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### BOLSHEVISM AND THE JEWS

NO one who knows how the Jews of Russia, in common with the rest of the population, have suffered from Bolshevist misrule will be likely to give credence to the theory that Bolshevism is part of a Jewish conspiracy. As everybody knows, Jews made up a very considerable part of the commercial class in Russia. The indemnities levied upon this class by the Bolshevist commissions in the cities have applied equally to Jew and Gentile. It is a fact that ordinary Jewish shopkeepers have been compelled to pay their full share of the indemnities so levied. Scores of thousands of Jews have had their property confiscated and been reduced to abject poverty. Many thousands more have had to flee, leaving

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everything behind them, thankful only that they could save their lives. The *Chresvy-chaikas* have drawn no distinction between Jew and Gentile, and the available records, meager as they are, prove that the Jews have contributed their full quota to the long list of the victims of these infamous terrorist organizations. Pogroms and other manifestations of anti-Semitism have been too common in Bolshevist Russia to permit any suspicion that Bolshevism is a pro-Jewish movement. The evidence upon this point is overwhelming.

I am quite well aware that the statement that pogroms have been common in Bolshevist Russia will be challenged and indignantly denied by many of our American defenders of the Bolsheviki, Jews and Gentiles alike. It is none the less a well-attested fact. I have in my possession a mass of evidence which amply proves the truth of the statement. At the same time, I do not mean to charge that the Soviet government has deliberately instigated or authorized

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pogroms. Indeed, I am quite ready to believe that the Soviet government has honestly desired and attempted to prevent such pogroms. Lenin accepted the presidency of an organization formed to combat anti-Semitism. The truth seems to be that just as pogroms have admittedly taken place in the new republic of Poland, despite the efforts of the Polish government to prevent them, and just as pogroms were carried out by Denikin's Volunteer Army despite General Denikin's attempts to prevent them, and the severe punishments inflicted by him upon the culprits, so regular Bolshevist troops in southern Russia have plundered and murdered Jews and raped and mutilated Jewish women and girls. Just as these lines are being written word comes, from sources of unquestionable authority, of pogroms against the Jews in the Ukraine, in which Bolshevist troops participated.

The Pogrom Victims' Relief Committee of the Russian Red Cross Society published a report of its investigations of the Jewish

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pogroms in southern Russia during the period when General Denikin's forces were fighting the Bolsheviki. The report, based upon evidence of unquestionable reliability, showed that Jews had been plundered and murdered not only by disorderly troops of Denikin's Volunteer Army, and by the troops of Petlura and by the robber bands led by "atamans," like Makhno, *but also by regular Bolshevik troops.* The report attributes to the latter the destruction of at least thirteen Jewish communities in southern Russia and the murder of five hundred Jews. And this is only one report of many. Before me as I write is the account given by an eyewitness of the pogrom which opened at Novo-Poltavka on September 1, 1919, and lasted through the whole of the week following. *More than one hundred Jews were murdered, numerous women and girls were raped, and the entire colony was plundered.* This pogrom was carried on by the guerrilla bands led by "atamans" Makhno and Grigoriev, together with regular Bol-

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shevist troops.<sup>1</sup> Do you ask me to believe that these pogroms were deliberately brought about as part of a "Jewish" conspiracy?

Under the rule of the Bolsheviki the local organs of Jewish autonomy in the Ukraine were entirely destroyed.<sup>2</sup> The chairman of the Jewish Community in Kiev, Mr. D. Levenstein, has testified to the brutal treatment of the Jews in that city during the Bolshevik occupation. Vladimir Kossovsky, one of the foremost leaders of the "Bund," well known in Socialist international circles, in an article published in the Jewish Socialist monthly, *Die Zukunft*, of New York, says:

Jewish pogroms in Bolshevik Russia have occurred with particular intensity during the first half of 1918. I shall point, as an example, to the pogroms in Gulkhov, in the government of Chernigov, where they assumed a particularly brutal form, and in a

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<sup>1</sup> The full account of this eyewitness appeared in the *Odesskiya Novosti*, September 27, 1919.

<sup>2</sup> Statement by Dr. M. Zitron, *Dos Yiddishe Volk*, of Warsaw, July 11, 1919.

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number of places in the Poliesiye. *All of these pogroms were the work of Bolshevik troops.*

The Glukhov pogrom, which has attained such sad notoriety, started on February 28, 1918, after a Bolshevik detachment had entered the city. The Red Army men, transformed into savage beasts, murdered the arrested Jews who were being taken under guard to the building of the Soviet, *and the street which housed the Soviet was literally sodden with Jewish blood. All Jewish stores and residences were sacked.* Peasants from the near-by villages soon joined the plunderers of the Red Guard in their work of looting and pillaging. According to newspaper reports, four hundred and fifty Jews were murdered, among these some Jewish soldiers who had been rewarded with "St. George" medals for bravery. Long lists of victims—such as could be identified—were at that time published in the newspapers. *The pogrom was directed exclusively against the Jews, and the Christian population of the city did not suffer in the least.*

Concerning the pogroms in Poliesiye, Kossovsky quotes from the official organ of the Menshevist party, the *Novaia Zaria*, of Moscow, June 10, 1918, the following:

The large Jewish population of this region (Poliesiye) finds itself in a particularly tragic situation. The "activity" of the Red Army in Novogorod-Sieversk, Seredina-Buda, and Glukhov, where

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the Soviet detachments massacred the Jewish populations, has found an echo in other cities, and the sword of Damocles hangs at present over the unfortunate Jewish people. In the city of Potchep the Jews saved themselves from a pogrom by collecting in time fifteen thousand rubles, which they handed over to the pogrom-mad Red Army detachment upon its entrance into the city, in addition to giving it a splendid reception and a sumptuous feast. As reward for this reception the bashi-bazouks of the Soviet decided to spare the city.

Pogroms and other manifestations of anti-Semitism have been so common in Bolshevik Russia as to make the "Jewish question" one of extreme difficulty and importance. In numerous Soviets, notably Yaroslavl, Vitebsk, and Smolensk, Jewish members were openly insulted by the Bolsheviks; such epithets as "*szhid!*" ("sheeny!") were hurled at the Jewish members. Once more I quote from the article by Kossovsky:

In the provinces the pogrom mania invaded even the Soviets, not mentioning the Red Army which became more and more infected with it. According to the Kiev *Naiye Zait*, in the Vitebsk Soviet shouts were heard, "Chase the Jews out of the Soviets

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and its institutions!" In the Yaroslavl Soviet, according to information printed in the Moscow Social-Democratic newspaper, *Vperiod*, there were often heard insulting and shameful cries directed against the Jews. In Smolensk, according to *Svobodnaya Rossia*, members of the Red Army would come to the Soviet and demand that Jews be barred from holding posts as war commissaries and commanders. A lively anti-Semitic propaganda was carried on in Moscow and Petrograd, too, though it never reached the stage of a pogrom. In Petrograd anti-Jewish posters, signed by a "Kamorra of the People's Revenge," were spread broadcast. As a result of the apprehensiveness aroused, detachments for self-defense were organized by the Jews of Moscow. In Petrograd the Bolshevist authorities did not permit the organization of self-defense bodies, fearing lest the weapons of the self-defense detachments be turned against the Soviet.

Upon the initiative of the Petrograd Jewish Community the day of May 23, 1918, was designated as a Jewish National Day of Mourning throughout Russia as a protest against the latter-day Jewish pogroms in Russia. On that day the Jews were to close all their business establishments, not to issue newspapers, etc., etc. The May 23d issue of the Petrograd Jewish daily, *Unser Tagblatt*, appeared in a black border and was full of articles relating to anti-Jewish attacks and pogroms, entitled: "Protest by Mourning," "Let Jewish Blood Boil," "The Day of Sorrow," "The Bloody Roll (Statistics Concerning Jewish Pogroms)." To convey to the reader the substance of these articles I will quote

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the closing words of the article, "The Bloody Roll": "The old tsarist, bloody Russia, fell, and a new Russia, a radical-Socialist, a communist, Russia came in its place. And still, as before, we stand facing a roster of Jewish pogroms, a roster which is, as yet, far from ended, as each day adds new names, new victims, and new massacres."

Mr. Louis Marshall, who is universally recognized as one of the foremost leaders of the American Jewry and who headed the American-Jewish delegation to the Peace Conference, in an interview published in the New York Jewish daily newspaper, *The Day*, July 27, 1919, categorically denied the assertion that there have been no Jewish pogroms under the rule of the Bolsheviki. He declared that such pogroms took place in the districts of the Ukraine controlled by the Bolsheviki as well as in those controlled by the robber bands. "We know of such pogroms having occurred," he said, "and very often the Bolsheviki care just as little about the Jews as others who make pogroms. It is possible that some of their pogroms are at

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times different, but in substance there were Jewish pogroms in Bolshevist territory as well." Mr. Marshall added the following observation: "*All Jewish representatives that I have met in Paris who came from Russia are strong opponents of Bolshevism. Even to this day the Jewish Socialist parties are no less sharp in their condemnation of the Bolsheviki than are the bourgeois parties.*"

So far as I have been able to discover, there is not a large Jewish Community in Russia which has not repudiated Bolshevism. Not in a single instance has the support of the leaders of such a Community been given to the Lenin-Trotsky regime. For example, I have before me the report of the annual general meeting of the Jewish Community of Archangel, which took place on May 11, 1919. Therein is contained a Memorandum by the Council of the Community on the relation of the Jews to Bolshevism. The Memorandum points out that, while it is true that there are Jews

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among the leaders of the Bolsheviki, it is also true that there are many Jews among the leaders of the anti-Bolshevist forces. It names such men as MM. Vinaver, Gotz, Minor, Bliumkin (who assassinated Count Mirbach), Kannengisser (who shot Uritzki), and Dora Kaplan (who attempted to assassinate Lenin and forfeited her own life).

The Memorandum asks the non-Jewish world to remember that all of the Jews connected with the Bolshevist movement in any prominent capacity are apostates, that not one of them ever took the slightest part in the affairs of Russian Jewry, and that the Jewish people only learned of their existence at about the same time and in the same way as the Russian people in general became aware of the existence of such non-Jewish Bolshevist leaders as Lenin, Lunarcharsky, Tchitcherin, Krylenko, Dybenko, and many others. Attention is called to the fact that prominent Jewish national workers in Russia have been subjected to the same persecution and mal-

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treatment by the Bolsheviki as the public-spirited men and women of other nationalities. The Memorandum cites the imprisonment of Doctor Maze, Rabbi of the Moscow Community, and the confiscation of the buildings belonging to the Petrograd Jewish Community, where the cultural and religious institutions of the Jews of that city were centered. I commend to the attention of all fair-minded men and women the following paragraph from this document:

Aside from this group of Jewish Bolshevist leaders there is the Jewish people, the many millions of the Jewish population of Russia. The unassuming representatives of that Jewish Community of Archangel take the liberty to affirm that neither the Jewish people as a whole, nor any of its socially organized groups, are responsible for the savagery, violence, acts of blasphemy, and mockery of human rights which characterize the Bolshevist regime.

The Jewish people are fully familiar with acts of brutality, with the Red Terror, familiar from long-past experience and from present experience in Bolshevist Russia, together with all the other nations inhabiting that unhappy territory. But the hands of the Jewish masses, of all the classes of the Jewish people, are not stained with this blood. We have not heard, and we believe that we shall

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never hear, of any act of terror committed by any masses of Jews led either by Jews or by non-Jews.

Let the Jewish Bolsheviki stand accused and condemned of their guilt like their compatriots of other nationalities, but there must be no room for generalization and wholesale accusation when the people as a whole are guiltless and where millions, permeated by a powerful cohesive force of an ancient culture organically foreign to the spirit of violence and vandalism, stand apart from a few individual persons.

Quite similar to the foregoing is a Memorandum addressed by the Council of the Vladivostok Jewish Community to the Russian people. The concluding paragraphs of this address seem to me to be a complete and crushing refutation of the monstrous calumny that is being so assiduously spread among our people:

In the present historic movement the Council of the Jewish Community of Vladivostok deems it its sacred civil duty to come forward with the following protest. The Council declares that: (1) The many millions of the Russian Jewry reject every responsibility for the crimes committed against Russia by a small group of Jewish renegades who have nothing in common with the Jews and have long since broken off all connections with them, such

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as Bronstein-Trotsky, Nakhamkes-Steklov, Apfelbaum-Zinoviev, Joffe, Kamenev, and others connected with Bolshevism, just as the Russian, Lettish, Polish, Georgian, Armenian, and other nationalities cannot be held to answer for the deeds and misdeeds of Bolshevik leaders who were born in their midst. (2) The Russian Jewry, as a whole, is warmly and sincerely devoted to the interests of Russia, its motherland, and has struggled and is still struggling for the regeneration of the Russian state, and is heartily interested, together with all the other peoples inhabiting Russia, in the speediest overthrowing of Bolshevism and the reconstruction of orderly life in Russia. The Russian Jews have lost over one hundred thousand of their brothers and sons in killed and wounded in the war with Germany. Thousands of Jews are found at present in the ranks of the armies of Admiral Kolchak and of General Denikin. (3) Bolshevism has ruined hundreds of thousands of Jewish merchants, business men, artisans, and men in various enterprises, and has completely destroyed the entire population of the Northwestern Territories. - *Thousands of Jewish families have been deported from Soviet Russia* and are now dragging out a miserable existence as refugees in Siberia, in the Ural region, and in the border cities.

*The Soviet government has shot and is still shooting Jewish public men, lawyers, engineers, physicians, and workmen who have participated in the struggle against the Soviet rule.* In the near future there will be published documents and irrefutable facts revealing

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the number of Jewish lives and the billions of Jewish wealth that have perished during the past two years in the struggle with Bolshevism.

The Vladivostok Jewish Community protests to the Russian public opinion and to the honest and independent Russian press against the falsehoods, insinuations, and calumnies directed against the Jewish people in such profusion by the enemies of humanity and the state.

In view of such facts as these, is it reasonable to suppose that Bolshevism is a pro-Jewish conspiracy? Is it less than ridiculous to suggest that the system which has reduced hundreds of thousands of Jews to abject poverty, broken up thousands of Jewish homes and families, confiscated billions of Jewish wealth, imprisoned thousands of prominent Jews, and murdered numerous others, is part of a Jewish conspiracy? Surely, every intelligent person must see that any such conspiracy must necessarily require, as the first condition of its success, a degree of racial solidarity never yet attained by any people at any time in the history of the world. That solidarity could only be obtained by assuring to the Jews



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their complete exemption from the suffering and oppression imposed upon the non-Jewish population. Had there been any thought of securing the solidarity of the Jewish people of Russia against the non-Jewish population, it would have been effectively thwarted by the imposition of such burdens of poverty and suffering upon the Jews, and their resulting resentment. Not the smallest particle of evidence has ever yet been adduced to show that the Jews in Russia have been exempted from any of the oppressive features of Bolshevism. As Mr. Wells reminds us, the Bolsheviki have suppressed the Hebrew language, the historic language of Judaism, to preserve which Jews in all lands and during many centuries have made such vast sacrifices. Do we need any further evidence?