What they really mean is that *some* interests of the nation

while many of them are wilful defaulters, the majority are genuinely unable to raise the money.

"... It is understood that the Government's intention was to pay natives who were willing to work on the national roads a fixed sum per shift, and out of this they would be able to pay their tax arrears, and any fine that had been imposed.

"Although they would not be treated, strictly speaking, as prisoners, it would be necessary to exercise control over them to see that they did not leave before they completed their obligations. It might also be advisable to enable them to stay on the roads long enough to earn sufficient money to take them to their homes again.

"Another point that had to be borne in mind was the difficulty experienced by natives in feeding themselves while they were at work on the roads.

"Magistrates in certain areas had already used their discretion in giving natives the opportunity of earning their tax arrears by giving them extra time and advising them where they could obtain employment. This scheme had not been too successful, as there was no control of the natives once they left the court, and it had frequently been necessary to round them up again for failing to pay their taxes after their period of grace had expired."

The naïveté which makes this newspaper refer to this as an advance in social reform must be forgiven by the reader. The Union of South Africa is in social matters not quite out of the Middle Ages as yet.

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demand that there should be no class strife. Hitler, Goering, and Mussolini may bellow *ad nauseam* that they have abolished the class war. They have abolished it as much as a man abolishes a defective drain by pouring disinfectant into it. The inescapable fact remains that both in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany the factories and mines and fields are owned by one class of people and that the overwhelming number of Germans and Italians depend for their existence on wages and salaries paid by this class. And when they cannot be employed so that the products of their labour are sold at a profit they become unemployed, and the State has to organise Winter Relief. How can any sane individual maintain that the class struggle has been ended in Germany when several million Germans must rely on charity to supplement their existence? The class struggle may be masked because strikes are prevented by force, but that is a different story.

At moments when the ascendant class challenges the existing ruling class revolutionary crises arise. Years may elapse before the new class is triumphant, but throughout this period society is in a ferment, passions are easily aroused, and those who wish things to remain as they are wage a ceaseless war against those who demand change. Hitherto force has always decided the issue. In these struggles between the classes, subsidiary questions have arisen just as they do to-day, but one thing is reasonably clear: at such times, when all the accepted conventions are being overhauled, when insecurity and threats of revolution throw up all kinds of political adventurers to the surface, when ill-digested theories and dogmas clash, when the average person is in a state of befuddlement and is unable to see what he really wants—at such times the existence of a group of strangers in the midst of an unstable community who

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revive old memories of hostility provides an admirable target for attack.

Anti-Semitism, then, according to this theory is fundamentally due to the class struggle. Each violent eruption of the class struggle serves as the catalytic agent which fires the explosion. Each major crisis makes the Jew a stranger because of its effect on both Jew and non-Jew, and as a stranger he is strategically situated for the next kick when it comes. And here, in a nutshell, is the whole sorry cycle. The widespread dispersal of the Jew, in itself due to the waves of persecution he has had to endure, makes him vulnerable at different times and places to the class vicissitudes of his hosts. Modern methods of communication, the speed with which news travels, may succeed in grafting the process artificially on to a community where possibly the objective factors do not exist for it. The Nazis have been extraordinarily successful in transferring Jew-hatred to countries where a Jewish problem can scarcely be said to exist, e.g. Mexico, Brazil, and even Spain, where there have been hardly any Jews for centuries.

If we reflect for a while it becomes easy to see why this sequence of events is to be expected. A community living in comparative peace, with no burning question to disturb the serenity of its life, is not likely to be stirred by the presence in its midst of a number of nonconforming strangers. When some measure of security reigns, and the social and political régime is securely established, there need be no urgent fear of "aliens." But it is otherwise when there is general uncertainty.

To a certain extent the magnitude of the Jewish question in a given country depends upon the number of its Jews. It was Frederick the Great, and Bismarck after him, who said that a certain number of Jews in a country were as necessary as salt is to soup, but that one could

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have too much salt in soup. It has been pointed out that when the percentage of Jews exceeds four, trouble arises.¹

Lest my argument be misunderstood, I had better elaborate it. A critic may well say that the class struggle explains certain aspects of anti-Semitism, but that it is not the whole story. I do not deny it. During the Middle Ages, when the Black Death swept Europe, many Jews were killed because it was said that they were responsible for poisoning the drinking-wells. The connection between this and the class struggle seems remote. But it was the class struggle which created the conditions where such an accusation could carry conviction. It had produced in the Jews a group of people strongly demarcated from the communities among whom they lived—people who kept to themselves, who worshipped a different God and different traditions. So it was easy to believe that they had maliciously conspired to destroy Christendom, particularly when they might have been presumed to have strong reasons for hating Christians.

If this argument is difficult to accept after the lapse of so many years, it may be easier to take a contemporary example of the same nature. Nazi Germany makes the accusation that it is the Jews who are fomenting war, that it is the "international Jew" who, hating humanity, wishes to destroy it. This accusation, no doubt, will sound as fantastic to future generations as the Black Death accusation sounds to us. But it will not entitle the earnest student of the phenomenon of anti-Semitism of those days to assume that an outbreak of anti-Semitism of the nineteen-thirties was due to the stupidity and credulity of Germans and others who could make themselves believe

¹ The dialectic materialist may be interested to see in this a pretty demonstration of the passage of quantity into quality: below 4%—peace. Over 4%—pogroms.

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that Jews wished to plunge the world into war. We know that Germans, and, unfortunately, many others, are receptive to such stupid allegations because Germany, having lost a war, having endured tremendous hardships and privations in the period following that war, has been the scene of tremendous class antagonisms. Germany stood on the brink of social revolution only seventy or eighty years after it had shaken off the shackles of feudalism. Is it to be wondered at that the intensity of anti-Jewish feeling should have been greater throughout this period in Germany than, say, in France or England? Or that Tsarist Russia, which was ripe for revolution for many years before it finally came, should have been the scene of incredible injustice and cruelty for the Jews?

It is first causes that we must seek if we are to preserve the scientific attitude. And, though it may be difficult sometimes to unravel the direct relationship between surface manifestations and deeper cause, there should be little difficulty in accepting the relationship when we discover that surface manifestations disappear with the disappearance of the main cause.

It is almost impossible to explain the existence of widespread anti-Semitism in our times unless we realise that the class issue cuts across all considerations which have served previously to localise it. Mankind, despite the unwillingness of many so-called statesmen to acknowledge it, is being divided by rival ideologies. It is slowly but inexorably being forced to take sides, and the supporters of these conflicting ideologies are to be found in all countries. Messrs. Baldwin and Eden may continue to assert that Englishmen refuse to be drawn into a conflict between issues that do not concern them, and that "Continental dictatorships" have no interest for them, but a very simple question should decide this: if Britain went to war with the Soviet Union, will it be denied that

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a large number of Britons would be sympathetic to the enemy cause? And, conversely, if Germany were the enemy, how would the Fascists and potential Fascists of Britain react?

The definition of a traitor has altered in the past few years. A man is no longer a traitor to his country but to his class. When Mussolini attacked Abyssinia, and thereby threatened the *status quo* in the Mediterranean, and British imperial interests with it, we had the curious spectacle of a number of Englishmen, claiming to be more loyal to the ideals of Empire than anybody else, egging on the man who challenged these ideals. In reality they were more loyal to Fascism than to British Imperialism. Similarly the Communists of Great Britain are more loyal to the ideals of Communism than to those of the Empire. These are facts. It is possible to deny their importance on the grounds that neither the Fascists nor the Communists form any appreciable proportion of the population, but, if this is so, and the danger of an extension of this division is negligible, why is it that no member of the "National Government" ever makes a speech without reiterating that there is no possibility of this happening? Do they not protest too much?

What is happening in Britain is happening elsewhere. The fact that the class issue is perhaps not so clear in Britain and the United States accounts for the comparative mildness of the Jewish question in those countries. But one need not be a prophet to predict that, as the class struggle becomes plainer, we shall see an accentuation of anti-Semitism.

The universality of anti-Semitism to-day is a result of the universality of the class issue. It may flow over into a country where the objective conditions do not warrant it, but that is an accident of modern conditions.

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THE JEWS ARE AN ANCIENT PEOPLE. They have seen civilisations come and go. Jews have been present at the birth of great empires and Jews have watched them perish. But it would be romantic to imagine that they have been spectators alone in history. Throughout the changing destinies of man, Jews, as men, have had their fate closely interwoven with that of other men. The picture of the ageless, unchanging Jew eternally seeking peace and never finding it has been familiarised for us in plays, books, and on the screen. But it is not an accurate picture. There have been times, it is true, when history has appeared to pass them by, leaving them untouched. But in the main they have shared the vicissitudes of the rest of mankind. Wars, revolutions, famines, pestilences, the development of knowledge, the growth of science and technology, have affected their daily lives equally with others.

We need not blind ourselves to the fact that the toll which progress has demanded was not confined to the Jew. It has taken the blood of martyrs of all races, creeds and colours to achieve what has been achieved. In the process of growing-up with all its associated growing-pains, Jew and Gentile have had perforce to share some measure of daily contact. The time has come for us to consider very briefly how this mutual growth has influenced the development of the Jew and produced the situation we have to-day.

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The history of the Jews is one that deserves more study than it receives, for there are few romances more fascinating and enthralling than the chronicles of a race which, cradled in the tiny Palestinian desert, has adorned the rich fabric of world civilisation with some of its most glorious figures.

We think of the Jews as an Eastern people, but the centre of gravity of their existence has been in the West for hundreds of years. They were expelled from England in 1290, and from France sixteen years later. They had lived in these countries for centuries, and their presence in the Rhineland dates from the very earliest times of which we have record. For our purpose here it will suffice if we examine in some detail the events which shaped their history in Western and Eastern Europe.

For four centuries—the eleventh to the fifteenth—Europe was in a ferment. The old, settled life, when people were born, lived, and died in a way which seemed ordained to last for ever, was breaking up. For almost five hundred years before the eleventh century, society had been rigidly divided into classes. One was born a serf in which case one died a serf, or one belonged to the ruling class in State or Church—often these were synonymous—and one's supremacy went unchallenged.

But, because life is not static, the germs of a new order were present even when this society seemed most stable. From the beginning almost, the satisfaction of those wants which the organisation of early feudal society was unable to achieve—the exchange of products with other regions, the demand for luxuries and the extension of trade—called for a new class in the State. It appeared—in the shape of the merchants and traders.

At first they were accommodated in the framework of feudal society by strict regulation of their methods of production and distribution. The number of merchants

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was strictly regulated by control of the chartered merchant guilds, to which they had to belong. The early manufacturers were grouped into trade guilds, the number of their apprentices was fixed, and the prices at which they bought their raw materials and at which they sold the finished article were strictly prescribed. The age seemed to produce a passion for classifying and arranging people in their own spheres.

This was all very well, but the growth of the new class made it impossible for the old balance of power to persist. The easiest way to understand the clashes which followed is to recall that only recently have "trade" and those associated with trade become respectable in the eyes of "society." This is a hang-over from the feudal period, when landowners formed the ruling class. The Church, as in Spain to-day, was perhaps the biggest landowner. These princes of the Church and State needed the craftsmen and traders—or, rather, they needed what they sold. But they looked down upon them and hemmed them in by all manner of restrictions. The early traders had to set up their market-places outside the castle or feudal abbey. These were often walled in for protection, and formed burgs or towns. Those who lived within the walls of the burg were called burghers—hence the origin of the word "bourgeois." These burghers were heavily taxed by both lord and king. As they grew in wealth and numbers they began to resent the fact that they were taxed by a class which made them pay heavily for the privilege of being ruled. It was this antagonism which, even down to the days of the Edwardian novel, made its patrician heroine say that her husband was "something in the City," implying that his activities were better kept dark. Henry James had to be apologetic about his Americans who had amassed their fortunes in "trade." But it is a measure of the

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consolidation of the power of the bourgeoisie that the hero of the modern romantic novel is no longer a duke, but the millionaire owner of a department-store.

From the eleventh century onwards the whole system began to show the effects of strain. The struggle for power between feudal lord and merchant prince was complicated by the struggle between rich merchant guilds and poor craftsmen who were forced to buy from, and sell to, the guilds. Overshadowing all was the gradual dispossession of the peasant from the land. He had begun to commute the tribute which he paid in corn and cattle into money payments: so that, instead of working directly for his lord, he paid a money rent and purchased his freedom.

This freedom was illusory. He was heavily taxed and his rents were high. Evictions and enclosure of the common land soon produced a class of landless labourers, many of whom came to the towns in search of employment. The rest wandered about the countryside as beggars. The intolerable conditions under which the peasantry lived gave rise to a series of peasant revolts all over Europe. In 1381 the peasants of England rose, but their leader, Wat Tyler, was killed and the movement was crushed. In France the Jacquerie, or series of peasant revolts, began in 1358, thirty years before the one in England and thirty years after the outbreak in Flanders. Here is proof enough that similar social forces were at work throughout Europe.

The new economy demanded freedom—a new kind of freedom: freedom to buy, freedom to sell, and freedom to turn to any kind of trade or to hire oneself to any kind of employer. Feudalism tied the great mass of peasantry to the soil, imposing on it onerous taxes which scarcely allowed it to buy the commodities produced in the towns. The spiritual and temporal lords who owned the

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forests, the mines, and the fields had control over the raw materials which were required by the merchant guilds and the craft guilds. All this had to be changed if the new freedom was to be won.

There were other factors which helped to disrupt the feudal order. The traditional authority of the Church of Rome was firmly attached to the feudal system. If the new dispensation was to triumph, that authority had to be undermined and replaced by a new conception of the Church. And so it happened. Gradually there came a revolt against the authority of the feudal Church in favour of the individual conscience, which culminated during the sixteenth century in the Reformation. The struggle against the universal jurisdiction of the Church involved ultimately the growth of national States, with their own languages and their own literatures.

What was happening to the Jews throughout this period of turmoil? From the outset the Jews of Europe were outside the feudal system. They could own no land. They were excluded from the merchant and craft guilds. They could exist outside its economy only. They were reduced for the most part to petty commerce in limited commodities. They were pedlars, small tailors, and innkeepers. And also they were moneylenders. The Church Fathers forbade Christians to lend on loan, so the Jews made up the deficiency. Later, when trade expanded, others took to it.

The birth of the bourgeois State, which did away with the rigid mould of the feudal State, gave the Jews greater opportunities in the occupations which the circumstances of the time forced upon them. This meant that they were, in a sense, linked up with the new forces, which were detested by those who had vested interests in the feudal régime, for they were essentially middlemen in the social economy.

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This turbulent period of social, religious, and national struggles was a natural consequence of a change in the productive relations of Europe. It was characterised by wars, revolts, and class hatred, as well as a growth of knowledge, an extension of the natural sciences, and the spread of the culture of the Renaissance.

But it was also characterised by the most ferocious attacks on the Jews. A catalogue of the outrages perpetrated against Jews in England, France, Germany, and Spain would make dreary reading. There were respite, it is true, but they were never long enough to allow them to forget the dangers which constantly beset them. Finally there began the series of expulsions from different countries which resulted in the migration of the bulk of European Jewry to Eastern Europe. Within a period of fifty years they were expelled from England and France and forced to flee from the Holy Roman Empire. Turkey, Poland, and Lithuania became havens of refuge.

I have tried to show that the dynamic factor, the driving-force behind all these apparently unrelated events, was an alteration in class alignment. But I should have to write a very much bigger book than this to cover its exact relationship to these changes. In one instance, however, the close relationship between the class struggle and anti-Semitism during this period can be satisfactorily demonstrated.

It is customary for some historians to ascribe the anti-Jewish persecutions of the Middle Ages to differences in religion. I have hinted already that many economic issues were fought out in the name of religion. The Inquisition and the expulsion of the Jews from Spain afford an instructive example of this.

The expulsions from England and France took place not long after the Moors had been driven out of a great

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part of Spain. The spirit of the Crusades still lingered, and the Christian conquerors of Moslem Spain brought with them the prevailing attitude towards Jews. Very soon there were fierce anti-Jewish riots in Castile, Aragon, and Valencia. Cordoba, Seville, Toledo, and Barcelona were ravaged, and thousands of Jews were killed. Since the fury of the mob appeared to be directed against their religion, thousands of terrified Jews became converts to Christianity. They were known as the Marranos.

Now, if the sole issue at stake had been religion one would expect that the question would have been liquidated. But the Marranos became very influential. They became prominent in every walk of life, but particularly in commerce and industry. And so the whole of feudal Spain began to murmur against the Marranos. There were sporadic outbreaks against them. In 1480 the Inquisition was instituted and the Marranos were crushed almost out of existence. In 1492 the Jews were expelled, and about one hundred and fifty thousand left Spain.

There is no doubt at all that religion played an important part in this tragedy, but is it purely a coincidence that the expelled Jews were mainly middle-class traders, and that victory belonged to the Church—that prop of feudalism? We talk of the vengeance which God exacts from those who have tormented His people, and we are told that Spain, as a result of her inhumanity to Jews, sank to the level of a third-rate Power. A more mundane explanation is that, in expelling the bulk of her middle class, Spain fell out of step with the rest of Europe, where the middle class was giving the State a dynamic momentum.

It was the Middle Ages which made the Jew a creature of the ghetto. In the ghetto he developed a life completely

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remote from the life around him. His customs, his literature, his language, and his dress, and the way in which he earned his living, were entirely different from those of the non-Jew. In some countries he was made to wear a badge which distinguished him from Christians. Jewish communities had to pay enormous sums to ruling kings and princes so that they might claim their protection. They became the chattels of these kings and princes.

The period bred characteristics in the Jew some of which persist to this day. Cooped up in the ghetto, he turned to things of the mind for relaxation. The love of learning, respect for knowledge, and appreciation of art and music which are marked among Jews are conceivably the result of a tradition handed down to the modern Jew by his ancestor of the Middle Ages. There was little opportunity to indulge in the sports and pastimes of the time: hence the contempt which many Jews still have for those who make a fetish of games. In those hectic times it was all-important to have money. With money one might bribe one's way to safety and peace: hence an undue tendency to-day to place greater value on the things which money buys. You cannot go on treating people as Jews were treated without the development in them of hatred and contempt for their persecutors. Some of this doubtless lingers on to-day. It is impossible to have any respect for the quality of mind of a people which makes another race responsible for all its misfortunes.

Whether these generalisations are correct or not, these were the conditions which formed the background of the Jew until close on the end of the eighteenth century.

It was the French Revolution and the revolutionary wars which finally established the middle class as the most powerful class in the State. It was a revolution in the lot of the Jews as well, because *for the first time they*

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achieved political emancipation. This was an enormous step forward. For the first time the Jew was a citizen of the country in which he lived. But centuries of ghetto life had made their mark. The Jew who emerged from it was a strange, outlandish figure, the subject of much jest and curiosity from his Christian neighbours. It was obvious that a long time must elapse before he caught up with them. It says much for the adaptability of Jews that many of them acquired the spirit of the new age. Very soon Jews were prominent in science, art, industry, commerce, and the social and political life of Europe. They entered the professions; they crowded into the universities. The stock exchanges and markets echoed to their voices.

The defeat of Napoleon, and the reaction which set in after the Congress of Vienna, had immediate repercussions on the Jews of Europe. The liberties and freedom which they had gained after the Revolution were taken from them by the absolutist monarchs whose powers were restored to them by that reactionary Congress. Again it is necessary to ask if it is merely a coincidence that the restoration of feudalism should mean intensified persecution for the Jews.

But a new class had begun to emerge—a class which was destined to challenge the supremacy both of feudalism and the middle-class capitalist State. The factories, mines, and workshops which had changed the face of the earth had also changed the apprentices and workmen recruited from landless peasants into a large class of wage-labourers. They lived under the dreadful conditions which we know to have been characteristic of industrial England. They were unmercifully exploited and sweated. Their children at the age of six had to work for ten hours a day. Small wonder that they rebelled.

Painfully, through strikes and riots, the new class

began to apply itself to the task of achieving power in the political field. Just as the feudal ruling class resented the encroachment of the middle class, so, in turn, the middle class objected to the pretensions of the workers. The history of the last hundred years in all European countries is the history of a struggle for power between capitalist States among themselves and between the capitalist ruling class and the workers in each capitalist State.

Anti-Semitism flared up again, taking new forms in accordance with new conditions. Now the Jew was a Socialist, and Jewish Socialism was something horrible which threatened the safety of Christian civilisation. Later—horror of horrors—he was to become a Communist. And, to complicate the issue, he was made to play another rôle as well—that of the financial manipulator of Christian ruin. Then, as always, it was the old Morality plays, with the Jew doubling the rôles of all the villains.

By 1870 there was widespread anti-Jewish agitation in Germany and Austria. It grew to a crescendo of fury after the Franco-Prussian War, died down in the period of expansion and relative stability which marked the short-lived Imperialist stage, boiled over again in the chaotic, class-riven post-war Germany, and culminated in the present orgy of hatred.

Great Britain had reached the Imperialist stage long before other countries. All classes benefited by the exploitation of the Empire, and so the class struggle, which was marked in the early part of the nineteenth century by industrial violence and bloodshed, took on a more subdued note. Thus there was little or no anti-Semitism. British Jews began to believe that, whatever befell their race in Russia or Germany, they, at least, could look forward to peace.

The United States absorbed nearly two million Jews

from Eastern Europe in the thirty or forty years before the Great War. The country was forging ahead by leaps and bounds. There was an enormous demand for both labour and capital. Capitalism grew apace. And the Jew could be accommodated. Later, Immigration Quota Acts were enacted, limiting strictly the right of entry for immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe. There is a great deal of social ostracism of Jews in the United States to-day, and one or two attempts have been made to capitalise anti-Jewish sentiment politically.

In the necessarily superficial account of the evolution of the Jew in Europe which I have given here I have attempted to prove my point that the constant disturbing factor responsible for anti-Semitism is the class struggle. I have tried to show that each outburst against Jews was not due to the spontaneous appearance of mass hysteria in their Christian neighbours nor of a periodic realisation of the iniquity of Jews, but to a disturbance of social equilibrium in the State. I hope that I have not been so superficial that I shall be accused of making the stupid generalisation that anti-Semitism is due to "economics." I have tried to show, perhaps inadequately, that there are many inter-related factors which make up the class struggle. But the decisive and controlling factor lies in the periodic eruptions which distinguish the revolutionary phases in history.

This interpretation may be disputed. It may well be said that I have ignored other and more compelling considerations. I shall be satisfied if I have established that there is strong presumptive evidence in the past for the correctness of my theory.

I said earlier that my thesis is capable of scientific and controlled proof. Let us test the theory in practice.

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ANTI-SEMITISM, I have said, arises out of the class struggle, is perpetuated by it, and can disappear only when the class struggle has disappeared. Let me emphasise at this stage that I do not deny the importance of subsidiary factors which may serve to account for Jew-hatred in individual cases. One man may dislike Jews because of their religion (though I doubt whether as an isolated reason this ever made sense). Another man may hate his Jew because he regards him as having a different code of ethics. Jews may be unpopular with some people because Trotsky is a Jew, and so all Jews are Communists. On the other hand, the Rothschilds are Jews, too, and so all finance-capitalists are Jews, and this may explain the phobia of some Jew-haters. But I contend that all these things are excrescences, and incidental to the main cause, which is primary in the sense that once it is removed the minor manifestations go with it.

A patient infected by the germs of typhoid fever begins to show certain signs and symptoms. He runs a temperature, develops a rash, his heart action is enfeebled, and he becomes gravely ill. What would one say of the observer who told the patient: "You are ill because you have a temperature, a rash, and a feeble pulse?" Surely empiricism becomes science only when one says: "This man is ill because he has a Bacillus Typhosus infection." Treatment can now be conducted

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on rational lines, and, what is perhaps more important, steps can be taken to prevent the spread of the disease to others.

The only logical way to prove that the offending organism, in the case quoted, is the typhoid bacillus would be to inject some of the patient's blood into an experimental animal, though the actual methods employed in practice are simpler. Conclusive proof of the germ's responsibility for an epidemic would be to isolate the source of the infection (an infected dairyman, for example), remove it, and show that no fresh cases occur. In the same way, if we wish to establish that anti-Semitism is a product of the class struggle we must show that it vanishes when class struggles cease.

In the Soviet Union the abolition of the private ownership of the means of production has laid the first indispensable foundations for the construction of a classless society. Perhaps I should emphasise once more that the use of the word "class" here has a special connotation, and that a classless society means a society in which there is no one special group of individuals who, by their command over the productive resources of the country, are able to negative any development of that society which is contrary to their interests. In the Soviet Union it is no longer possible to discern a class of individuals who own the factories, mines, and fields, and another larger class dependent upon it for its existence. The tug-of-war which results from the conflicting interests of two such groups no longer exists. Production for use has displaced production for profit. Class struggles have given way to struggles against inefficiency, against illiteracy, against inadequate technique, against all those things which delay the consummation of a truly Socialist economy. Socialism can never be a success unless the Socialist community has a greater productive output

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than anything the world has hitherto seen. It is against the obstacles to such an achievement that the citizens of the Soviet Union contend, and in this struggle there is no need to invoke race-hatred or to invent "Aryan" races, with all its concomitant imbecilities.

There is no anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union. "In the Soviet Union," says Stalin, "anti-Semitism is regarded as a form of cannibalism." But it is important for us to see that this is no mere accident of Soviet policy, but that it is inherent in the outlook of Socialism on national problems. It is one of the clearest examples of the logic of Socialism that it alone can bring peace in a field which is otherwise characterised by ill-feeling and hatred. In effect, the contemporary Russian attitude to nationalism may be expressed in the following manner:

"We recognise that nationalism and the accentuation of racial differences are not permanent features of human history. Ultimately the interdependence of the world in material things must end in interdependence in things of the spirit. Nationalism will give way to internationalism. But we are not such fools as to believe that this can be achieved until those forces which perpetuate the differences between races are destroyed.

"We shall cease to exploit the more backward races in our country. We shall refrain from using our material superiority over them to crush their traditions, their cultures, and their right to develop their own resources. With Socialist co-operation we shall help the Georgians, the Kazaks, the Tajiks, the Armenians, the Buriat-Mongols, and the rest to build their own Socialist enterprises, to man their industries, schools, hospitals, and farms to their own advancement.

"We shall prove to them that we have no desire to enslave them, to Russify them, to exalt our language, our customs, and our traditions above theirs. When we

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have done this we shall have removed all cause for hostility between us. Then, and only then, we shall anticipate the development of a true internationalism—not the wishy-washy internationalism of Mr. H. G. Wells, with millions of bored rabbits living in aseptic glass cages, all wearing the same clothes, all speaking the same language, all eating the same food—a society in which the only sensible thing left for an intelligent person to do is to escape to the moon. We cannot forecast our future, but at least it will be a society in which there will be many cultures, many literatures, and many differences; a society Socialist in content and national in form. Whatever shape it takes, it will not be the drab, unexciting, idiotic existence which our fatuous creators of brave new worlds depict for us."

At this stage I would beg the reader to view the introduction of the Soviet Union into the argument in as unprejudiced a manner as possible. Soviet Russia is a Socialist country, and if we are to preserve the scientific approach to our problem we must of necessity examine what has happened to the Jews in that country. It should be possible to retain some measure of objectivity in such a discussion. After all, if the claim that racial antagonisms have disappeared in the Soviet Union can be substantiated, it is as well that we should know it, for heaven knows we have little enough to offer as a substitute.

The national policy of the Soviet Union has a definite practical basis. In the case of backward races, energetic steps are taken to educate as rapidly as possible a sufficient number of their own people to take up leading positions in the economy of the areas in which they live. Hospitals, schools, and universities are built and manned as far as possible by members of their own race. All official transactions are carried out in the language of the region. Where no written language exists, an alphabet

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based on the spoken language is created. Printing-presses are set up which publish the educational books and periodicals necessary to revive an indigenous culture. Writers, artists, technicians, and professional men and women are encouraged to help their countrymen to catch up with their more advanced neighbours. Finally, the industrial and agricultural framework of the country is developed to its fullest extent, so that the material resources of its people are expanded sufficiently to ensure a rapid rise in the standard of living.

Throughout, it must constantly be emphasised, there is no attempt made to secure the plums of office for other races.

At this juncture it is appropriate to deal with the criticism which is frequently directed against this modernisation of backward races. The squalor, dirt, disease, and ignorance characteristic of backward countries is hailed with squeals of delight by hurried tourists as "picturesque," and the introduction of modern technique as "vandalism." It is always interesting to observe the haste with which such tourists fly back to the sanitation, doctors, schools, and cleanliness of their own civilisations.

In this attitude to backward races there is no question of an official class, alien to the people they govern (India); no question of concessions, monopolies, and arrangements which serve to enrich an alien race only (Ceylon, Dutch East Indies, Kenya, Manchukuo, French Indo-China, Belgian Congo). There is, of course, a free interchange of products between the constituent Republics of the Soviet Union. There are no tariff barriers, no fears of the dumping of unwanted goods, because all goods are needed to build up the economy of the whole country. The greater the productive effort, the more goods are available for distribution. This is

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why such a policy can be carried out only under Socialism, for under a capitalist economy we have seen how a plethora of goods ("over-production") leads to crises; so that India must be discouraged from constructing textile-mills for fear that Lancashire mill-owners may have their profits diminished and Lancashire workers be thrown on the dole.

As a direct result of such a policy there is no talk of racial superiority, of the trusteeship over inferior races ("if we didn't stay in India the Indians would exterminate each other"). There is trusteeship, of course, but not of a nature where the guardian helps himself at the expense of the ward. And there is no call for the Pecksniffian pretence which covers such double-dealing with phrases which imply that the pleasant process of defrauding is an arduous task ("the White Man's Burden").

Those who are sceptical whether a national policy as outlined above is really in force in the U.S.S.R. may with advantage ask themselves the question: Is there really any reason why, granted a Socialist economy, there need be any other policy? Does it not seem the only logical and peaceful method of reconciling jealous national aspirations? And, if this is so, why should it be so difficult to believe that this is, in fact, Soviet policy? If a different state of affairs existed, would there not be uprisings of discontented Georgians, Ukrainians, Tajiks, and such like? The answer that overwhelming force keeps them in subjection under the Soviet yoke is not very convincing when we reflect that, strong as Japan, Britain, and France are, they cannot completely stifle the demands for national freedom in Manchukuo, India, and Syria. The Soviet Union has not found it necessary to maintain "peace" among its constituent peoples with the aid of bombing-planes (North-West Frontier),

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nor does it use the Cossacks, as Tsarist Russia did, to police disaffected areas. In the words of the advertisement, "There must be a reason."

How does the Jew come into the picture? In view of what I have just written, it is clear that anti-Semitism can have no place in such a society. The bitterest enemy of the Soviet Union does not dare to assert that a Soviet citizen suffers from disabilities by virtue of his Jewish race. I should make an exception here of Trotsky, who does assert it; but he has long ceased to be objective in his attitude to the Soviet Union.

After the Revolution the Jew in Russia differed from other Soviet citizens in one important respect. He lacked a territorial base which he could regard as his own; an area of land where he could live surrounded by his own people if he so desired. This was overcome with the establishment of Biro-Bijan, a large, sparsely populated area, as a Jewish Autonomous Region.

Pre-war Russia treated its Jews with less consideration than Nazi Germany does now. This is a fact which tends to be forgotten to-day. Civic restrictions, educational disabilities, and pogroms were the outward expressions of the deep hatred and contempt felt by Russians for their Jews. In the space of a few years all this has vanished. Again, "there must be a reason."

Before the war, what is now Poland formed part of the Russian Empire. Let us take the two areas on each side of the Russo-Polish frontier as material for the "control" experiment without which no scientific statement is worth the paper it is written on. On the Polish side of the frontier there are anti-Semitic parties, special economic measures directed against Jews, a demand for increased immigration facilities for Polish-Jewish immigration into Palestine to solve the "Jewish question," anti-Semitic riots in the universities, and a degree of poverty

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and destitution among Jews unparalleled in extent. On the Russian side of the frontier there are no economic restrictions, except against trade for profit, which applies equally to all Soviet citizens; no educational disabilities, no status of inferiority, no riots against Jews, and no insults and public attacks in the Press.

It must be remembered that the frontier is merely an arbitrary line drawn by the Versailles Treaty. Previous to this, Jews on both sides of the frontier shared all the disabilities in which Tsarist Russia showed itself such a worthy forerunner to Hitler Germany. Jews are found in all professions and trades in the Soviet Union. There are Jewish workers in industry, in collective farms, in the theatre and artistic fields, in the Press, in the diplomatic sphere, in the Red Army and Navy, and in the administrative and executive branches of government. Yet no cry is raised of "Jewish domination," a plaint which is made in all countries by every half-wit with a bee in his bonnet on the Jewish question and by every unscrupulous little thug with political ambitions.

What factors are responsible for this extraordinary difference? It cannot be explained on the grounds that Polish Jews are "undesirable" and Russian Jews "nice Jews." They were alike in culture, breeding, and economic status. In this respect the "control experiment" is ideal.

The answer is that the Soviet Union is a Socialist country. To those who are not mature enough politically to recognise Socialism when they see it, it may be pointed out that when capitalism is abolished in a country, when production is for use and not for profit, when the ownership of the means of production is in the hands of the community, and when its citizens are paid according to the quantity and quality of their work, *that country is a Socialist country*, querulous complaints from *The Times*,

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Mr. Hearst, and Trotsky notwithstanding. The Soviet Union is a Socialist country, and because it is a Socialist country, and for no other reason, there is no class struggle, no class antagonism, no conflict between a group which owns the mines, factories, and farms and a group utterly dependent on it for a living.

Poland, which has retained its capitalist economy, has undergone all the vicissitudes of other capitalist countries since the war. It has had boom times, depressions, unemployment, poverty, and a decline in production, just as other capitalist countries have had. It has strikes, riots in which the military are called out, a discontented proletariat, a starving peasantry, and Fascist dictatorship—in fact, all modern inconveniences. Poland is a class-riven State. Hence it is infected with virulent anti-Semitism.

It may be argued that the Soviet Union is Jew-dominated, and that its policy of non-discrimination against Jews is due to the fact that Jews exercise a dictatorship over the country. There are three million Jews in the Soviet Union among a population of one hundred and seventy millions. The suggestion that this once bitterly despised and persecuted minority has in the brief space of twenty years subjected a vast country, surely entitles its protagonist to a place alongside the shade of the late lamented Lady Houston.

The question may be asked: Is there any guarantee that this happy state of affairs for the Jew in the Soviet Union will last? Is it not possible that in the course of development we may see outbursts against the Jews? On previous occasions in history Jews have congratulated themselves on a seeming end to their persecution. May this not be a similar delusion?

To ask the question betrays an unwillingness to accept the thesis that Jew-hatred is a product of the class

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struggle. For, once this is recognised to be correct, it must follow that only the abolition of the class struggle can end it. In that case it is clear that anti-Semitism can only return in Russia if Socialism is destroyed. Indeed, we may say that on the day that anti-Semitism shows itself in the Soviet Union the doleful critics who assert that the Soviet Union is returning to capitalism will be vindicated.

But it should surely be obvious that if there were any danger of a reversal of Soviet policy towards Jews it would occur when *almost every other country* was infected with the virus. Yet we have the fact that whilst the relationship between Jews and non-Jews is steadily deteriorating in Britain, America, the Dominions, and most of Europe, it is unaffected in the Soviet Union. During the Zinoviev-Kamenev trials, in which almost all the defendants were Jews, not a single voice was raised in Soviet Russia to suggest that Jews as a body were responsible for the misdeeds of the individuals concerned. Note the contrast with Germany, where the assassination of the Nazi agent Gustloff by a Jewish student in Switzerland was regarded by the *Führer* as a declaration of war against Germany by the Jewish race.

The statement is often made that it will take many years to eradicate the hate and ill-feeling between Jew and Gentile, since these are imbibed at school and in the home. Yet, in a country where hatred of the Jew was universal, only a few years of Socialism have sufficed to make it seem the memory of a nightmare.

Article 123 of the New Soviet Constitution states:

“The equality of the rights of the citizens of the U.S.S.R., irrespective of their nationality or race, in all fields of economic, State, cultural, social, and political life is an irrevocable law.

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"Any direct or indirect restriction of these rights, or, conversely, the establishment of direct or indirect privileges for citizens on account of the race or nationality to which they belong, as well as any propagation of racial or national exceptionalism, or hatred and contempt is punishable by law."

The conclusion which we arrived at in theory—namely, that anti-Semitism was a surface manifestation of the deeper class struggle—is proved in practice to be correct. For where there is no class struggle there is no anti-Semitism.

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AMONG ALL THE MISREPRESENTATIONS and distortions of life in the Soviet Union to which we are treated, very few have dared to assert that the status of the Jew is inferior to that of any other Soviet citizen. For it is the easiest thing in the world to prove that there are no pogroms, no anti-Jewish propaganda, and no economic exclusion.

But one criticism is frequently heard. Jews who are opposed to the Soviet solution of the problem maintain that the price paid for emancipation is too high. Soviet policy, they declare, may save the Jew, but it destroys Judaism. In exchange for his freedom from persecution he must submerge his identity. The traditions, religion, and culture which characterise Judaism disappear in the process of socialisation, so that the final result is not a free Jew, but a free Russian or a free Georgian and so on.

This objection, if it were sound, would be a serious criticism of Socialism. We cannot ignore the fact that a nation, race, or group of people linked together by common interests and a common tradition cannot easily be persuaded to commit hara-kiri. The will to survive is real even though it may be said that the tie is mainly a sentimental one. This is why those who have cheerfully asked the Jews to solve their problem by assimilation with their neighbours are ignoring not only practical considerations, but more intangible though

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not less potent objections to such a course. In practice, no nation will of set deliberation submerge its identity, quite apart from the difficulties which arise through the unwillingness to submit to the process without protest of those with whom the Jews are asked to assimilate. *Vide Germany.*

If it is true, then, that the process of socialisation has demanded greater sacrifices from the Jews than from the other peoples of the Soviet Union, that from being an identifiable group they have merged into a shapeless, grey, and neutral people indistinguishable from the others, then those who oppose this solution of the Jewish question have a powerful argument. But is it true?

It will be agreed that the characteristics which make up the personality of a nation are: its past history, its traditions, its literature, art, customs, food, drink, and conventions, based on the environment which surrounds it. How are these factors influenced by Socialism?

I have said little here of religion. This is not because I regard it as a negligible matter in a discussion such as this, but because it has lost the wider significance which it had in earlier times on the relationship between Christians and Jews. Torquemada had Jews killed because he wanted to save their souls. And in the Middle Ages a Jew might sometimes save his skin, if not his soul, by changing his religion. But to-day even this way of escape is barred. If all the Jews in the world became Christians, Mohammedans, or German pagans they would not find salvation in the eyes of their enemies.

It is useless to think that the Jewish religion has any function in the causation of anti-Semitism other than as a factor emphasising Jewish strangeness. But this does not mean that their religious beliefs and customs are not precious to many Jews. The question to decide is whether the Jewish religion is the only religion which

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has altered in the transition from capitalism to Socialism. And from the embittered laments of popes and archbishops we know that it has not been unique in this respect.

This is not the place to speculate on the future of religion in the classless society. It may be that the new idea of religion will concern itself more with the lot of man on earth than with his future destination. It may be that we shall see religious leaders of the future with sufficient courage to speak out against evil in high places before they think it quite safe to do so. It is even possible that we shall be spared the spectacle of consummate asses in clerical garb justifying the expenditure of millions of pounds on armaments on the ground that *one* predatory Imperialist country may be trusted to act "the policeman with a truncheon" against other predatory Imperialist States. But we may be certain of one thing: those who use their privileged positions as dignitaries of a Church to uphold reaction, poverty, and oppression must not expect their accidental relationship to religion to yield them similar power and authority in the new society.

Article 124 of the New Soviet Constitution reads:

"To ensure to citizens freedom of conscience, the Church in the U.S.S.R. is separated from the State and the school from the Church. Freedom to perform religious rites and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognised for all citizens."

Priests, rabbis, and parsons are no longer disfranchised. They are no longer regarded as enemies of the régime. Their former rôle as enemies of Socialism has ended. Their class affiliation made them enemies of the emergent class, and it was because of their open support of Tsarism and feudal reaction that they suffered, and not because

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they preached the love of God. They may preach openly now because they are no longer likely to confuse the love of God with reverence of the capitalist system.

Jews who bewail the weakening of Jewish religious ties in the U.S.S.R. must ask themselves whether it is not part of a process discernible everywhere. Ritual subtleties, rabbinical law, and Talmudic studies have, it is true, very little hold on the Jew in the Soviet Union, but have they very much more outside the Soviet Union? Having answered this, Jews must consider whether they can reasonably expect their religious code to remain unaltered during a transformation of the whole of society. In other words, when every sort of barrier between Jew and non-Jew has been lowered is it not natural that many of the orthodoxies which are themselves the product of these barriers will die out?

The hard facts remain. Synagogues are open in the U.S.S.R. Jewish religious festivals are celebrated. Jews, in common with other Soviet citizens, have freedom of worship. It is perfectly true that these rights are exercised less and less, but surely this means that Jews of their own free will are less and less attracted by them.

As to language and literature, it is admitted that Yiddish flourishes, that schools and official transactions are conducted in Yiddish throughout those areas where Jews form an appreciable portion of the population. Thousands of books and many periodicals are published in Yiddish. The grievance that Hebrew was boycotted is now being remedied.

Biro-Bijan has been proclaimed an independent Jewish Autonomous Province, with the promise that it will be turned into an independent republic as soon as its population warrants this step. The underlying purpose is to satisfy the national aspirations of a people without a territorial base of their own. In other words, if a

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Soviet Jew wanted to feel that there was some area in the Union where the whole social fabric was almost entirely Jewish, where he could be completely at home among his own people, hear his own language spoken, read his own books, go to schools and universities run by Jews, work in factories and on farms staffed by Jews, and administer the political life of his own territory, he would find this in Biro-Bijan.

There have been many sneers and much misunderstanding about the colonisation of Biro-Bijan. The country is as large as Great Britain, consists mainly of undeveloped ground, and is poorly populated. It is situated near the scene of possible hostilities between Japan and the U.S.S.R., and the fantastic suggestion has been made that in the event of war the hardships of the Jews in Biro-Bijan will be used to win the sympathies of the Jews in Europe and America for the Soviet cause. In establishing this autonomous area for the Jews the Soviet Government could not, without violating its fundamental principles, turn out the indigenous inhabitants of more attractive territories for the benefit of the Jews. If they did this they would put themselves on the same plane as the Zionists who ask that the Arabs should give up Palestine and Trans-Jordania on the score that they have sufficient territory elsewhere. Proposals such as these have earned for Zionists the enmity of the Arabs; a similar policy would make enemies for the Jews in the Soviet Union.

Inevitably, then, a new colony in the U.S.S.R. would have to be undeveloped, and rather remote from the settled areas. How long it will remain so, surely depends upon the settlers themselves.

Impatient internationalists like Mr. H. G. Wells may deplore this tendency to perpetuate water-tight compartments; but realists cannot afford to ignore the fact

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that the majority of human beings still display a modified form of gregariousness. The impatient ones, however, may take consolation from the circumstance that the Jews of the Soviet Union do not appear to be flocking in large numbers to Biro-Bijan. Apparently their national aspirations do not influence them powerfully enough to induce them to go there. But since they are free to do so if they wish, and free to stay where they are if they wish, the only explanation must be that under Socialism the tendency to huddle together becomes weakened.

In summary the Jews in Socialist Russia are free to practise the rites of their religion; they are free to use their own languages; they are free to live together and to manage their own affairs, free to develop their cultural heritage. They are *not* free to attack Socialist freedom or to revive capitalism, but these disabilities they share with all citizens of the U.S.S.R.

The complaint that under such circumstances Jews lose their racial identity on closer examination comes to this: in a State which has laid the foundations of a Socialist order the Jew changes, and is no longer recognisable by Jews who do not live in a Socialist country. But in this respect what has happened to the Jew has happened to the Ukrainian, the Volga German, the Mongol, the Tajik. The Volga German is a different individual from the Nazi. He is none the less a German, and possibly a superior one at that.

Man has changed his environment, and environment has changed man. Which is the answer, of course, to the sententious remark that "you can't change human nature." And just as the Chassidic Jew differed from the Jew of the Haskalah (each a product of changing times), and the Jew of the ghetto from the post-French Revolutionary Jew, so the Jew of to-morrow must differ from the Jew of to-day.

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"But," says the Zionist, "it is just this change which I resent. This transformation you speak of produces a Jew who is divorced from his fellow-Jews, and to whom the ancient traditions of his people are not vital realities. If I must choose between a future like his and my own, I prefer the present." Which is all very well if only the choice rested with him. But it does not. The issue which faces the whole of humanity makes no exception in the case of the Jew.

It is true that in France, America, and most parts of the British Empire the middle-class Jew may still believe that he can retain the blessings of democracy without sacrifice. He is due for enlightenment, as is the middle-class non-Jew. He may be content to have himself discussed as a "problem," regarding it as the price he has to pay for preserving his present identity. But he will have some difficulty in recognising his identity if Europe is overcome by Fascism.

There remains the objection which is raised by both Jews and Christians. We are told that Socialism implies the destruction of individual liberty.

It is an astonishing feature of modern times that the very man who begs you gravely to give him liberty or give him death is the same man who tells you that he has been unable to take a holiday for years because his work does not allow it or his finances do not permit it. It is the same man who grieves because he cannot afford to give his children a decent education. It is the same man who neglects to consult a doctor for fear that he will be told to stop work and so lose his job. It is the same man who cannot afford to get married until he is too old to do so. It is the same man who cannot persuade his wife to have children because the expense of raising them is terrifying. It is the same man who is haunted to his dying days by the spectre of dependants left without an

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income. These men and women who, throughout their lives, are completely oblivious of their chains, are the first to talk of something which they vaguely call "individual liberty."

If they looked at the real world instead of the fantastic world of their imagination they would see individual liberty hemmed in everywhere by restrictions which an untenable economic system creates for them. They would see agricultural labourers and workers in factories who, all their lives, do not travel beyond the confines of a village or town. They would see a whole world without hope and without stability, feverishly piling up armaments for a war which it believes will inevitably destroy civilisation.

Pavlov conditioned his dogs so that when he sounded a gong they began to salivate. The middle classes of the world are so conditioned that when the words "individual liberty" are mentioned they leap to defend their aspidochelons for fear that the horrid Socialists will take them away.

It is fantastic, this complete ignorance of what really constitutes liberty. In 1832, slavery was abolished in South Africa. Before this happened, the colonists fed their slaves and saw to it that they were not overworked, because slaves were valuable. A slave might fetch a hundred pounds.

The slaves were freed. After a century their descendants live in squalid slums. Their children are riddled with tuberculosis. Their educational advancement and their economic activities are hampered by all kinds of social and legal restrictions. Are these people really free?

We are told that in the British Empire as opposed to the "dictatorship" countries there is real freedom. India, with a population of three hundred millions, has just been granted a constitution which is complacently

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referred to as an instalment of democracy. Thirteen per cent of this huge population are enfranchised, and, to make sure that there shall be no danger of Indians achieving real independence, the Federal clauses in the constitution tie the rest of India to the feudal areas ruled by autocratic princes where dictatorship such as Hitler never dreamt of exists. Control of finance, fiscal and foreign policy effectively rests with Britain. Would Indians be worse off if they were ruled by Mussolini?

I shall be told that I have used the Jewish question as a peg on which to hang Communist propaganda, and that the cure which I offer is worse than the disease. I do not see how a theory which can be proved up to the hilt can be ignored. Socialism has brought peace and freedom to the conflicting nationalities of the Soviet Union. How can one pretend that it is irrelevant to the issue at a time when everywhere we see nothing but nationalism, which can only satisfy its "national honour" by encompassing the dishonour of other nations?

Socialism will not solve all the troubles of the world. Which is fortunate, perhaps, for we shall not be able to measure happiness without the standard of unhappiness. But it will give us a world in which human dignity will be possible for Jew, Christian, Chinaman, Negro, and Indian. In the process they will change. Their traditions will be adapted to new conditions. Their art and culture will take on new features. There will be many to regret the passing of the old world. We need not grieve too bitterly for them. They will have their revenge when the new of to-day becomes the old of to-morrow.

The solution is not easy. It is perhaps far distant. But it is the *only* solution. If the cure is painful and drastic, the blame must be laid upon history, which has always been a crude surgeon.

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WE SAW that one of the inevitable consequences of the present anti-Semitic wave must be the growth of Zionism among Jews. Driven out of one large country, refused admission to almost every other country, ridiculed, insulted, and despised almost universally, it is small wonder that Jews turn to Zionism as a way out.

"We are not wanted. We are too weak to fight," they say. "Very well! We shall build our own home. Here we shall be beholden to no one. We shall build Palestine for the future, so that our children will know in time to come that there is one place where peace and freedom await them. And in the course of time, if we have built well, we shall claim equality of treatment and respect from other nations."

Jews would not be human if they did not respond to the promise of these words, and the majority of them are firmly convinced to-day that Zionism is the one constructive effort they can make to counteract their perilously exposed position. They hope to establish in Palestine a national home, where Jews who are unable or unwilling to live in other countries may settle freely. They hope also, when they have laid a solid foundation for their national home, that other nations will respect their labours and begin to treat their Jewish minorities with justice and toleration.

Their argument may not unfairly be summarised in the following manner: "We are everywhere in a

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minority. We have had hitherto to rely on the good offices of other nations to speak on our behalf when we have been oppressed. We have been fortunate in the past that some Governments have stood by us. Lately, however, we have been forgotten. Sympathy is not enough. The League Commission has failed to take any practical steps which might enable Jews to leave those countries which discriminate against them. We are treated in this manner, our protests ignored, because we are weak and unrepresented.

"We are told that we are parasites, that we are fit for trade and commerce only. We know that this is not true. But in our own country we shall show the world that we can do everything that others have done. Then we shall be in a position to represent our people and demand justice for them. Once our anomalous position has ended we shall be a normal people, and anti-Semitism will die out slowly. If we had had a country of our own we should never have been the sport of Jew-baiters throughout our history."

As stated above, the argument is unanswerable. If the Jews had somehow, in the course of their history, established themselves in a country of their own, where even a substantial minority of them could have been accommodated, it is extremely doubtful if anti-Semitism would have existed to-day. Here and there one might have found anti-Jewish feeling, as one finds anti-Irish feeling in some places, but there could not have been the phenomenon we know to-day. Those Jews who were persecuted in one country would have made their way to their own country, and so in the course of time there would have been established some form of equilibrium. If in such circumstances many Jews still lived outside their own State, it could only be because their presence was not resented. The requirements of international

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trade and the sanctity of markets could conceivably have acted as deterrents to discrimination against Jewish nationals in other countries.

This being so, Zionists who urge the speedy establishment of a Jewish homeland are theoretically correct in their assumption that the eventual metamorphosis of Palestine will result in just such a happy transformation as we have pictured above. The class struggle will go happily on its way, and Jews will face its vicissitudes as Germans, Englishmen, Americans, and Spaniards face it. The Jewish ruling class will find its privileges assailed by Jewish workers in field, farm, and factory, and the Hitlers of to-morrow will have to wage their war against Communism without being able to drag in the bogey of the "International Jew." In fact, we should in all probability find close co-operation between them and the Jewish ruling class in the common task of putting down "subversive" movements.

What, then, makes the theoretical position of the Zionists untenable? It is this: *they have arrived at this solution too late*. It was a possible solution before capitalism had developed into monopoly-capitalism and imperialism, before the world had been partitioned into colonies, dominions, protectorates, spheres of influence, and strategic points. The purchase or conquest of Palestine, supposing that Jewry had pursued a policy of colonisation as a corporate venture, was theoretically possible at earlier periods. The difficulties in the way of such a policy are insuperable to-day.

The most important factor militating against it is the attitude of the Arabs. The political theorist will find himself quite unable to grasp realities unless he rids himself of the temptation to assume that the world is static. The Arab to-day is not the Arab of pre-war days. Turkey had ruled the Arabs for four hundred years,

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and when the yoke was shaken off they were disinclined to resume their rôle of a subject and oppressed people. They had been induced by Great Britain (acting through T. E. Lawrence) to fight against the Central Powers, on the understanding that the Allies would help them to establish an independent Arab State.

Before the war, Palestine had been part of the Turkish province of Syria, and had been inhabited by Arabs for many hundreds of years. Jewish colonisation began very slowly in the forty years preceding the war, and when Arab nationalism became a factor of importance Palestine was naturally included in the scope of Arab nationalist ambitions.

The Balfour Declaration, and the various secret arrangements made between the Allies and the Arab leaders, have been the subject of acrimonious discussion during the last few years. There is no doubt that conflicting promises were made to Jews and Arabs under the stress of a war where every method to ensure victory was used. A case can be made out to prove that both Jews and Arabs were deceived, and that both possess claims which are morally and legally justifiable.

There is, fortunately, no need for us to enter the maze of bluebooks and white-papers and Palestine Commission reports which encumber this question. They are, in the main, ridiculous attempts to square the circle. The promises made cannot be kept without indulging in sharp practice, and the post-war history of Palestine shows clearly enough the dilemma in which British diplomacy is placed as a result of the extravagant bribes held out to Jews and Arabs.

The practical facts are that the Arab nation wishes to be independent, that it regards Palestine as part of an independent Arab State, and that it is uncompromisingly hostile to the policy of building up a national home for

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the Jews in Palestine, even if such a policy implies due regard to the political and economic rights of Arabs living in Palestine.

To this Zionists reply that Arabs have enough territory in Trans-Jordania, Syria, and Nejd, that Jewish immigration has benefited the Palestinian Arabs enormously, that Palestine from being a desolate neglected area has become a fruitful land solely through the sacrifices of the Jewish people, that they were induced to make these sacrifices in the naïve belief that the promises of British statesmen, unlike those of other countries, were genuinely meant, and that restriction of the rights of entry of Jews into Palestine would be a serious breach of contract.

None of these arguments can seriously be disputed. Palestine has been industrialised and its agriculture modernised. Many Arabs have benefited through Zionism. It is true that a new class of landless Arabs has been created, and that many of these peasants have been transformed into industrial workers, but proletarianisation of the peasant is a familiar process in a country undergoing industrialisation.

But along with this change-over from the feudal rule of the Turkish régime there has occurred the usual appearance of unemployed workers and labour struggles. There is no doubt that Palestine has undergone a revolutionary change since the settlement of Jews, and that improved sanitation and the provision of schools and hospitals have benefited Arab as well as Jew.

Why, then, do Arabs object to Zionism? For the same reason that the Zionists object to Arab nationalism. Zionists may point to the benefits which Arabs derive from Jewish immigration. But the Arabs remain unimpressed. German Jews may argue with justice that they were an asset to Germany, that their artists, writers,

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scientists, and industrial leaders brought great benefits to Germany. Can they persuade the Nazis to accept their argument? The Arabs want an independent Arab State, with full control of their political and economic lives, and no persuasion of the advantages of a British Mandate operating a pseudo-impartial guardianship over them and the Jews is likely to change their views. They are prepared to fight for this, and, if they give in temporarily, it is only the British Army which induces them to do so.

To contend that this intransigent Arab nationalism is the result of political agitation conducted by a few unscrupulous Arab politicians financed by Powers with an axe to grind in the Mediterranean is to indulge in wishful thinking. There were Arab uprisings in 1920, 1921, 1925, 1929, 1933, and 1936. The general strike of 1936 was in reality a minor war against the Jews and against the British Government as the Mandatory Power. Agitators can achieve a great deal, but when a whole people is prepared to face bombing-planes and machine-guns at their instigation they are more than agitators; they are leaders.

This is the real situation, and no amount of sophistry will serve to obscure it. Arab and Jewish nationalisms clash, and the conflict between them can only be settled by force. This may be denied. Many prominent Zionists have contended that a peaceful solution is possible, and that if only the extreme Arab nationalists would cease stirring up the Arab masses a reasonable compromise could be achieved. But, again, what are the facts? Zionists want Palestine to be a country where Jews are admitted freely, and where they may seek refuge from persecution. They may reluctantly concede the point that immigration should be regulated by the economic needs of the country. But their ultimate aim is to arrive

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at a state of affairs where Jews will be welcome to settle freely in Palestine. If this is not their aim, then they are betraying their followers. A national home which restricts the admission of its own people is a cynical mockery. For this reason Zionists, if they are to be true to their ideals, must ceaselessly demand that Jews be allowed to enter Palestine with as little hindrance as possible.

In other words, the Jewish population must grow at the expense of the Arab, and, in the course of time, must outnumber the Arab. And the Arabs know this. They fear it because it means, under a capitalist economy, the political and economic domination of the Jews. This is why their constant cry is that it is only possible to arrive at a compromise with Zionism if immigration of Jews is restricted.

It may be true that the Arab is temporarily benefiting from the Jewish invasion, but he does not see it in this light. What he does see is that Jewish trade unions urge upon their employers the employment of Jewish workers only; that, very naturally no doubt, Jewish manufacturers and farmers get preference from Jewish customers. In the development stage there may be a demand for Arab labour and a market for Arab agricultural products, but the far-seeing Arab can view with apprehension only an influx of land-hungry and proletarian Jews. This is because Palestine has a capitalist economy. The distinguishing feature of capitalist economics is that it is based on scarcity. If too many people are available for useful work, if too much food is produced, this system breaks down, and millions must starve and be thrown out of work before it will begin to work again.

So Arabs fear that an increase in the number of Jews in Palestine may mean unemployment and starvation for them. They may be wrong in this assumption. It is possible that an extension of Palestinian trade to adjoining

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countries may stimulate the demand for capital and labour so much that there will be ample room for Jew and Arab. But the Arab will not face the risk. He does not concede the right of the Jew to regard Palestine as a national home, and, if there are risks to be taken in the future, he prefers to be the dominant partner, and he can do so only if the Jews are kept out.

One may deplore all this. The Arabs may be told that they have so much territory outside Palestine that they could easily spare the small country which Palestine is. But can anyone seriously imagine that such pleas are likely to be successful, especially when Palestine possesses the best ports and is the most developed part of the original Arab States?

These are the hard, bitter facts. It is childish to imagine that anything but force, or the threat of force, can settle the issue, though this will not prevent solemn Commissions of Enquiry from producing ponderous reports in which the actual facts will be hidden under a mass of verbiage. Palestine to-day enjoys comparative peace only when a Royal Commission is wending its majestic way through the country. When troops are withdrawn, reality returns. Indeed, I make the British Government a present of the suggestion that they preserve the peace in Palestine by arranging for a permanent Commission of Enquiry.

Since force, under present conditions, is the sole determinant of the question, the solution depends upon those who can most effectively wield force. And at the moment this means that the final decision rests with the British Government.

The factors which determine the attitude of the British Government are ultimately the interests of Great Britain. Lord Melchett has pointed to the advantages which Great Britain would derive from large-scale migration

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of Jews into Palestine, where "at the eastern end of the Mediterranean a link of Empire could be constituted between East and West which could by its man-power, wealth, and equipment make itself impregnable, and provide at no expense to Britain a permanent naval air base." And he gives as an extra inducement the likelihood that such an arrangement would prevent the Leftward drift in politics of the hard-pressed Jews of Poland, Rumania, and Hungary.

The argument might commend itself to an Imperialist British Government were it not that it ignored two things: the reaction of other Imperialist Powers to such a policy, and the reception which the scheme would get from the Arabs. The plan would undoubtedly strengthen Britain's command over the Mediterranean and safeguard the route to India, but it would ensure the hostility of the Arabs, and they would be supported by other Powers with ambitions in the East.

Britain cannot afford to antagonise the Arab nation. The Arab revolt of 1936 meant the despatch of a formidable army. It follows, then, that the attitude of Britain towards the conflict between Jew and Arab can at best be one of uneasy equilibrium, swaying now to the Arab and now to the Jew. And always in the background the British Army and the Imperialist interests of Great Britain must have the final decision, and not abstract notions of justice for Arab or Jew.

How can it be otherwise? There may be periods of tranquillity, cumbersome truces, and patched-up peace, but never for long. And with the tremendous *tempo* of international events to-day these interludes grow shorter and shorter. Lord Melchett's way out leads to bloodshed and disorder, to civil war in Palestine and constant ferment in the East.

Suggestions have been made that the mandate over

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Palestine should be transferred to other Powers; Italy, Poland, and America have been mentioned. Such notions can be seriously entertained by lunatics only. The port of Haifa has become of immense strategic importance for the British Empire, since it is the terminus for the Mosul pipe-line. A proposal to hand over the Mandate would meet with armed opposition from Great Britain.

Those who hope for a solution of the Jewish question in Palestine are doomed to disappointment. Jewish aspirations in Palestine are the helpless playthings of inter-Imperial rivalries and conflicting national ambitions. The class struggle, which produces antagonism between rival empires and makes nationalist strivings incompatible with peace, is inexorable. It has pursued the Jews throughout their history, and threatens to undo them in the one collective enterprise they have undertaken to rid themselves of its consequences.

What is one to say of so-called statesmen who make pretty speeches to the Jews, flattering their achievements in Palestine and encouraging them in their tragic hopes of making it a haven from persecution? It is a bitter truth that the statesman of our day is a man who leaves posterity to shoulder the responsibilities which he is incapable of facing.

The foundations of a Jewish nation cannot successfully be laid in Palestine under the constant threat of war and civil war. The present state of things is governed by the Micawber spirit: we must go ahead; somehow salvation will come. Paving the Palestinian swamps with gold has not prevented the progressive degradation of the status of Jews outside. Palestine may one day provide spiritual impetus to the Jew, but it will only be a Socialist Palestine which can do it. And we may venture the opinion that in a Socialist world the candidates for admission to Socialist Palestine will be well under "the absorptive

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capacity of the country," in that phrase beloved of Royal Commissions who want to keep Jews out and must look for a gentlemanly way of doing it. The reluctance of the Jews in the U.S.S.R. to go to Biro-Bijan may be equalled by the reluctance of the Jews of Socialist Britain, France, and Germany to go to Palestine. Whether this prediction is accurate or not, the fact remains that it is only under such conditions that Jews will be welcomed by Arabs in Palestine. In the meantime, all talk of "renewing national pride and greatness," of "building a civilisation to synthesise the achievements of East and West," of "establishing a Fifth Dominion" as a prop of Empire in the East, is romantic moonshine.

The outcome in Palestine depends upon the outcome of the issue which hangs like a gigantic question-mark over the whole of humanity to-day: Socialism and the classless society, or that destruction which Mr. H. G. Wells, the celluloid Cassandra, so often predicts.

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THIS IS THE JEWISH QUESTION in its stark reality. Peace and security for Jews depends upon peace and security for non-Jews. The one can never be achieved for long without the other. And, even if all Jews were unimpeachably virtuous, loyal, industrious, honest, beautiful, cultured, modest, and guaranteed free from contamination with Marxism, this would still be axiomatic.

It becomes incredibly tiresome to watch the efforts of those who attempt to counter the attacks of the anti-Semite by pointing to the virtues of some Jews. The bore, often enough himself a Jew, who repeats Burke's tag that you cannot indict a whole race, and says sententiously that there are many good Jews, though, of course, there are bad Jews, would see, if he were honest with himself, that what he really means is something quite different: he is prepared to be magnanimous about the bad Jews for the sake of the good ones. What he cannot see is that the posing of the question in this manner implies that Jews are a race of creatures apart; for no one, unless he were an idiot, would say: "There are good Frenchmen and bad Frenchmen. There are good Americans and bad Americans." Merely to say that there are good Jews and bad Jews implies that there are very few of the former.

The whole approach is superficial. It is the easiest thing in the world to prove that people whom you dislike

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for some reason or another lack virtues which you yourself possess. Turn up British and French newspapers of the war period and read the solemn editorials which made the German nation appear to be a criminal throw-back in the history of civilisation. If the Hitlerisation of Germans has not entirely destroyed their sense of humour they would extract diversion and instruction from the comparison between their *Führer's* description of the Jewish race and, say, any editorial in the *Daily Mail* on the character of the German nation during the war years.

Now, since the accession of Hitler to power, the Conservative Press of Great Britain and the United States is filled with remorse. We are told that it is impossible to keep a cultured and great people like the Germans in subjection, and that they are the bulwarks of Western civilisation. The interesting feature of all this is that it is these very newspapers which hounded the democratic post-war German Government to its doom. This Government, which attempted the impossible tasks of appeasing the fantastic Reparation demands of the Allies and the reconstruction of a country ruined by war and blockade, was pursued with a venom which is reserved now for the Soviet Union. This sudden transformation of Germans from Huns into bulwarks of civilisation is inexplicable until we remember that loyalty to one's country in our epoch has given way to loyalty to one's class: and that the Germany of Hitler is a bulwark, not of civilisation, but of monopoly-capitalism.

I said at the outset that the Jewish question is primarily not a Jewish question. Nothing that Jews of their own accord can do will solve the Jewish question or produce the classless society. This is not defeatism. It is the logical product of historical circumstances. But this is no excuse for despair or for week-kneed submission.

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If the analysis given here has any validity at all, it is obvious that the fight for freedom from persecution is not a task for Jews alone. The vast majority of mankind have every reason for being their allies in this fight. It is a lack of understanding which divides their ranks.

There are many non-Jews who hate anti-Semitism instinctively merely because, as decent human beings, they loathe cruelty, hatred, and persecution of the weak. Many genuine religious-minded and liberal people are shocked at the intolerance and viciousness of attacks on Jews. The vast majority of these would be as shocked if they were told that if they really wished to see the end of such things they would be forced to oppose Fascism relentlessly. They do not as yet see that Fascism is the enemy of progress, of tolerance, of peace, and of every decent value which has kept mankind on the move. Hitler, Mussolini, and all Fascist apologists claim that Fascism ends class war and replaces it by a conception of national unity in which selfishness is banished and each individual sinks his own petty interests in the nobler interests of the nation. If this were true, if Fascism really meant the end of the class struggle, then the humiliation and destruction of sixteen million Jews would be worth while, for the ultimate benefit to humanity would transcend that of a small minority of people who would scarcely be missed.

But what has Fascism accomplished that can make us believe its claims? Fascism, we are told, has regenerated the German people and restored their national dignity. It has made Italy a powerful nation and given them punctual trains. It has given courage to Germans and Italians whose spirit had been destroyed for many years. Suppose all this is true. Are these things really worth the anxiety with which hundreds of millions of human beings view each week-end that Herr Hitler retires for spiritual

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inspiration to Berchtesgaden? Is it not a fact that since the restoration of German honour Europe has been turned into an armed camp? A few years ago the militaristic clods who talked of ensuring peace by preparing for war were laughed at and ridiculed in every country. To-day we listen humbly to the same louts whose stupidity has brought us to our present pass. What is the reason if it is not Fascism, and its glorification of war, which gives them a handle to mislead us? It is the Fascist countries which have flouted the League of Nations. It is Mussolini who talks of bearing the olive-branches of peace on eight million bayonets.

Do we have to acquiesce in the bombing, gassing, and massacre of Abyssinians so that Italians should feel their honour restored? Must we stand by while Germans murder democracy in Spain in order that they may no longer bear the stigma of a defeated people?

The Fascist nation, we are told, is united in sacrifice. The economic situation in Germany is bad. Guns are needed more than butter. There is a shortage of fats. A shortage of fats means rickets for growing children; it means a diminished resistance to tuberculosis. Do all Fascist citizens share this shortage of fats? Are the children of the rich in Germany as exposed to the danger of rickets and tuberculosis as the children of the poor? Even if it is true that this state of affairs is due to the wickedness of the outside world, which refuses to give colonies to Germany, is it the German workers or the German bankers, industrialists, and stockbrokers who must tighten their belts? Has the class war disappeared in Germany, or is it masked only?

We know that strikes occur in France, Britain, and the United States. It is the only weapon that their workers have against long hours and low wages. True, they have

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sometimes to face tear-gas and armed men as a consequence. Still, they strike. It is not yet illegal to strike. No one in his senses will maintain that German workers are better off than British, French, or American workers. Is it not reasonable to assume that they do not strike now because they dare not? And if force is necessary to keep them from striking, does it not prove that the class struggle exists under Fascism in spite of Fascist claims?

Fascism is the enemy of the Jew. But it is also the enemy of peace, of progress and liberty. Those who would fight for peace, progress, and liberty must not be deflected from the struggle, because in so doing they also fight the battle of the Jew. Hate the Jew, if you must, but do not allow your hatred to make you the victim of the Fascist who, on the plea that he also hates the Jew, makes you his accomplice in worse crimes.

"This is all very well," the reader may say, "but if you expect us to put up with revolution and class warfare merely in order to solve the Jewish question you are asking too much. We have no intention of destroying our society in order that you may fit into it more comfortably. If you are pleased with the lot of the Jew in the Soviet Union, why not go there? We hold no brief for either Fascism or Communism. We shall guard the democracy which is our cherished heritage, and in which the Jew is not so badly off. We shall certainly not agitate for classless societies in order to oblige you."

The misunderstandings which arise in the course of an argument are invariably due to the fact that we give names to institutions and things. The institutions and things may change; the names seldom, if ever. So that we may find ourselves worshipping at the shrine of democracy and be quite unaware of a change in the conditions governing that democracy.

Merely to ask for the retention of the democratic State

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to-day lands one into conflict with Fascism. We may say, "We want neither Fascism nor Communism. We mean to keep our democracy." But Hitler and Mussolini tell us that democracy is a breeding-ground for Communism, that it is a "stinking corpse," and that Germans and Italians want none of it, so that when we say we are for democracy we find ourselves in opposition to Fascism.

The democracy we took for granted before the emergence of Fascism was always a limited democracy. It was a democracy which gave every citizen a vote but restricted his right to use it effectively. It claimed that the political convictions of the unemployed miner gained equal publicity with those of Lord Rothermere. It believed that political democracy had no relation to economic democracy.

In spite of that, it was a democracy of sorts. It allowed reasonable freedom of speech. Naturally enough, the employer who owned a newspaper was not disposed to let the worker state *his* point of view, and it was only through incredible sacrifices that the worker was able to publish his own paper. But it was not illegal to do so. This democracy gave religious freedom to its citizens, and to a certain extent it democratized its legislative, if not its administrative, functions. It granted asylum to political and religious refugees, and it burned with generous indignation when roused against persecution and tyranny.

All this is true. Yet what has happened to this democracy? To-day it is on the defensive. The churchman who interprets his religion to mean a hatred of war, and says so in public, is told that freedom of speech is not licence of speech. The sincere democrat who says in his innocence that unemployment and means tests are incompatible with modern civilisation is warned that the safety of the country depends upon the expenditure of

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vast sums upon armaments. This democracy which gave sanctuary to the oppressed can do it no longer without clamorous protest that it is taking the bread from the mouths of its own citizens. This democracy finds its world too small. "We are full up," it says; "you must look elsewhere."

This, we are informed, is due to the growth of dictatorships (nobody bothers to ask why). Communism and Fascism are equally responsible for the attack on democracy, and Communism, as the senior partner, is the "onlie begetter" of all the mischief. Yet, if this judgment is correct, how can we explain the fact that Communists everywhere seem eager to fight for democratic rights and privileges alongside any party which seeks to preserve them? "The better to destroy you with, my dears," retort Hitler and Mussolini. But is there really any duplicity in the attitude of a party which says: "We think your democracy is a forerunner only of real democracy—an instalment, if you like. We shall try to persuade you with the march of time that we are right. But we shall defend with you to the bitter end the rights and privileges of this instalment. Half a loaf of democracy is better to us than Fascism. We think that you will discover in the fight for the half-loaf the necessity for the whole loaf. But we shall wait for you. In the meantime we are with you, and you do wrong to doubt our sincerity."

The Jew who believes, therefore, that his own troubles will cease only with the advent of the classless society is not asking the non-Jew to adopt a revolutionary outlook exclusively for Jewish benefit. What he says in effect is: "I shall join you in your fight to preserve your freedom. I shall help you to combat Fascism. In this fight you are serving my interests, but, equally, I am serving yours. Even if I accepted your advice and removed myself to

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Russia, you would still be left with the same battle to fight if your principles mean anything at all to you. And if you say that you do not like me, and would prefer to fight without my aid, then I reply: Very well, but *fight*, and do not give up the fight because our mutual enemy tells you that I am on your side."

The Jew, among many peculiarities, is uniquely peculiar in one respect. His behaviour and his social responses are readily generalised. A Jew who perpetrates fraud on a large scale injures not only the victims of his deception, but innocent members of his own race. Refined anti-Semites do not appreciate this fully when they attribute sinister motives to Jews who endeavour to preserve the anonymity of Jewish rogues.

British Communists do not bring British Conservatives into disrepute, nor do they cast a stigma on the entire British people. But the Jew who is a revolutionary has to face not only the hardships of all political rebels, but the knowledge that he has left as hostages thousands, and probably millions, of his own people who loathe his views as much as the others do. As a rebel he may be presumed to be impervious to the consequent sufferings of these hostages who are his enemies as much as their captors. But it is nevertheless a qualification which no other revolutionary has to acquire. He must, in addition, face the fact that he has handicapped his own party by providing the opposition with a weapon which they may use to delude its potential supporters. His Jewishness will be used to dub his party Jewish.

The way of a revolutionary is not easy. It is less easy for the Jewish revolutionary. This is why it is fantastic to suppose that Jews of all classes will throw in their lot with those who believe in a revolutionary transformation of society. Of all peoples, the Jews should be most aware of the baneful effects of the class struggle, but by reason of

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their isolation and exposed strategic position they can do least to end it.

It would be a gross misunderstanding if this were taken to mean that Jews should be encouraged to remain neutral. It merely explains why many of them are, though they get no credit for it from the Fascists. Some of the staunchest supporters of Mussolini are Italian Jews. It was not necessary for him to attack Jews in order to gain power. He would have been laughed out of court if he had, for there are only 73,000 Jews among the 40,000,000 Italians.

The first duty of a Jew is to understand anti-Semitism. The romantics have argued that Jews have a historic mission to inculcate the virtues of tolerance and brotherly love in non-Jews. They have not been conspicuously successful in this. But we may be sure of one function which they do perform. They are the barometer of the class struggle. It is no accident that they achieved political emancipation for the first time after the French Revolution, and that they were freed from every sort of discrimination only after the Russian Revolution.

Understanding anti-Semitism, the Jew may at least retain his dignity and his self-respect. If he is sufficiently sure of his intellectual bearings he will make them a guide to action. The last thing he will do will be to apologise for his existence and the activities which, as a human being first and foremost, he owes to his self-respect. He may have to face ostracism, banishment, even death. But, in a world of hatreds, jealousies, and a specious Fascist philosophy which has rationalised brutality, romanticised the supremacy of the dull and vicious by confusing it with the innocent and virile, the inducement to grace it by remaining in it becomes less persuasive each day.

Honour demands more insistently as the problem cries

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for solution that the Jew answer the accusation of his isolation from the rest of the world by affirming, on the contrary, his attachment to that part of the world only which values the rights of man more highly than the rights of men. In short, Jews, in so far as they can, must ensure the success of the fight against Fascism; rejecting the cautious advice of those who would persuade them that by ignoring the fight they will escape the wrath of the Fascists. Rather should they rejoice in having earned their enmity. The results may be unpleasant, but they have faced unpleasantness before, and never in so good a cause.

The natural corollary to this is that they should see in correct perspective that new civilisation which promises real freedom, for the first time in history, to Jew and non-Jew. They have prostrated themselves often enough to friends whose friendship has been based on other considerations than a correct appraisal of the problem. It is time they recognised that no other motive can bring them comfort for long. Tolerance and kindness which arise from the emotional cannot always survive the intrusion of other emotions. Without conviction and enlightened self-interest, emotion is helpless against self-interest without enlightenment.

Cold calculations of pros and cons is admirable perhaps in estimating our acquaintances. It has an ungenerous flavour in the judgment of friends. Those Jews who acknowledge grudgingly what has been done in the Soviet Union, with much reference to "experiments which have still to justify themselves" and "restrictions on individual liberty," when they themselves are but ticket-of-leave men, deny a loyalty which they owe, not only to friendship, but to the service of civilisation.

In this manner Jews may answer the base attack on their alleged "internationalism." The honourable reply

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to "internationalism" is internationalism. For, though the word may have become a term of abuse in an epoch which shamelessly makes a mockery of ideals which once had power to stir the minds of men, it is more than ever necessary to stress that there is an internationalism which not even the jeers of a Fascist can defile. The brotherhood of science, the exchange of knowledge, the comradeship of those who believe that mankind may achieve dignity, not in the posturings of shirted idiots and hysterical *Führers*, but in the peaceful collaboration of workers, artists, and scientists of all races—this is the true internationalism. It is the "internationalism" which binds Hitler to Mussolini, Goering to Araki (shades of Spengler!); it is the "internationalism" of Nuremberg rallies, of shoddy adventurers who do not refuse the money of those whom they demagogically attack in public; it is this "internationalism" which must be fought like a pestilence, lest it overwhelm the true internationalism.

Devotion to a genuine internationalism does not predicate a swamping of identity. I have said enough of the dreary visions of the future which Aldous Huxley and H. G. Wells have given us. It is significant that they are the products of two men whose intellectual outlook has constantly betrayed a distrust of the common people. Wells, who has never troubled himself to understand scientific Socialism, is typical of the arrogant intellectual who considers his values too precious to be shared with "the mob." He will find that the heritage of civilisation can be preserved only when it can influence the thoughts and deeds of great masses of people. While it is the exclusive possession of the few it is in constant danger of destruction by the many.

Those to whom scientific Socialism is a living reality see the rest of humanity, like sleep-walkers, approaching

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a frightful precipice. In their desperate anxiety to avoid a catastrophe they may adopt methods as rude as those forced on the man who wakens a sleep-walker. The bankruptcy of our social order, which can put men back to work only so long as they produce machines to destroy us, should be clear to all. The fact that it is not makes the task of those who do understand an obvious one.

It is this task which calls for the co-operation of Jews. Pride in the traditions which link them to the Jewish poets, philosophers, physicians, and scientists who have ennobled their history demands that they become, in the words of that Jewish poet who saw life clearly and saw it whole, "soldiers in the liberation war of humanity."

In this struggle they will find friendship without patronage, genuine understanding and comradeship. The Fascists and half-Fascists who sneer at such comradeship do well, perhaps, to scoff. Whom can *they* hail as comrades? Horst Wessel? Ernst Rohm? Franco? Graziani?

THE END

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