

A Legacy of Hatred



Second

Edition

*Why Christians
Must Not Forget
the Holocaust*

David A. Rausch

A Legacy of Hatred

Why Christians Must Not Forget the Holocaust

Marvin R. Wilson (Gordon College): "Powerfully written and so very timely in view of the current rise of anti-Semitism around the world. A Christian historian and teacher of Judaism, Rausch details the oft-ignored history of contempt between Christians and Jews. The author shows convincingly why Christians today must never forget the Holocaust. The author's account is thoroughly researched, eminently readable, and painfully true. *A Legacy of Hatred* ought to be on the bookshelf of every informed Christian."

Franklin H. Littell (Temple University): "A book of quality at two levels. First, it is scientifically of very high order. Second, it is infused with the sense of moral outrage with which any person of sensibility — and certainly any Christian! — must confront the story of the Holocaust and the callousness of Christendom while it occurred. The author manages a very difficult but imperative task: to keep in harness his commitment to careful exercise of the historical method and his commitment to Christ, the Lord, and the flawed churches that carry his name."

Larry R. Helyer (Taylor University): "As racism continues to rear its ugly head over the international landscape, we need as never before to contemplate the depths to which human beings are capable of descending in their treatment of one another. This revised edition, which includes a sobering update and survey of anti-Semitic, racist sentiment, fills that need."

David A. Rausch, professor of history and Jewish studies at Ashland University (Ohio), has established himself as one of the leading Christian scholars in the field of Jewish studies. He has written numerous articles in scholarly journals and authored twelve books, including *Building Bridges: Understanding Jews and Judaism* and *World Religions: Our Quest for Meaning*. He earned his Ph.D. degree from Kent State University.

Second Edition

David A. Rausch



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To My Students
and the Survivors Who Have Shared

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Preface

A Legacy of Hatred: Why Christians Must Not Forget The Holocaust was first published in 1984. Since then, I have received nearly four thousand letters from people from all walks of life who have been touched by this study and who have acknowledged the cancer of racial and religious prejudice in their churches, homes, and places of employment. Professors have used this book effectively as a text on a number of campuses, not only in courses on the Holocaust, but also as a supplemental book in survey courses to encourage students to think about these issues. Such response is heartening, and I am excited about those who have accepted the challenge to believe, to care, and to change.

My thanks go to Allan Fisher, Director of Publications at Baker Book House, and Jim Weaver, Editor of Academic Books, for seeing the significance of this updated paperback edition of *Legacy*. Sadly, the problems still face us, and a younger generation is being plagued with millstones of prejudice. The Holocaust remains an important case study to combat this cancer as we approach the twenty-first century. As I look at my own children (David Joshua, Jonathan, and Benjamin), my heart agonizes for the million or more Jewish children—a whole generation—murdered by the Nazis.

I am fortunate to be assisted in this endeavor by my liberal arts institution, Ashland University. The Faculty Forum has been a constant encouragement to me for over a decade. Esther Shudmak of Boardman, Ohio, a survivor of Auschwitz, has gone beyond the call of duty many times to help me and my classes at the university catch a glimpse of the personal tragedy of this period of history. As a Christian, it is my prayer that this new edition will further the message, providing education, inspiration, and hope.

DAVID A. RAUSCH
Ashland University
Ashland, Ohio
Summer 1990

I

The Meaning of the Holocaust for Today

Jesus Christ had a flawless attitude toward those of other religious or racial backgrounds. The Samaritans in John 4 were both religious and racial outcasts, and yet Jesus treated them with a sensitivity and balance that was truly remarkable within the confines of the society in which He lived. As we trace the encounters Jesus had throughout His life and ministry, we are constantly amazed by His unblemished demeanor toward women, children, and the outcasts of society—the unloved and unlovely. Jesus saw the potential of the individual; He had divine perspective; He knew the *total* picture. His love and compassion have drawn people of all races, religions, and walks of life ever since.

Ironically, His followers have faced and continue to face some of their greatest challenges in the area of prejudice and racism. In striving to imitate the life of Christ, the Christian often encounters his most difficult struggle in trying to match Christ's balance, compassion, understanding, and love toward all others.

Prejudice infests us all; the most dangerous attitude we can have is to think that we have no prejudice. The next danger is to believe that it cannot make us cold and indifferent—that it does not harm our society and that it takes no toll on our spiritual life.

For history teaches us differently. Caricatures and stereotypes can have awesome consequences. The Polish people hated the Nazis; but Nazi propaganda nourished such a hatred of Jews, even in Poland, that after the detested Nazis were defeated, some Poles pulled emaciated Jews who had barely survived the work camps off trains headed for safety and killed them. For years the hatred of both nations had been transferred to the “international culprit,” the Jew; and

the citizens learned to vent their frustrations in an "appropriate" manner. Even after Adolf Hitler's death, Jewish children had to be smuggled through Poland disguised as Gentiles.¹ Prejudice has no age of accountability: young and old are subject to the venting of irrational hatred, and the results are often disastrous.

History broadens our perspectives unlike any other subject; and we can use the Holocaust period as an object lesson, a *case study*, to unlock truth. Knowledge of the Holocaust is important not only for the factual material concerning the rise of Nazism, but also for what it tells us about the structure of evil, the dangers of civil religion, and moral responsibility in an immoral environment. Hitler drew upon centuries of anti-Semitism, and his slogans existed long before he was born. Threads of politics, economics, and religion, seemingly harmless by themselves, were woven together to produce the horrid "Final Solution," the attempt to exterminate all of European Jewry. The student of the Holocaust experience becomes more sensitive, alert and informed about the world-around him. With an understanding of the Holocaust, he sees the consequences of even latent racial and religious prejudice.

HARD QUESTIONS ASKED BY THE HOLOCAUST

CAN IT HAPPEN HERE?

Such an object lesson is needed during the current economic difficulties of our nation, as religious and racial hate groups, many claiming to be Christian, are spreading even to the doors of our unsuspecting churches and college and seminary campuses. Their materials are published and distributed with fervent evangelistic effort, with the intent to rewrite and falsify the history about which most Christians know so little. Increasingly, pastors and educators are becoming alarmed at their success. With Bibles in their hands, they enter church meetings, Bible studies, and classes and try to prove that Jesus was not a Jew, that God commands racial segregation and that blacks, Orientals, and Indians are inferior beings. Such groups have existed throughout the history of our nation—as the history of immigration will show.² We need to be alert to these current perpetrators of hate.

Although the Jewish Holocaust experience must of necessity remain a focal point of this case study,³ there are general implications that underscore the im-

1. Even in the summer of 1946 (a year after Hitler's death), pogroms against Jewish survivors occurred. On July 4, 1946, forty-two Jews were murdered by Poles in Kielce. Note Earl Vine-cour and Chuck Fishman, *Polish Jews: The Final Chapter* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1977), p. 6. Compare Yehuda Bauer, *A History of the Holocaust* (New York: Franklin Watts, 1982), pp. 340-42 on the *Brichah* ("flight") underground Jewish organization, which helped survivors flee Poland.

2. Note Leonard Dinnerstein and David M. Reimers, *Ethnic Americans: A History of Immigration and Assimilation* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1975) for a history of this phenomenon.

3. Although millions of others died during World War II, the Jewish dimension of the Holocaust is unique. The Nazis were determined to kill all Jews, and they searched out every hovel, thwart-

portance of Holocaust study. Without an understanding of the Holocaust, we cannot fully comprehend the ability of human beings to be inhumane to other human beings—even in a civilized society. The retort, "It can't happen here in the United States!" must be evaluated in light of the Holocaust. Germany was thought to be an oasis of culture and civilization in the Western world before and during the rise of Hitler. German Jews thought that the last place that would succumb to pogrom was their beloved country—a country in which many Jewish families had lived for centuries.

Nevertheless, in the land of the Reformation, religious institutions were powerless to protect Jewish citizens. As we shall see in Chapter 15, the plight of the German church under the Nazis shows us the immense hardships and difficult decisions Christian leaders have to make under impossible conditions—decisions the American church may likely face someday.

For those of us who put our faith in law and order, it comes as a shock to learn that Hitler and his officials were elected legally and that they used the law to institute anti-Jewish policy. In fact, legal persecution of Jews made it easier for the Nazis to secure the cooperation of German citizens and to justify their actions to the world. The horrors of the Holocaust could take place only when acts of discrimination were made lawful. The Führer thus gained the cooperation of the masses, who would have had no part of an illegal action. As we shall see in Chapter 16, the most common defense used by those accused during the Nuremberg Trials was that they were "only following orders."

A study of the history of members of the black community in the United States and their "legal enslavement," or the violation of the rights of Japanese Americans on the West Coast during World War II are perfect examples that our own legal system is not immune to the same threat of legalized racism.⁴ Indeed, neo-Nazi groups in the United States today claim they will use legal process to turn our nation into a fascist state.

WHO IS MAN?

The inhumanity exhibited during the Holocaust boggles the mind and has led a number of theologians and philosophers to reevaluate their former view of the essential goodness and upward progress of man.⁵ How can we believe in

ing their own war effort to do so. Conversion was no longer a refuge. See Henry L. Feingold, "Determining the Uniqueness of the Holocaust: The Factor of Historical Valence," *Shoah* 2 (Spring 1981), pp. 3-11.

4. Even after the legal slave trade was abolished and the Civil War had brought emancipation, the newly acquired privileges of the black community were legally nullified. Books such as Peter I. Rose et al., eds., *Through Different Eyes: Black and White Perspectives on American Race Relations* (New York: Oxford U., 1973) give helpful insight into the black community's view of this history. See the end of chapter 10 on the Japanese.

5. In the face of these horrors, some Christian theologians have suggested that we reformulate the Christian faith. A few have gone so far as to suggest that Christian belief in the Resurrection should be discarded. Such reevaluation fails to understand that anti-Semitism existed before Christianity, and it must be battled within the confines of traditional Christian belief if most Christians are to be reached.

an enlightened, progressive world in the light of Nazi murder squads, composed of an inordinate number of Ph.D.'s and lawyers, whose belt buckles declared "God goes with us"; or murder squads that would use children for target practice and smash an infant's head against the wall to hear it pop? How does anyone justify belief in the goodness of man in light of German soldiers so hardened that they could kick old men in the streets, slice off beards and flesh from Orthodox Jews with knives, stuff hoses down throats to fill stomachs with water until they burst, burn screaming human beings alive—and then go home to celebrate Christmas with their families while on leave?

How do we explain the apathy of the general population of Europe (not just the German citizenry) and the ready compliance of a select number eager to help the Nazi regime in any way possible? Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Poles and Hungarians all helped. Even in France, Nazi leaders were astounded by the eagerness Frenchmen displayed in trying to please their conquerors.

In addition, we find the strange world of both the extermination camps and the labor camps: some as small as fifty persons; others with standing populations of small cities. Camps where inmates starved while guard dogs ate like royalty; where rats as large as cats chewed fingers off corpses and attacked the dying and those who dared to fall asleep, oblivious of other humans, crouched in corners. Camps in which medical experiments were performed by doctors and scientists using human beings for guinea pigs, and that provided for a German university (at its request) a skeletal collection of male and female Jewish corpses for anatomical research.

European ghettos astound us with their daily atrocities. A ghetto where a Jewish physician's daughter could be blinded by drunken soldiers who plucked out her "beautiful black eyes" and where subsequently a law would mandate deportation to extermination camps of those who were crippled *and blind*. Survivors of the Holocaust have viewed pictures of the starving people of Cambodia in the late 1970s and marveled, "Why it's just like the ghetto!" Such is the stark reminder of the ability of human beings to be inhumane to other human beings. I will never forget the student who told me that were it not for her class on the Holocaust she would have "missed" the plight of the Cambodian refugees.

WHAT WOULD WE HAVE DONE?

Without an understanding of the Holocaust, we would not question what our reactions might be while watching others being persecuted. How much of your life would you risk for another racial or religious group? The study of the Holocaust cautions us against a quick answer. We see that often the jeopardizing of a career, a wife, children, or community set up circumstances that made a clear-cut decision difficult. Good, decent citizens were conditioned or coerced to turn their backs on the plight of others; indeed, to promote the Nazi plan.

The historian is overwhelmed with the question, *What made the difference?* What made the difference between the few who helped the Jewish people during their dreadful persecution and the multitude who turned their backs on them? Why did a few put themselves, their families, their possessions, and their careers on the line for a persecuted people, while most did not? What is that moral kernel within our psychological, mental, or religious makeup that makes some react differently from the multitude in the face of prejudice, scapegoating, caricature, oppression, and outright physical violence to a race or religious group different from their own?

That is a difficult question in light of the Holocaust, as its study reveals that only a few evangelicals, a few Protestants, a few Catholics, a few Orthodox, a few agnostics, and a few atheists (*and* not necessarily in that order) helped the Jewish people during their persecution. Varian Fry, a bespectacled, frail, moody intellectual; a man who would seem to be a most unlikely candidate to stand against the Gestapo, succeeded in organizing the escape of approximately fifteen hundred men and women from Nazi occupied France in 1940–1941. A man who appeared to have no religious motivation, Fry explained to his mother that he stayed because it took courage and "courage is a quality I hadn't previously been sure I possessed." To his wife he wrote: "Now I think I can say that I possess an *ordinary* amount of courage."⁶

Are Christians really different from the rest of society? Some Christians throughout Europe not only opposed the Nazis but also helped and defended the Jewish people. They met the challenge that was suddenly thrust upon them. However, they were relatively few in number—a fact that perplexed Richard Gutteridge as he studied German evangelical response to Nazi racist propaganda. Gutteridge concluded: "Most tragically of all, what was missing was a spontaneous outburst at any point by ordinary decent Christian folk, who certainly existed in considerable numbers."⁷ Even after the war, when the call for a national Christian repentance for such neglect was made in the Stuttgart declaration, Catholic and Protestant German church leaders developed what John Conway has termed "collective amnesia" about their role in the Nazi era. They explained that the majority of the German people did not know about the Nazi excesses or that their cries had been quickly silenced by the all-powerful German police state. Hitler and his minions, they said, were to take full blame for that dark period in German church history.⁸ The church, in another failure to meet the challenge, shirked her responsibility by seeking to lay the blame on others.

Modern psychology has much to say about the capacity within man to com-

6. Donald Carroll, "Escape from Vichy," *American Heritage* 34 (June/July 1983), p. 91. Italics added.

7. Richard Gutteridge, *Open Thy Mouth for the Dumb: The German Evangelical Church and the Jews, 1879–1950* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1976), p. 304.

8. John S. Conway, "The German Church Struggle and Its Aftermath," in Abraham J. Peck, ed., *Jews and Christians After the Holocaust* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), p. 40.

mit atrocities. Stanley Milgram has spent decades studying this phenomenon, and in his book *Obedience to Authority* he stresses that we all have something to worry about when hate, distrust, or dislike of other racial or religious groups permeates our society. He emphasizes:

This is, perhaps, the most fundamental lesson of our study: ordinary people, simply doing their jobs, and without any particular hostility on their part, can become agents in a terrible destructive process. Moreover, even when the destructive effects of their work become patently clear, and they are asked to carry out actions incompatible with fundamental standards of morality, relatively few people have the resources needed to resist authority. A variety of inhibitions against disobeying authority come into play and successfully keep the person in his place.⁹

To understand such societal pressures one has only to recall how difficult it is to speak out when a member of one's family, a boss, or a friend tells a joke about an ethnic or religious group. Even those who dislike such jokes are hard pressed to overcome peer pressure, and they give in with a half-hearted laugh. An awareness of the Holocaust experience makes such jokes ring hollow, because the student is suddenly aware that even "innocent" caricatures and stereotypes shape attitudes and behavior.

Self-examination is certainly an important result of Holocaust study. We learn that those who believe that such collaboration with the forces of evil is beyond their potential are sometimes the first to succumb to genocide; and we see that we might do the same.

HARD LESSONS TAUGHT BY THE HOLOCAUST

TURNING AGAINST THEIR OWN

Without an understanding of the Holocaust, we would fail to understand that racists will devour their own people. Once unleashed, racial theory begins its own pecking order even among the "white races." Hitler had plans to weed out the human race in favor of the purest of the pure Aryans. Slavs, Ukrainians, and Poles who helped him had no idea he planned either to enslave or exterminate them. In discussing the "mastering" of the plague of racial impurity, Hitler noted in *Mein Kampf*: "This also is only a touchstone for the value of a race, and that race which does not pass the test will die and make room for races healthier or at least tougher and of greater resistance."¹⁰ As the German people found, this could extend to individuals even among their own people—individuals who were *not* Jews, blacks, or Gypsies.

9. Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), p. 6.

10. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1939), p. 339.

A few months after Hitler became Chancellor in 1933, the Law for the Prevention of Progeny with Hereditary Disease was instituted. That law decreed mandatory sterilization for mentally retarded, deaf, blind, epileptic, or physically deformed persons. Soon afterward, the director of the Racial-Policy Office declared that those who would have compassion on people suffering from hereditary disease were false humanitarians and were committing a "sin against the Creator's own laws of life." On the eve of World War II in 1939, the top-secret Euthanasia Program was decreed by Hitler. He and his staff had decided on the "mercy-killing" of the mentally ill, deformed, and "incurables" throughout the Reich. Between 1940 and 1941 an estimated fifty to one hundred thousand German citizens were transferred and subsequently killed by doctors in special institutions under fictitious authorities such as the "National Coordinating Agency for Therapeutic and Medical Establishments," "Charitable Foundation for the Transportation of the Sick," and "Charitable Foundation for Institutional Care." The victims' families were told that the state could better care for their children and that the Reich had their best interests at heart. Upon arriving at one of the half-dozen "institutes," the victim would be shot, injected, or gassed to death. In an interesting parallel to the later gassing of Jews, gas chambers were camouflaged as shower rooms, hermetically sealed, and connected to engines that piped in carbon monoxide. The centers also had crematoria, and families were notified on preprinted forms that their beloved had died suddenly from heart failure or pneumonia and, for sanitary reasons, had been cremated.¹¹

Rumors soon abounded that the Nazi regime was killing German citizens. Even allegations that badly wounded soldiers were "mercy killed" were circulated. The public was outraged. Conscientious citizens cried out, and both Catholic and Protestant clergymen preached against the abuse. In a sermon in August 1941, Catholic bishop Galen protested the "mercy-killings"; his protest sermon has been called by Richard Grunberger "the most successful single act of resistance ever undertaken in the Third Reich."¹² The well-known prelate did not suffer any punishment from the Nazis for his sermon, but three parish priests who had distributed his sermon as a tract were beheaded by the Gestapo. Hitler backed down and officially suspended the euthanasia program, but the institutions continued to function sporadically until the end of the war, killing by some estimates as many as 275,000 by injection, starvation, and gas. Chronically and mentally ill patients, senile persons, Gypsies, foreign forced laborers, children from mixed marriages, and Russian prisoners of war suffered death at the hands of a "healthier" member of the race.¹³ Nevertheless, the massive outcry of irate citizens stemmed a large scale annihilation, and we can only speculate how much

11. Gerald Reitlinger, *The Final Solution: The Attempt to Exterminate the Jews of Europe, 1939-1945*, 2d ed. (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1968), pp. 130-38. Compare Leo Alexander, "Medical Science Under Dictatorship," *The New England Journal of Medicine* 241 (14 July 1949):39-41.

12. Richard Grunberger, *Hitler's SS* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1970), p. 55.

13. Yehuda Bauer, *A History of the Holocaust* (New York: Franklin Watts, 1982), p. 208.

more could have been done if public opinion had wished to help the Jewish community in the same manner.

THE FALSE APPEAL TO FAITH

The church would soon learn after Hitler's rise to power that Hitler was not a Christian. However, Hitler used religious language to fool church leaders at the outset. *Mein Kampf* appeals to God, contains passages that sound biblical, and purports to defend Christianity. In chapter 2, "Years of Study and Suffering in Vienna," Hitler concluded a diatribe against the Jews by declaring: "Therefore, I believe today that I am acting in the sense of the Almighty Creator: By warding off the Jews I am fighting for the Lord's work."¹⁴ As he compiled *Hitler's Letters and Notes*, Werner Maser was amazed to find that Hitler's draft for a monumental history of mankind dealt with the Bible. "What is remarkable about these notes," Maser asserted, "is that they contain so many references to the Bible, a book to which Hitler paid scant attention in *Mein Kampf*."¹⁵ Indeed, Hitler's first point in his introduction is *I. The Bible*. The Bible is mentioned in at least four more points throughout his draft. As a master propagandist, Hitler would lead people down the path of destruction with words and phrases they wanted to hear.

Hitler in fact stated that if war came he "would take up and resolve this question of euthanasia because it was easier to do so in wartime, when the church would not be able to put up the expected resistance."¹⁶ Hitler may have underestimated the outcry of Christians when their own families and parishoners were subjected to "mercy-killing," but Christians certainly underestimated the ravaging effect that racial slurs and racial hatred have on a nation, a community, and an individual. The lessons of the Holocaust are a stern warning to all of us. The Nazis had enough gas left to kill 20 million more people. Who was next?

THE DANGER TODAY

Organized racism presents a challenge facing each American today. As our country has gone through a period of economic instability, a resurgence of prejudice and hatred is erupting in an alarming number of racial incidents and forming insidious hate groups. Daily it becomes less possible to ignore blatant racism as it knocks at the doors of our cities, our schools, and our churches. Ironically, just as during the Holocaust, the fast pace of American life and our preoccupation with personal problems relegates such incidents to the fringes of our con-

14. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, p. 84.

15. Werner Maser, *Hitler's Letters and Notes* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), p. 283. Note pages 278-83 for the notations.

16. Reitlinger, *The Final Solution*, pp. 132-33.

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sciousness. And, just as during the Holocaust, this "new" surge of racism deserves more than a passing glance or a shake of the head. Consider, for example, the following occurrences in the past few years.

In Minnesota in 1981 two women with Jewish backgrounds were attacked during the school year on *Christian* college campuses in the Twin Cities. One was a Jewish Christian in her first year of teaching in the biblical studies department at a Baptist college; the other was a Jewish nursing student at a Lutheran college. The biblical studies teacher suffered verbal harassment and written threats that shocked administration, faculty, and student body. The last note slipped under her door—apparently from an insider—read: "Christ-killers get killed or get out." She resigned after months of such notes and telephone calls. The nursing student suffered verbal threats and several physical assaults on the Lutheran campus by assailants who emphasized that her "kind" was not welcome on the Lutheran campus.

In Pennsylvania the same year, a young minister took a position in a Free Methodist church only to find that three of his board members were active in the Ku Klux Klan; and in West Virginia the Klan forced a United Methodist minister to resign his pastorate after he refused to allow them to promote the Klan during a Sunday service. The Methodist minister then found a butcher knife stuck through the upholstered back rest of his chair, and both he and his wife were threatened.¹⁷ Neither of those ministers was an activist, but they, their friends, and their families were made painfully aware of the horror of being surrounded by the terrorist tentacles of small but growing hate groups.

Black Christians are also suffering abuse. A black Baptist minister from a prominent urban church spoke to a radio audience in September 1982 on the topic of "Black Theology Today." This pastor has been very active in helping to educate and retrain blacks in computer technology, and his church is known for its charity and social concern. He received in the mail a carefully drawn gross caricature of a black man hanging from a Ku Klux Klan gallows with the caption, "The Best Kind." The note, filled with profanity, read: "You [vulgarity] Stinkin' [vulgarity] colored African Monkeys [sic] belong in Zoos with other Animals—Not among an [sic] White Human Society." A swastika was drawn below, with three K's in spaces between its prongs. The same swastikas have appeared on synagogues recently, a grim reminder of a not-too-distant past.

Pastors are increasingly finding both mild and fanatic adherents to these groups within their own congregations. A pastor in the Christian Church, for example, is constantly receiving material from two wealthy parishoners in his congregation. In fact, there appears to be a concentrated effort to "convert" denominational officials, and propaganda is received monthly, such as this letter to a dis-

17. "Klan Terrorizes UM Pastor, Forces Him to Flee Church," *The United Methodist Reporter*, 16 January 1981.

trict superintendent in the Methodist church from a New York Baptist pastor, which stated in part:

There are many advantages to living in upstate New York. Due to the low minority population we have a lower crime rate. The one draw back [*sic*] is not being personally [*sic*] involved with others who share my opinions. I do not accept the 6 million hoax; I believe Adolf Hitler was the greatest leader of the 20th century; I believe the modern jews are Khazars; I believe whole-heartedly [*sic*] in the Zionist conspiracy; and do not believe in race mixing.

Anti-Semitic literature was enclosed in an attempt to bolster this minister's racist creed. He also enclosed a *Christian Vanguard* newspaper and an article from *The Spotlight*, "The Paper You Can Trust."

CHRISTIAN RACISTS

These developments are frightening for a number of reasons. First of all, most of the hate groups call themselves "Christian." A classic example is the *Christian Vanguard*, the official publication of the New Christian Crusade Church. It claims to be "A Publication Compiled for the Elect," and to declare the "Gospel of the Kingdom." In one issue, the reader finds the cover article by the Reverend Oren E. Potito, "Jesus Was Not a Jew," in which Potito declares: "Anyone who would say . . . that Jesus Christ was a Jew racially is guilty of nothing less than blasphemy." He emphasizes that Christians who teach this are trying "to satisfy the Jews and escape persecution [by the Jews]."¹⁸ Subsequent articles—all in the same issue—include "Bible—Not a Jewish Book," "Can Anything Be 'Judeo-Christian'?" "God Commands Racial Segregation," and "7th Comm. Forbids Race Mixing." This last article announces that "Thou shalt not commit adultery" means that one must not *adulterate* the races or, in the words of the author, "mongrelize with a non-White." It includes ten pictures of "non-white" racial groups, including American Indians, blacks, Jews, and Asians. Editor Thomas E. O'Brien concludes:

No scientist, no Jew psychiatrist, no liberal professor, no minister, no priest, no politician, not even our senile Supreme Court can improve a child genetically; only your Creator could do that, and I am sure He has no intention of doing so.

To the non-whites who may have read this article, it pains me ever so deeply to point out your inadequacies, but I must tell the truth, there is no alternative. You see we Whites have to prepare ourselves for an after-life with our Father, YOU DO NOT!¹⁹

This racist "Christian" newspaper is replete with Bible verses taken out of context. Yet it declares that Christians who disagree with its conclusions on race

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are omitting certain sections and statements in the Bible. (The particular issue in which these quotes appear is number 69, first published in 1977 but distributed throughout the United States in the past few years because it is a favorite for recruitment.)

It is significant that such hate sheets keep declaring that the United States is a "Christian Nation." One soon realizes that their brand of Christianity is not only heretical but dangerous. Ku Klux Klan publications emphasize that KKK members are fine, upstanding *White Christians*, and that they are dedicated to preserving our *Christian Nation*. Sixty years ago Adolf Hitler claimed to be a good Christian and a loyal German patriot under the platform of his fledgling Nazi Party. It is frightening how similar this modern racial propaganda is to Nazi literature of a half century ago. It is alarming to see the same tactics utilized. For example, in Missouri a man who had worked a number of years for a company was notified that he had been layed off with little chance of being rehired. Immediately on his work bench appeared a card from the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan with the message "Racial Purity Is America's Security" and the address and phone number of the Klan in Metairie, Louisiana. On the back was this venomous message:

There are thousands of organizations working for the interests of Blacks. But, how many groups stand up for the cultural values and ideals of the White Majority? Not many? As a result we are faced with reverse discrimination in jobs, promotions, and scholarships—busing for forced integration—high taxes for minority welfare—a high rate of brutal crime—gun-control—anti-White movies and TV programs—in short, a society oriented to the wishes of minorities. We of the Ku Klux Klan are unapologetically committed to the interests, ideas, and cultural values of the White Majority. We are determined to maintain and enrich our cultural and racial heritage.

The card concludes: "We are growing fast and strong because we have never compromised the truth."²⁰

This card is an indication of the slick soft-sell of the modern Klan. It is subtle propaganda of which Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's Minister of Propaganda, would have been proud. Goebbels believed that if one told a lie long enough, people would believe it. He also believed that mixing in a little truth as bait on the hook would reel in many an unsuspecting sojourner.

A GROWING NETWORK

The incident mentioned above leads to the second reason such modern groups are frightening. These organizations are building a network to foster racism and to capitalize on racial fears and tensions. For example, in September 1979 a Christian woman was murdered in Akron, Ohio. The murderer happened to be

18. Oren E. Potito, "Jesus Was Not a Jew," *Christian Vanguard* 69 (1977), p. 1.
19. Thomas E. O'Brien, "7th Comm. Forbids Race Mixing," *ibid.*, p. 19.

20. The card, which is now in my possession, suggests: "Interested in finding out more? We'll send you a free copy of the CRUSADER newspaper and 10 free copies of this card."

a black man. Within one month after the murder, her husband, daughter, and four sons each received *The Thunderbolt* newspaper mailed from Marietta, Georgia to their respective addresses.

Published for over twenty years, this sixteen-page hate sheet claims to present "The White Mans' Viewpoint." The issue (October 1979) sent to the grieving Akron family carried the article "White Families Suffer from Negro Murders." Under the caption "Negro Murder and Rape Rampant" it prefaced five murder stories by declaring:

Government figures show that for the year 1977 negroes committed 87% of all murders in our major cities. They murdered 9,751 people and raped 89,425 women. For years most of the victims of negro crime were other blacks but now things are changing and an ever growing percentage are Whites. More and more frequently they murder their rape victims. Psychologists say that this is because they hate the entire White Race and are taking their mass hatred out on a single victim—most often a defenseless White woman. Here are but a few vicious crimes which have been committed in recent months and when all are lumped together demonstrate how deadly allowing negroes to live within our midst has become.²¹

The murders of an eleven-year-old Georgia boy, a twenty-two-year-old New Jersey female night desk clerk, a twenty-five-year-old New Jersey nurse, a sixty-eight-year-old woman, and an eleven-year-old Michigan girl were all then recounted in heartrending detail to arouse pity and desire for revenge. Pictures of some of the victims, along with two of their black "killers" were included in this article, which was designed to instill rage and prejudice toward the black community.

The cover story for this particular issue was "Refugees Cause Murder—Dis-ease—Welfare." The racist article was against Boat People. The caption under a picture of crowds of little refugee children asked: "Is America to be taken over by Asiatic hordes? There are at least 20 million who want to come to America." Other articles include "Jews Say They Are 'Master Race,'" "Degenerate Race Mixers Organize" and a large piece on Africa entitled "Africa Reverts to Jungle Savagery as Whites Driven Out." One of the most pathetic aspects of the paper was the pictures of indoctrinated little children involved in a demonstration by the National States Rights Party (the party supported by *The Thunderbolt*) against the Asian refugees.

Men promoting this racism are showing up unannounced in congregational services and Bible studies. Laden with prooftexts that they interpret "from the Greek," they seek to befuddle Bible study teachers and to turn the study toward their particular interest. In St. Paul, Minnesota, they attended a Central Baptist Church Bible study only to find a professor, well acquainted with New Testament Greek, teaching the lesson. Needless to say, he exposed their ignorance,

21. "White Families Suffer from Negro Murders," *The Thunderbolt* 246 (October 1979), p. 13.

yet they caused a great deal of disruption before being asked to leave. In Ashland, Ohio, in a Pentecostal church service, one of these individuals stood up during the testimony time and made quite an impression on some of the congregation by eloquently claiming to have all the gifts of the Holy Spirit. He would not stay for the entire service, but put photocopied racist hate sheets on all the car windows. The congregation soon learned from the sheets that this "noble Christian" was against all churches as well!

It is a pathetic fact, however, that most proponents are not as visible as these intruders. Church members within a large part of Protestantism and Catholicism are distributing similar material to their fellow church members and friends. Colleges and seminaries are also receiving such literature and sporadic "evangelists" of this cause. The reference librarian at the Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, was amazed at the racist literature an elderly, gray-haired lady donated to the Institute. That little lady, who looks like anybody's grandmother and has the zeal of a missionary, is Gerda Koch, the leader of a "Christian" research institute—an organization that spreads materials claiming that the Holocaust never happened and that there is a Jewish Zionist plot to take over the world. "Pray for me and Christian Research," she wrote, "that we may meet our Great Responsibilities toward our Nation and the World today!"²²

AN UGLY CIVIL RELIGION

It is perplexing how anyone could fall for such propaganda—that is, until we study the Holocaust. The Holocaust experience teaches us how easy it is to get caught up in such absurdity—to have lies possess your spirit and totally absorb your being. But the lies are often the most easily marketed products of these hate groups. They promote simplistic solutions to complex problems, emphasizing that their solutions are the *only* solutions. This is the third reason these modern hate groups are frightening. A good example is the issue of *The Thunderbolt* sent to the Akron family. It states the following at the end of its article on black murderers and their victims:

THE ONLY SOLUTION: The National States Rights Party calls for the eventual deportation of every black in America to their native homeland in the jungles of Africa. They have failed their golden opportunity to adjust to civilization. If we are to survive as a Race and Nation there is but one solution left and that is Abraham Lincoln's back-to-Africa plan. "The American Colonization Society" sent over 20,000 negroes back to Liberia in Africa. A national enlightenment will help us to complete this great task and save civilization.²³

22. This statement appeared on one of her "Christian Book Lists" for Christian Research, Eureka Springs, Arkansas. She also added, "As God provides we give out thousands of pieces of literature during the year." See Morton Ryweck's assessment of her booth at the Minnesota State Fair in Peter Ackerberg, "Anti-Semitism in Minneapolis," *Minneapolis Star*, 10 October 1978, p. 9a.

23. "White Families Suffer," p. 13.

A study of the Holocaust will bring a chill to the reader of these words. National "enlightenment" is their goal. As Hitler "enlightened" with propaganda and force, so these organizations have their simplistic solutions. As German citizens, because of race, were divested of centuries of family heritage and citizenship under the Nazi regime, so in the name of "civilization" these groups would propose to violate the rights of American citizens.

In such a distorted gospel, a view of the world develops that disdains the rights and privileges of human beings and seeks to dehumanize any but the approved group. When one looks beyond the religious facade, an ugly civil religion appears. This religion equates *Christianity* with *American* and *God's Chosen People* with the *pure white races*.

The warning is clear. Week after week a CB operator drove up and down Interstate 71 in Ohio calling:

Detroit, Michigan . . . Detroit, Michigan . . . If you don't want another little Atlanta coming up there in Detroit and destroying all of those little pickaninnys [a slang term for Negro children] out there on the street . . . you all better straighten up because the Ku Klux Klan . . . the Southern Louisiana Ku Klux Klan is going to take care of you. . . . If you don't start working and get off the welfare rolls, so the other people in the United States don't have to pay for your living and your propagation . . . we are going to kill those little niggers out there so that the big niggers don't grow up. If we have to kill those big niggers out there, we will do that too!²⁴

He called them "black animals." He called himself "The Nigger Eradicator." His solution is extermination, and yet he talked of "spiritual values."

They all do. The masthead of the *Christian Vanguard* reads: "HE WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH AND DOES NOT SPEAK OUT, IS A MISERABLE CREATURE"—a caption that rises above Potito's article, "Jesus Was Not A Jew." Even the American Nazi *White Power* paper promotes a civil religion and declares: "Only a spiritual rebirth can rescue our young people from the inner emptiness which has overtaken them. . . . Unless we can turn our young people away from leading lives guided by empty materialism and inspire them with a new set of spiritual values, the outlook for our Race is very, very dark."²⁵ One should not be surprised to hear a modern American Nazi say such a thing. The twenty-fourth point of Hitler's Nazi party platform in 1920 stated in part: "The Party, as such, stands for positive Christianity." The same point denounces the Jewish people.

In Montgomery County, Maryland, outside of Washington, D.C., thirteen hate-violence incidents, two-thirds of which were anti-Semitic, were reported in 1980. In 1981 the number exploded to 101, and in just the first nine months

24. This particular broadcast was taped by the Reverend Joseph Heilman on March 4, 1981. Mr. Heilman is presently a Methodist pastor in West Virginia.

25. Martin Kerr, "What's Happening to Our Kids?" *White Power* 89 (January-February 1979), p. 7.

of 1982 was at 143. The first half of November 1982 had at least eight reported incidents, including one at the Georgetown home of author Herman Wouk (the author of *The Winds of War*). A young Jewish girl who had viewed the display of swastikas, slogans of hate toward Jews, and the eight-foot Nazi eagle defacing the Shaare Tefila Synagogue in Silver Spring that month later viewed a similar defacement of her elementary school in Rockville. This time the perpetrators of hate drew gas chambers and painted slogans such as "Hitler was right," "Death to Jews and Gooks," and (next to the gas chamber) "Silent but deadly genocide." The little Jewish girl turned to her mother with questioning eyes and said, "I thought they caught those guys." Her mother responded saying that this was done by "other guys" and that "there are more of them."²⁶

Because of these facets of racist ideology in our modern era, Christian response is no longer an option—it is a mandate. We cannot allow the "Christian" attitude to be interpreted through the words and actions of these hate groups. We must be prepared. We must know the consequences; we must be able to sift the wheat from the chaff. Our study of the Holocaust will help us do this. Our remembrance of the love of Jesus, a love that directed Him to declare that even *enemies* are to be loved, should strengthen the Christian on this journey. If we are to love our enemies, should we not also love our fellow neighbor of a different race, ethnic origin, or religious faith?

We begin our journey into the Holocaust experience long before the rise of Nazism; in fact, long before Hitler's birth. We begin our history less than a century after Jesus' death. Before we begin our voyage, let us listen to the pleas of two victims who in their agony tried to preserve a record for us: one from the ghetto; one from the camp. The twenty-year-old leader of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, Mordechai Anielewicz, wrote the first; Zalman Gradowski in Auschwitz wrote the second:

Aware that our days are numbered we urge you: remember how we have been betrayed.²⁷

I know you will not believe me. I know, but you must.²⁸

26. Michael Kernan, "The Specter of Anti-Semitism, The Unending Web of Fear," *Washington Post*, 1 December 1982.

27. "Last Letter of Mordechai Anielewicz," in Ber Mark, *Uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto*, trans. Ger-shon Freidlin (New York: Schocken Books, 1975), p. 54.

28. Elie Wiesel, "The Holocaust as Literary Inspiration," in *Dimensions of the Holocaust* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern U., 1977), p. 11.

THE WORLD CONQUERORS: A DISTILLATION OF CENTURIES OF HATE

Men and women who call themselves Christians in Hungary, Vienna, and New York City have encouraged and bolstered Janos's views. His favorite book is popular in these circles in New York City and has been circulated by some of the racist groups already mentioned. It is Louis Marschalko's *The World Conquerors: The Real War Criminals*, translated from the Hungarian by A. Suranyi. In this book, the real criminals of World War II are the Jews. German Nazis are portrayed as those who "tried most earnestly to establish co-operation and partnership among the European élite."¹ The German Nazis were looking for "those considered good patriots in their own country," and they "recognised that the individual has social rights." Although the "National Socialist revolution" had a peaceful and cooperating Europe "in the making," Marschalko insists that the Jews began a propaganda campaign to discredit Hitler's altruistic motives. According to *The World Conquerors*, Hitler was slandered by the Jews as a power-monger who had a low opinion of other European nations—whereas in fact the Führer was only a peaceful visionary for unity. Marschalko continues: "Meanwhile, in 1938, Roosevelt, who can only be regarded as a puppet of the Jewish brains trust, sent the following gaily worded wire to Churchill for the promotion of war preparation: 'You and I can rule the world.'"²

As the student of World War II can plainly see, Marschalko not only rewrites the history of the Holocaust (Chapter 11 is entitled, "What Has Become of Six Million Jews?"), but also rewrites the whole history of the war! His concluding statement in the book is that the "new slogan" for those who are an "awakening people" has to be: "Anti-Jewish people of the world unite before it is too late."³

An important element in *The World Conquerors* is the author's attempt to separate Christianity from its Jewish roots and Jesus from Judaism. This is typical of today's racist literature. Marschalko seeks to drive a wedge between the Old and New Testaments by portraying the Old Testament as "Jewish holy books" filled with Jewish violence, criminal activity, and fanatical tribal nationalism that killed neighbors and sought to conquer the world under the "national laws of the God-Führer." According to Marschalko, the Jewish prophets and kings deserved total condemnation, "but the so-called Christian churches condemn nothing, yet continue teaching Gentile children that most pornographic and bloodthirsty book—the Old Testament."⁴ After denouncing the Old Testament, he attempts to show that Jesus condemned both it and the Jewish people. Using Houston Stewart Chamberlain's *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* (see next chapter), Marschalko explains that Chamberlain "deduces clearly the fatal

1. Louis Marschalko, *The World Conquerors: The Real War Criminals*, trans. A. Suranyi (1958; United States: Christian Book Club, reprint, 1978), p. 75.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 295.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

2

Between Church and Synagogue Two Millennia of Christian Anti-Semitism

A third-generation minister in the Hungarian Reformed church, Janos was a reserved man, almost withdrawn and shy at first meeting. One would hardly associate him with foaming-at-the-mouth Hitler brownshirts. And yet by his second month in seminary, some students were calling him "the campus Nazi"; others were deeply troubled by his theological views. Quiet Janos became very vocal at the mention of the Jewish people, whether in class or in church, and he would immediately launch into an exposition of how "Jews control the world" or how "Jews were trying to control the world." To Janos, the Jewish Holocaust never occurred; and Jews, whom he believed to be in control of the press and media round the world, were exploiting this "lie" to further extend their sinister reach. Janos refused to preach from the Old Testament (the "Jewish" Bible), and he claimed that competent historians had found that Jesus was not really a Jew. Conspiracy and hate literature was a part of Janos's life; he did not realize how much it consumed him. He would talk incessantly against the Jews, unaware that this topic dominated his conversations. At times he claimed that two-thirds of the ministers in the Hungarian Reformed church agreed with this message, and that the congregants "knew all about it." His superior promoted anti-Semitism in special "ministry" classes that completely separated Jesus from Judaism.

Janos is a victim, and it will take a powerful miracle to cleanse him completely from the spiritual cancer that has infested his being.

consequences attending Jewry's entry into world history and is the earliest author to discover that Christ, insofar as racial descent is concerned, was not a Jew."⁵ He then proceeds to portray the Jewish people as "Christ-killers," incapable of being good citizens, deceptive manipulators of both capitalism and Communism in their venture as "world conquerors." Marschalko in his first chapter constantly speaks of "we Christians"; and by the time he reaches the rewriting of World War II and the quote cited above concerning Roosevelt and Churchill, he boldly adds, "World Jewry declared war on Europe *and on Christianity* at the very moment Hitler came to power, or perhaps even before."⁶ By separating Christianity from Judaism, Jesus from Jews, Christians from Jews, and ultimately, Jews from God, Marschalko is in a position to declare anything he wishes against the Jewish people. Thus he supplies a rationale for his readers who are swept along on his perilous journey of hate.

Although traditional Christianity would disdain Marschalko's eradication of the Old Testament, the concept of separation is unfortunately not new. It originated in the early conflict between the church and the synagogue—a conflict that would plague historic Jewish-Christian relationships.

THE BIBLICAL ERA

Jesus was a Jew. Those who first followed him were Jews. He chose only Jews as his disciples. Christianity was the child of Judaism, and Jerusalem was the center of Christianity in the early decades of the church. That early Christian believers were Jewish is evident in Acts 15, which records that at a Jerusalem council around A.D. 50 (a couple of decades after Jesus' death) Jewish Christians debated whether or not Gentile converts should be under the Mosaic law. In other words, they were asking: "Should the Gentiles become Jewish *before* they become Christians?" Only after great debate and a spirited speech by Peter (who had debated on the other side a few years earlier), did James the Just, the presiding elder of their congregation, express his judgment, that they "not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles [i.e., not trouble them to become Jewish first], but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood" (Acts 15:19–20). The suggestions were very Jewish-oriented, and historical records reveal very *Jewish* followers of Jesus. Recent scholarship has convincingly maintained what some scholars of the past had asserted, that is, that the apostles continued their own Jewish identity and practices and probably encouraged other Jewish believers to do so as well. Paul himself appears to have remained an observant Jew his whole life, and it has been pointed out that salvation by grace is a very Jewish concept. A vibrant Jewish Christianity devel-

5. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

oped in Judea during the apostolic period, being considered by the Romans a sect of Judaism.⁷

EARLY TRIUMPHALISM

The Roman intrusion into Judea and the widespread acceptance of Christianity by the Gentiles complicated the history of Jewish Christianity. The Roman wars against the Jews not only destroyed the Temple and Jerusalem, but also resulted in Jerusalem's relinquishing her position as a center of Christian faith in the Roman world. In addition, the rapid acceptance of Christianity among the Gentiles led to an early conflict between the church and the synagogue. The Gentile Christians interpreted the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem as a sign that God had *abandoned* Judaism, that He had provided the Gentiles freedom to develop their own Christian theology in a setting free from Jerusalem's influence. Theological and political power moved from Jewish Christian leaders in Jerusalem to centers of Gentile Christian leadership such as Alexandria, Rome, and Antioch. It is important to understand this change, because it influenced the early church Fathers to make anti-Jewish statements.⁸

This historical background also underscores the problem that the Gentile Christian church faced. Unlike Marschalko in *The World Conquerors*, and even though the Gentile Christian church disdained Judaism and Jewish nationalism, the church believed that the Jewish Scriptures were *her* Scriptures—the Scriptures used by Jesus, Paul and the disciples! Early church Fathers quoted from the Jewish Scriptures and even defended themselves to the Romans from the Jewish Scriptures.

And yet, the use of the Jewish Scriptures by the Gentile church required some reinterpretation because, according to those Scriptures, the Jewish people are the chosen people of God, the people of the Covenant and the people of the Book, with an immense responsibility to the world. The Gentile church attempted to reconcile this difficulty by reinterpreting those Scriptures to state that the Christian church is the true Israel, the "new" Israel—not just grafted in as Paul declared in Romans 11:17, but totally *replacing* the Jewish people. This triumphalism, the attitude of celebrating a victory over an "enemy," has fanned

7. Note E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977). Compare W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (London: S.P.C.K., 1958); and W. D. Davies, *Christian Origins and Judaism* (London: Darton, Longman & Dott, 1962). Recent Jewish scholarship, which is most interesting, includes David Flusser, *Jesus* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969) and Richard L. Rubenstein, *My Brother Paul* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972). Journal articles abound. See, for example, Leonard Swindler, "The Jewishness of Jesus: Some Religious Implications for Christians," *Journal of Ecclesiastical Studies* 18 (Winter 1981): 104–13. On salvation by grace in Judaism, note David H. Stern, "Non-Messianic Judaism Teaches God's Grace" (unpublished essay), as quoted and discussed in David A. Rausch, *Messianic Judaism: Its History, Theology and Polity* (New York: Edwin Mellen, 1982), pp. 122–23.

8. For an extended treatment of this topic refer to my book *Messianic Judaism: Its History, Theology and Polity* (New York: Edwin Mellen, 1982), pp. 1–20.

the flames of religious anti-Semitism ever since. Let us analyze the rhetoric of the ante-Nicene church Fathers (those before the Council of Nicca in A.D. 325).

THE ANTE-NICENE FATHERS

On his way to martyrdom by the Romans, Ignatius, the Bishop of Antioch, claimed in his *Epistle to the Philippians* at the beginning of the second century that Satan “fights along with the Jews to a denial of the cross”⁹ and that “if any one celebrates the passover along with the Jews, or receives emblems of their feast, he is a partaker with those that killed the Lord and His apostles.”¹⁰ This is ironic, because Jesus and the apostles always observed the Passover. Ignatius upheld the prophets and declared, “And the Prophets, let us love them too, because they anticipated the gospel in their preaching.”¹¹ Nevertheless, a few lines later he wrote, “Now, if anyone preaches Judaism to you, pay no attention to him.”¹²

“NOT YOURS, BUT OURS”

The Epistle of Barnabas, which circulated about the same period, explained that the Jewish sacrifices were abolished, their fasts not acceptable to God, and that Christians, not Jews, were actually the heirs of God’s Covenant with Abraham. To those who believed the Jewish people still had a future through the Covenant, the epistle harshly stated: “Take heed now to yourselves, and not to be like some adding largely to your sins, and saying, ‘The covenant is both theirs and ours.’ But they [the Jews] thus finally lost it.”¹³ This epistle was highly regarded in the church and was even included in some of the early canon lists. Reading between the lines, one notes the existence of Christians who believed that the Jewish people definitely had a future through the Abrahamic Covenant and were quite vocal about it.

Alas, many in the church were not content with claiming an interest in the Jewish Scriptures, but proceeded to try to make the Old Testament the exclusive domain of the church. Justin Martyr, one of the greatest Christian defenders of the faith, took up this theme. In his *Dialogue with Trypho* (c. A.D. 140), Justin quoted fluidly from the Jewish Scriptures and then proclaimed to Trypho, the Jewish escapee from the Second Jewish Revolt:

For these words have neither been prepared by me, nor embellished by the art of man; but David sung them, Isaiah preached them, Zechariah proclaimed them, and

9. Ignatius *The Epistle to the Philippians* 4. All references from the early church Fathers can be found in Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds., *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325*, 10 vols. (Edinburgh: The Ante-Nicene Christian Library, 1885–1896).

10. Ignatius *Philippians*, 14.

11. Ignatius *Philippians*, 5.

12. Ignatius *Philippians*, 6.

13. *Epistle of Barnabas* 4. Compare 2, 3, 5, and 13.

Moses wrote them. Are you acquainted with them, Trypho? They are contained in your Scriptures, or rather not yours, but ours. For we believe them; but you, though you read them, do not catch the spirit that is in them.¹⁴

Later Justin remarked to Trypho: “For the prophetic gifts remain with us, even to the present time. And hence you ought to understand that [the gifts] formerly among your nation have been transferred to us.”¹⁵

“CHRIST-KILLERS”

Justin was a Gentile, born in Samaria around A.D. 110 and very possibly of Roman descent. Other church Fathers based their Gentile-biased arguments on his First Apology to Antoninus Pius written around A.D. 155. Early in his First Apology he wrote that Jesus was “crucified under Pontius Pilate.”¹⁶ Later, however, he declared: “The Jews who are in possession of the books of the prophets did not recognize Christ even when he came, and they hate us who declare that he has come and show that he was crucified by them [the Jews] as predicted.”¹⁷ Although Justin is milder than other early Fathers, the “Christ-killer” theme permeated church history—wreaking havoc on the Jewish community.

Another historic justification for persecuting Jewish people was Jewish persecution of Christians. Justin emphasized: “[Jews] consider us their enemies and opponents, putting us to death or punishing us, as you [Romans] do, whenever they can, as you can realize—for in the Jewish War recently past, Bar Cochba, the leader of the revolt of the Jews, ordered Christians only to be subjected to terrible punishments unless they would deny Jesus the Christ and blasphemous [Him].”¹⁸ Decades earlier, Justin remarked to Trypho the Jew:

For the circumcision according to the flesh, which is from Abraham, was given for a sign; that you may be separated from other nations, and from us; and that you alone may suffer that which you justly suffer; and that you may be desolate, and your cities burned with fire; and that strangers may eat your fruit in your presence and not one of you may go up to Jerusalem. . . . Accordingly, these things have happened to you in fairness and justice, for you have slain the Just One [Jesus], and His prophets before Him; and now you reject those who hope in Him, and in Him who sent Him—God the Almighty and Maker of all things—cursing in your synagogues those that believe on Christ. For you have not the power to lay hands upon us, on account of those [the Romans] who now have mastery. But as often as you could, you did so.¹⁹

14. Justin Martyr *Dialogue with Trypho*, A. Jew 29. Italics added. There is some debate among scholars as to whether Trypho actually existed or was a composite figure Justin drew from conversations with a number of Jews.

15. Justin Martyr *Trypho* 82.

16. Justin Martyr *First Apology* 13.

17. Justin Martyr *First Apology* 36.

18. Justin Martyr *First Apology* 31.

19. Justin Martyr *Trypho* 16. Italics added.

Justin admitted that the Jews were not responsible for most of the persecution against Christians. Jews, in fact, had a very difficult time maintaining their own religious rights in the Roman Empire after the revolts in Palestine. Nevertheless, according to official church interpretation the curses of the Scriptures were applied to the Jewish people whereas the blessings of the Scriptures were applied to the church. The Jews were supposed to "justly suffer" as the "Christ-killers," an emphasis that has continued to be used to the present day.

These themes permeate the writings of the early Fathers of the Christian church. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyon after A.D. 177, declared that the Jews were "disinherited from the grace of God" and "would never have hesitated to burn their own Jewish Scriptures."²⁰ Hippolytus of Rome wrote around A.D. 200: "Hear my words, and give heed thou Jew. Many a time dost thou boast thyself that thou didst condemn Jesus of Nazareth to death . . . Of what retribution does Jesus speak? Manifestly of the misery which has now got hold of thee."²¹ Origen of Alexandria and Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, both blamed Jews for the persecution of Christians that occurred about A.D. 250. Cyprian demanded that all Jews be forced to leave his diocese or die.²² Tertullian of Carthage pounded another nail in the Jews' coffin when he wrote around A.D. 200:

In former times the Jews enjoyed much of God's favor, when the fathers of their race were noted for their righteousness and faith. So it was that as a people they flourished greatly, and their kingdom attained to a lofty eminence. . . . But how deeply they [the Jews] have sinned, puffed up to their fall with a false trust in their noble ancestors, turning from God's way into a way of sheer impiety, though they themselves should refuse to admit it, their present national ruin would afford sufficient proof.²³

The foundation had been laid and the message was clear. The Jews were no longer God's chosen people. They had persecuted and killed Jesus Christ and Christians. The Jews deserved persecution and the loss of their land. The Christian church had inherited the covenant promises of God—the church was God's chosen people. The curses of the Bible were ascribed to the Jews; the blessings of the Bible to the Christians. This was religious anti-Semitism, and even Hitler would draw on this foundation.

THE CHURCH WITH WORLDLY POWER

When church and state were linked in the fourth century, due initially to Emperor Constantine, Christian persecution of the Jewish people became a regular practice. By the end of the fourth century, Christianity was the official and

20. Irenaeus *Against Heresies* 3. 21.

21. Hippolytus *Against Jews* 1. 5.

22. See Dagobert Kunes, *The Jew and the Cross* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1966), p. 41.

23. Tertullian *Apology* 21.

exclusive religion of the Roman state. It would seem the church would have no more reason to fear Judaism. Ironically, the church's paranoia got worse; attacks against the Jewish community became more bitter. In A.D. 325, Constantine as a "Christian" emperor forbade Jews to live in Jerusalem. They were not allowed to engage in any proselytizing. At the Council of Nicea it was decided that Easter should not be determined by the Jewish Passover calendar, and that Christians should "have nothing in common with this odious people," the Jews. Emperor Constantine in A.D. 357 confiscated the property of a Christian who dared to convert to Judaism, and Hilary of Poitiers wrote that the Jews were a perverse people accursed by God *forever*. Ambrose of Milan was so upset with Emperor Theodosius I for ordering the synagogue in Milan to be rebuilt that he wrote: "I hereby declare, that it was I who set fire to the synagogue; indeed, I gave the orders for it to be done so that there should no longer be any place where Christ is denied."²⁴

"I WISH TO DRAW MY BATTLE LINE"—JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

The Fathers were men of piety, noted for moral excellence in other areas of the Christian life. When it came to the Jewish people, however, they were found wanting. A classic example of this phenomenon is the most famous preacher of the fourth century, John Chrysostom, known as the "Golden Tongue." A man admired by the common people and a fearless advocate of modest Christian living to the most pompous of royalty, Chrysostom showed complete lack of restraint toward the Jewish people in a series of eight long sermons delivered in Antioch in A.D. 387.

The only reason Chrysostom was so upset was because some Christians were fellowshipping with Jews. That the Christian church had separated herself from the Jewish parent and severed all ties in an irrational paranoia is amply evident in Chrysostom's raging denunciations. The church, firmly in control of Roman society, presented a bold contrast to the Jewish community, which was choked by rules and restrictions. Yet Chrysostom deemed it necessary to strike out against the Jewish people. In these sermons one clearly sees where the rhetoric of the early church Fathers led—and even more frightening, where it can go. Chrysostom began by discussing an "illness" that had infected the church. He declared:

What is this disease? The festivals of the pitiful and miserable Jews . . . There are many in our ranks who say they think as we do. Yet some of these are going to watch the festivals and others will join the Jews in keeping their feasts and observing their fasts. I wish to drive this perverse custom from the church right now . . . if I should fail to cure those who are sick with the Judaizing disease, I am afraid that, because of their ill-suited association and deep ignorance, some Christians may par-

24. Note Paul E. Grosser and Edwin G. Halperin, *The Causes and Effects of Anti-Semitism: The Dimensions of a Prejudice* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1978), pp. 77-79.

take in the Jews' transgressions . . . For if they hear no word from me today, they will then join the Jews in their fasts; once they have committed this sin, it will be useless for me to apply the remedy.²⁵

"But do not be surprised that I call the Jews pitiable," he explained. "They really are pitiable and miserable."²⁶

According to Chrysostom, the Jews were murderers, and worse than wild beasts. Their synagogue "is not only a brothel and a theater; it is also a den of robbers and a lodging for wild beasts." "No Jew adores God!" he exclaimed. His proof for this statement: "The Son of God says so."²⁷ Chrysostom held the whole Jewish people culpable for the killing of Christ, using statements that would be reaffirmed by anti-Semites for the next sixteen centuries: "So the godlessness of the Jews and the pagans is on a par. But the Jews practice a deceit which is more dangerous. In their synagogue stands an invisible altar of deceit on which they sacrifice not sheep and calves but the souls of men."²⁸ "Finally, if the ceremonies of the Jews move you to admiration, what do you have in common with us?" Chrysostom asked his audience.

One can easily see that a Jewish Christian who wanted to hold on to his heritage or a Gentile Christian who wanted to learn more about the parent of Christianity would have found it extremely difficult under this pressure. Furthermore, Chrysostom sought to separate Christianity totally from Judaism. For example, in the fourth sermon he cajoled:

Let me, too, now say this against these Judaizing Christians. If you judge that Judaism is the true religion, why are you causing trouble to the church? But if Christianity is the true faith, as it really is, stay in it and follow it. Tell me this. Do you share with us the mysteries, do you worship Christ as a Christian, do you ask him for blessing, and do you then celebrate the festival with his foes? With what purpose, then, do you come to the church?²⁹

"I have said enough against those who say they are on our side but are eager to follow the Jewish rites . . . it is against the Jews that I wish to draw up my battle line."³⁰

Four more sermons of vitriolic hatred ensued, bringing the number to eight in all; each contained diatribes against Jews, Judaism and the synagogue; each separated Jesus Christ from the Jewish people who gave him birth. Chrysostom in the seventh sermon began: "Have you had enough of the fight against the

25. John Chrysostom, *Discourses Against Judaizing Christians* 1. 1. 5. This discourse as well as others from the period can be found in Philip Schaff, ed., *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, 14 vols. (Buffalo, N.Y.: Christian Literature Company, 1886-1890).

26. Chrysostom *Discourses* 1. 2. 1.

27. Chrysostom *Discourses* 1. 3. 1-2.

28. Chrysostom *Discourses* 1. 4. 4.

29. Chrysostom *Discourses* 4. 4. 1.

30. Chrysostom *Discourses* 4. 4. 2.

Jews? Or do you wish me to take up the same topic today? Even if I have already had much to say on it, I still think you want to hear the same thing again. The man who does not have enough of loving Christ will never have enough of fighting those who hate Christ."³¹ The message is clear, according to Patristic reasoning. Those who love Jesus hate Jews—and fight Jews.

Chrysostom ended his eighth sermon by asking his congregation to pay him interest on the "money" (message) he deposited with them, demanding imperative "action on your own part."³² Tragically, centuries of anti-Semitic incidents resulted. In spite of her high position in the Roman Empire, the Christian church remained paranoid about Judaism.

"I RENOUNCE ALL" — PROFESSIONS OF FAITH FOR JEWISH CONVERTS

The professions of faith required by Jewish converts to Christianity in the ancient and medieval periods indicate the total separation from Judaism required by the church. "I do here and now renounce every rite and observance of the Jewish religion, detesting all its most solemn ceremonies and tenets that in former days I kept and held," the convert had to affirm in one creed. "I altogether deny and reject the error of the Jewish religion," he proceeded. "[I] shun all intercourse with other Jews and have the circle of my friends only among honest Christians." The convert had to admit that "because of our pertinacious lack of faith and the ancient errors of our fathers" he had been held back from the Christian faith, and therefore, he would not "become involved in any Jewish rites or customs nor associate with the accursed Jews who remain unbaptized." He was not to shun "swines' flesh," and for him and his family he must swear, "We will not on any pretext, either ourselves, our children or our descendants, choose wives from our own race; but in the case of both sexes we will always link ourselves in matrimony with Christians."³³

Others were forced to declare that they would never return "to the vomit of my former error, or associating with the wicked Jews. In every respect will I lead the Christian life and associate with Christians." Denunciation of their Jewish families and Jewish heritage was always required. Such denunciation was sometimes very thorough. For example, the church of Constantinople required in part:

I renounce all customs, rites, legalisms, unleavened breads and sacrifices of lambs of the Hebrews, and all the other feasts of the Hebrews, sacrifices, prayers, aspersions, purifications, sanctifications and propitiations, and fasts, and new moons, and Sabbath baths, and substitutions, and hymns and chants and observances and synagogues,

31. Chrysostom *Discourses* 7. 1. 1.

32. Chrysostom *Discourses* 8. 9. 9.

33. Such professions are plentiful and follow the same basic patterns. For a selection, note James Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue: A Study in the Origins of Antisemitism* (New York: World, 1934), pp. 394-400.

and the food and drink of the Hebrews; in one word, I renounce absolutely everything Jewish, every law, rite and custom, and above all I renounce Antichrist, whom all the Jews await in the figure and form of Christ; and I join myself to the true Christ and God.³⁴

The penalty for eating and feasting with one's Jewish family, or for going astray from the oath in any way, also had to be declared by the Jewish convert to Christianity. In this case he declared that if he lapsed from his oath, "then let the trembling of Cain and the leprosy of Gehazi cleave to me, as well as the legal punishments to which I acknowledge myself liable. And may I be anathema in the world to come, and may my soul be set down with Satan and the devils."³⁵

Such declarations are even sadder because a large number of Jews were forced to convert to Christianity under the penalty of death! For example, Byzantine emperors such as Heraclius, Leo III, and Basil I promoted forced conversions during the medieval period. After outlawing Judaism, Leo III commanded that all Jews in the empire undergo baptism. Some died rather than convert, but a large number underwent baptism—and later "unbaptized" themselves.

INFERIOR CITIZENS

Those Byzantines then had to satisfy themselves by disrupting synagogue worship and enacting laws prohibiting Jews from holding government posts, evangelizing, or owning Christian slaves. Jews were clearly considered inferior citizens.³⁶ In the West, kings such as Chilperic, a Frank of the sixth century,³⁶ ordered the baptism of a large number of Jews, setting a precedent that culminated in massive forced conversions of thousands of Jews (and death and expulsion of others) during the Spanish Inquisition in the latter fifteenth century. The medieval Roman church progressively stripped the Jewish people of legal rights, rights that had taken centuries to procure under the pagan Roman Empire. The decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 during the papacy of Innocent III ordered Jews to wear distinctive garments, ostensibly to curtail intimate relationships between Jews and Christians. The distinguishing badge took many forms: in Italy a disk was sewn on the clothing; in German areas a distinctive hat was worn; and in England two strips of white linen or parchment were sewn on a prominent part of the clothing. Ironically, during this time English princes needed Jews to get around the usury laws of the church, and therefore ignored anti-Jewish legislation put forward by the council—and turned the badges into forms of protection.³⁷

34. *Ibid.*, 397.

35. Note Andrew Sharf, *Byzantine Jewry: From Justinian to the Fourth Crusade* (New York: Schocken, 1971), especially chapters 4 and 5.

36. Parkes, *Conflict of Church and Synagogue*, pp. 334–35. Compare Peter Lasko, *The Kingdom of the Franks: North-West Europe Before Charlemagne* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971), pp. 64–65.

37. Marion Gibbs and Jane Lang, *Bishops and Reform, 1215–1272: With Special Reference to the Lateran Council of 1215* (1934; reprint, New York: Oxford U., 1962), pp. 134–35.

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TWO WHO STOOD FOR WHAT WAS RIGHT

Most Christians were products of their culture, imbued with the anti-Jewish propaganda passed down from the early church Fathers. Some, when it was in their best interest, (as with the princes above) were compelled to help the Jewish people. A few, however, stepped out because they believed that persecution of Jewish people was wrong, or had gone too far.

A good example is found in Bernard of Clairvaux, a distinguished figure of the twelfth century who was asked to preach a sermon to get the Second Holy Crusade off the ground. The Christian Crusaders to the Holy Land during the First Crusade (1096–1099) had viciously plundered and killed the Jews of Europe to finance their trip. Once in Jerusalem, they rushed through the streets killing every human being in sight—man, woman, and child. These knights were savages, and the streets were running with blood. They burned the Jews alive in the chief synagogue, circling the screaming, flame-tortured humanity singing "Christ We Adore Thee!" with their Crusader crosses held high. Bernard was aghast at such conduct, and in his sermon he emphasized that on this Crusade the knights must not persecute Jews. There were fewer Jewish victims because of his convictions, although incidents occurred. One Jewish man was stabbed five times by a group of Crusaders "in memory of the wounds suffered by Jesus."³⁸

During the Reformation period, Johann Reuchlin was also forced to make a decision and felt compelled to take a stand for what was right. A famed Hebraist and Christian humanist, Reuchlin was a product of his age and had considered Jews to be blasphemous and barbaric. And yet, when a Hebrew Christian, Joseph Pfefferkorn, and the Dominicans obtained permission to seize copies of the Talmud and burn it, Reuchlin tried to convince educators, church leaders, and princes to save the Jewish literature. For his courageous act, he suffered abusive accusations that he was a "Judaizer" and was receiving money from Jews. He was forced to appear before the Inquisitors. In his tract *Spectacles* he asserted that a Christian should have conversations with Jewish people, learning from them and buying from them. "A Christian should love a Jew as his neighbor," Reuchlin maintained, "all this is founded on the law." Reuchlin finally appealed to Pope Leo X and was acquitted. The Talmud books were spared.³⁹

MARTIN LUTHER AND THE REFORMATION—AN UNFULFILLED PROMISE

Unfortunately the Jewish people could not count on another famous Christian humanist of the period, Desiderius Erasmus. "When an overly zealous Jewish convert to Christianity wished to destroy the Jewish books, Erasmus said that so long as the New Testament was secure he would prefer to let him have

38. Hans Eberhard Mayer, *The Crusades*, trans. John Gillingham (New York: Oxford U., 1972), pp. 99–100.

39. Edward H. Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews: Twenty-Three Centuries of Anti-Semitism* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), pp. 150–51.

the Old rather than disturb the peace of Christendom."⁴⁰ Thus, one of the most gifted and brilliant men of the period was willing to tolerate a bad situation. In contrast, Erasmus' future opponent and the great Reformer of the period, Martin Luther, defended Reuchlin when replying to scholars who had written to him concerning the affair.⁴¹

Luther appeared to be a breath of fresh air in the midst of a dismal situation. Initially, he had high regard for the Jewish people because he expected them to convert en masse once they were presented with a Christian message free from "papal paganism." In his treatise *That Jesus Christ Was Born a Jew* (1523) the German Reformer demonstrated that Jesus Christ was a Jew, born of the seed of Abraham, and provided a sad commentary on the medieval church's treatment of the Jewish people. He wrote: "If I had been a Jew and had seen such dolts and blockheads govern and teach the Christian faith, I would sooner have become a hog than a Christian." At this time he took a firm stand against the mistreatment of Jews, and advocated a new relationship with them. He concluded:

Therefore, I would request and advise that one deal gently with them [the Jews] and instruct them from Scripture; then some of them may come along. Instead of this we are trying only to drive them by force, slandering them, accusing them of having Christian blood if they don't stink, and I know not what other foolishness. So long as we thus treat them like dogs, how can we expect to work any good among them? Again, when we forbid them to labor and do business and have any human fellowship with us, thereby forcing them into usury, how is that supposed to do them any good? If we really want to help them, we must be guided in our dealings with them not by papal law but by the law of Christian love. We must receive them cordially, and permit them to trade and work with us, hear our Christian teachings, and witness our Christian life. If some of them should prove stiff-necked, what of it? After all, we ourselves are not all good Christians either.⁴²

It is no wonder that Jewish people viewed the Reformation as an opportunity for religious freedom, an opportunity to be treated as human beings.

Alas, Luther became irritated when the Jewish people continued to resist conversion. In 1526 he complained of the Jews' stubbornness, and by the 1530s he was presenting the common medieval stereotypes accorded to Jews. In conversions in *Table Talks* he caricatured Jews as "stiff-necked," "ironhearted," "stubborn as the Devil," and "usurers." In 1543, at the end of his life, he wrote three derogatory treatises against Jews, which anti-Semites would quote for the next four hundred years. So horrible were his statements that Julius Streicher, Hit-

40. Roland H. Bainton, *Erasmus of Christendom* (New York: Scribner's, 1969), p. 143.

41. Note Martin Luther to George Spalatin, Wittenberg, January or February 1514, in *Preserved Smith, ed. and trans., Luther's Correspondence and Other Contemporary Letters* (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1913), pp. 28-29.

42. Martin Luther, *That Jesus Christ Was Born a Jew*, 1523, trans. Walther I. Brandt, in *Luther's Works* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1962), 45:229. See p. 200 for earlier quote.

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ler's hate-sheet editor and propagandist in *Der Stürmer*, cited Luther at his Nuremberg trial to justify his actions.

One of these treatises is *On The Jews And Their Lies*. In it Luther called the Jews "venomous," "bitter worms," and "disgusting vermin"; he asserted that they were all thieves and should be deported to Palestine. He made numerous suggestions concerning treatment of the Jewish people throughout the treatise, including these:

What shall we Christians do with this rejected and condemned people, the Jews? . . . I shall give you my sincere advice. First, to set fire to their synagogues or schools and to bury and cover with dirt whatever will not burn, so that no man will ever again see a stone or cinder of them. This is to be done in honor of our Lord and of Christendom. . . . Second, I advise that their houses also be razed and destroyed. . . . Third, I advise that all their prayer books and Talmudic writings, in which such idolatry, lies, cursing, and blasphemy are taught, be taken from them. Fourth, I advise that their rabbis be forbidden to teach henceforth on pain of loss of life and limb. . . . Fifth, I advise that safe-conduct on the highways be abolished completely for the Jews. For they have no business in the country-side, since they are not lords, officials, tradesmen, or the like. Let them stay at home. . . . Sixth, I advise that usury be prohibited to them, and that all cash and treasure of silver and gold be taken from them and put aside for safekeeping. . . . Seventh, I recommend putting a flail, an ax, a hoe, a spade, a distaff, or a spindle into the hands of young, strong Jews and Jewesses and letting them earn their bread in the sweat of their brow.⁴³

Luther's about-face caused extreme bitterness among the Jewish people, some of whom had hailed him as the forerunner of the Messiah and a new age. Jews were forced out of Saxony the same year.⁴⁴

A LEGACY OF HATRED

As shall be seen in these pages, synagogues would be burned and homes demolished; Jewish books would be destroyed and rabbis killed. There would be no safe place in Germany (or in most of Europe) for Jews; rich and poor, all would have their money confiscated by the Third Reich. Work gangs of young and old men would provide twelve- to fourteen-hour days of slave labor. Even Martin Luther could not have foreseen the horrible way in which his words would be used.

The religious animosity we have been looking at was to continue for the next two centuries among both Protestants and Catholics. During the Catholic Reformation, in the latter half of the sixteenth century, the popes in their attempt

43. Martin Luther, *On the Jews and Their Lies*, 1543, trans. Martin H. Bertram, in *Luther's Works*, 47:268-72. The total treatise is found on pages 137-306.

44. Note the discussion of Luther in Leon Poliakov, *The History of Anti-Semitism*, trans. Richard Howard (London: Elek, 1965), pp. 216-26.

to bolster the church began segregating the Jewish people into ghettos. This act would have significance for the twentieth century as well.⁴⁵

Even the eighteenth-century Enlightenment—the age that had supposedly emancipated the Jew—nourished a continued stream of religious anti-Semitism. Joseph Samuel Levi, a German Jew, found to his chagrin that in the “enlightened” year of 1795 no Jew was permitted to remain in Rostock, Germany overnight without special permission from the magistrate. Although he was seeking a Christian to explain to him the gospel message, the local minister and magistrate met him with suspicion. They finally sent him to three neighboring towns on the condition that if he was *not* accepted he could return to Rostock. A minister in the neighboring town of Wismar befriended him and led him in studies in the New Testament. He was baptized later in another town by a Lutheran minister who had him take on additional names and drop his family name of Levi. He thus became Joseph Samuel Christian Frederick Frey. One would think that this would have been enough for the Christian European community, but when Frey entered a seminary to become a missionary and preach to Gentiles, he was informed that he could not take the examination for the Danish Missionary Society “on account of his having been a Jew.” Later, however, he was “allowed” to become an assistant to a missionary in Africa. Delayed in London on his way to Africa, Frey became (in the words of famed Hebrew Christian, Louis Meyer) “The Father of Modern Jewish Missions” by establishing the London Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews in 1809.⁴⁶

Such maltreatment toward this exceptional young man underscores the ever-present suspicion of Jews (and even of Jewish converts to Christianity) in many areas of Europe during the Enlightenment and afterward. One also notes in this incident the seeds of a racial anti-Semitism that will be coupled to religious anti-Semitism in the nineteenth century. As the history of the conflict between church and synagogue up to the nineteenth century is evaluated, one is struck by the candor of Erasmus when he avowed: “If it is Christian to hate the Jew, then we are all good Christians.”⁴⁷

3

Nineteenth-Century Germany

In June 1983 religious leaders representing a wide range of theological viewpoints were joined by scientists in a declaration urging Congress to ban experiments that might change human genetic characteristics. Jerry Falwell, Bishop James Armstrong (President of the National Council of Churches), as well as Roman Catholic and Jewish leaders were among those signing this remonstrance. They were concerned that humans not be treated like animals and that science not abuse its abilities. Disregard for the fine line between removing genetic defects (“good genetics”) and tampering with the human race is cause for anxiety, especially because racist groups today are enthusiastically promoting eugenics programs.

The National Alliance in Washington, D.C., for example, bills itself as an educational organization, and it wants to expand eugenic operations. Its magazine, *National Vanguard*, has given considerable attention to new developments. Editor William L. Pierce has actually stated that “we ourselves are concerned only with race-based eugenics.” In response to a reader’s question about Robert Graham’s eugenics-oriented sperm bank, the Repository for Germinal Choice, Pierce wrote:

Every new birth of a genetically superior baby brought about through his program is to be commended, of course, but unless Graham’s program is massively expanded, ultimately with full governmental backing, and coupled with a strong *negative eugenics program to weed out the accumulated genetic refuse of centuries of dysgenic breeding*, it will accomplish nothing in the long run. It is a step in the right direction—a

45. Abram Leon Sachar, *A History of the Jews* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), pp. 251–55.

46. See Louis Meyer, *Eminent Hebrew Christians of the Nineteenth Century: Brief Biographical Sketches*, ed. David A. Rausch (New York: Edwin Mellen, 1983), pp. 113–19.

47. Quoted in Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews*, p. 151.

very important step—but many more steps must be taken before we can say that such programs have a chance of putting the race once again on the upward path.¹

Pierce explained that the reason some people were afraid to take the “racist position” on eugenics was because of “Jewish control of the news and entertainment media.” His objection to the position of most of those advocating eugenics was that “they would just as soon use sperm from an intelligent Negro or Eskimo or Jew as from an intelligent White man.”

The National Alliance wants to eliminate the non-white “genetic refuse” from America. Its statement of faith, published on the back cover of the *National Vanguard*, emphasizes that “no multi-racial society can be a truly healthy society” and “no government which is not wholly responsible to a single racial entity can be a good government.” It declares that “all young people of our race must have instilled in them a sense of quality instead of equality” and that the first step toward these goals “must be the gathering together of all those men and women of our race who share our beliefs and who are willing to participate in our effort to raise the consciousness of others.” The Alliance’s creed affirms:

We believe that our people must be united by the common goal of building a better world and a better race. Today, without a common national-racial purpose, we are unable to focus our energies and achieve the great things which otherwise would be within our grasp. But once we are united on the basis of common blood, organized and disciplined within a progressive social order, and inspired by a common set of ideals, there will be no problem which we cannot overcome, no enemy whom we cannot vanquish, and no goal which we cannot attain.²

This sounds like a speech from Hitler, but its roots actually go back even further—to the nineteenth century. What happened in Nazi Germany grew out of the racial theory that permeated philosophy, science, and religion in that earlier era. Racial anti-Semitism was combined with religious anti-Semitism in a powerful delusion that infected the Christian church.

ANTI-SEMITISM—THE SHAME OF A HUMILIATED PEOPLE

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the armies of Napoleon were overpowering Europe, claiming to liberate citizens from dominating governments. The French National Assembly in 1789 had established the “Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen,” an act that led to legal emancipation of the Jewish community in areas conquered by the French armies. Prussia, which had been at peace with France at the beginning of the century, decided to go to war when Napoleon’s intention of controlling Germany became clear. The French crushed the famous Prussian army at the battles of Jena and Auer-

1. “Editor’s Reply,” *National Vanguard* 91 (December 1982), p. 3. Italics added.

2. “What We Believe” is on the back cover of the *National Vanguard*.

stadt in October 1806. Consequently, the Prussian king Frederick William III and his government fled east to be protected by the Russian czar. One year later, in 1807, the French and Russians joined forces by signing a treaty. Napoleon meanwhile continued to occupy Berlin with his troops, taking all Prussian territories west of the Elbe. This was a time of humiliation for the German people; and because Jews gained some freedom under French rule, the Germans accused them of plotting secretly with Napoleon.³

FICHTE—THE “MORAL DECADENCE” OF JEWS

This humiliation was intensified by the Germans’ own emphasis on nationalism and the superiority of their race. Johann Gottlieb Fichte, professor of philosophy at the University of Berlin, delivered “Addresses to the German Nation” in 1807, which stirred the German people to realize their “exceptional heritage” and to believe that only under Germanic peoples could a new era of history blossom. In a period of anti-French feeling, Fichte’s view that Latins (especially the French) and Jews were members of decadent, mongrel races while the Germanic race was the purest was particularly encouraging. Fichte maintained that world affairs were determined by man’s moral purpose and that the German nation-state must be based on moral convictions—convictions best suited to the Germanic peoples. In spite of his deep respect for the Bible and for some individual Jews, Fichte wrote: “A mighty state stretches across almost all the countries of Europe, hostile in intent and engaged in constant strife with everyone else . . . This is Jewry.”⁴ He portrayed the Jews as in direct conflict with the national aspirations of the German people; in direct conflict with the “moral” German state.

HEGEL—THE STATE IS ALL

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel succeeded to the chair of philosophy in Berlin upon Fichte’s death in 1814. William Shirer underscores his significance:

[Hegel] is the subtle and penetrating mind whose dialectics inspired Marx and Lenin and thus contributed to the founding of Communism and whose ringing glorification of the State as supreme in human life paved the way for the Second and Third Reichs of Bismarck and Hitler. To Hegel the State is all, or almost all. Among other things, he says, it is the highest revelation of the “world spirit,” it is “the actuality of the ethical idea . . . ethical mind . . . knowing and thinking itself”; the State “has the supreme right against the individual, whose supreme duty is to be a member of the State . . . for the right of the world spirit is above all special privileges” . . .

3. See R. R. Palmer and Joel Colton, *A History of the Modern World*, 5th ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), pp. 382–96. Compare Marvin Lowenthal, *The Jews of Germany: A Story of Sixteen Centuries* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1936), pp. 217–31.

4. Jacob Katz, *From Prejudice to Destruction: Anti-Semitism, 1700–1933* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U., 1980), p. 60.

Hegel foresees such a State for Germany when she has recovered her God-given genius. He predicts that "Germany's hour" will come and that its mission will be to regenerate the world. As one reads Hegel one realizes how much inspiration Hitler, like Marx, drew from him, even if it was at second hand.⁵

The Jewish people were to suffer just as much under Marxism as under fascism—and in racist literature would be unjustly accused of fostering both.

A CYCLICAL PATTERN

After Napoleon's defeat, the Germans took revenge on the Jews. 1816 was a year of severe famine and unemployment, and Jakob Friedrich Fries, an anti-Semitic philosopher who lectured at both Jena and Heidelberg universities, led demonstrations of ultra-nationalist students against Jews, urging that they be "destroyed root and branch." Christian Friedrich Ruch, history professor at the University of Berlin, emphasized that Jews should not be citizens of the Christian German state, and that allowing Jews to prosper had brought decline and decay. During the same period, the Jewish community was claiming its right to freedoms provided by the Enlightenment, rights that were systematically being taken away from them. In 1819 riots against Jews broke out in Germany and spread to neighboring countries. Crying, "Hep! Hep! Hep! Death and destruction to all the Jews," mobs smashed windows and looted businesses and homes. Researcher Lucy Dawidowicz has suggested a cyclical pattern of German political relations with the Jews: "long periods of reaction, repression, conservatism, and anti-Semitism following brief spells of liberalism and the expansion of [Jewish] rights."⁶

SCIENTIFIC RACISM

In this environment, a scientific racism began to develop. It is ironic that one of the first contributors to this "science" of racism was a Frenchman who had no particular aversion to Jews. In his *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races* (1853), Count Joseph Arthur de Gobineau used the word *Aryan* (a word linguists scholars had used for a number of related languages, including German and Latin) to denote a supreme and original white race. Gobineau claimed that race was the determining factor in the rise and fall of civilizations, postulating a hierarchy of humanity ranging from the superior white race to the inferior black race. Racial mixing had brought decline to the Latin and Semitic peoples, whereas Aryans Germans—the western Germanic tribes—held the key to a successful hu-

5. William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany* (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett, 1959), pp. 143-44.

6. Lucy Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews, 1933-1945* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975), p. 29. "Hep!" was a derogatory rallying cry against Jews common in Germany. There is debate about the origin, but some believe it was originally a cry for driving domestic goats.

man destiny. These powerful people, he said, could be brought down only by the degenerative effect of race mixing.⁷

Composer Richard Wagner, an anti-Semite who blamed all his problems on a fantasized Jewish control of the press and theater, and his son-in-law, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, were among those who broadened Gobineau's "Aryan" to include all Germanic peoples, that is, tall, blond, and long-headed peoples. Hitler noted in *Mein Kampf* of those to be admired: "Side by side with Frederick the Great stands a Martin Luther as well as a Richard Wagner."⁸

Scientific racism was influenced by a number of other pseudo-scientific theories promoted after 1850. The most important of these was Social Darwinism. In England, Herbert Spencer proposed that there was a constant struggle between humans in which the strongest would win. He suggested the existence of two kinds of knowledge: individual knowledge and racial knowledge. Spencer and his disciples believed natural law dictated that the weak and poor of society should *not* be protected. Social Darwinism was subsequently applied on the national level, implying that stronger nations were the best and had a right to rule others.

These ideas had grave consequences not only for the Jewish community but also for the Christian church. Thinkers like Karl Eugen Dühring, a Social Darwinist who taught at the University of Berlin, shared Wagner's thesis that Christianity was a product of "Hebraic orientalism" and that those who persisted in Christian tradition could not possibly fight Jews or defend the Aryan spirit.

Not only did anti-Semites berate Christianity; they supported a new paganism in its place. A movement to exalt pre-Christian German folk traditions bolstered nineteenth-century German nationalism—ironically, at the very same time that medieval Christian stereotypes of Jews and religious anti-Semitism were being brought into the modern age.

UNITED GERMANY

The Jew was between a rock and a hard place. Christians had been against him for centuries. Anti-Christian Nationalists also used him as a scapegoat. And even socialists blamed him for the problems of the world: Karl Marx accused Jews of initiating capitalism, and he used violent anti-Jewish language in his treatise *On the Jewish Question* (1844).

The Jewish response was to try to assimilate more to German society; to prove they were good Germans. Political developments worked in their favor. Under the leadership of Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, Prussia during the 1860s led the states of Germany toward unification. Among the political concessions

7. Michael D. Biddiss, *Father of Racist Ideology: The Social and Political Thought of Count Gobineau* (New York: Weybright and Talley, 1970), pp. 112-21.

8. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1939), p. 287. Compare Robert W. Gutman, *Richard Wagner: The Man, His Mind, and His Music* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1968), pp. 418-32.

to the National Liberal party was a final emancipation law in 1869, which granted Jews equal citizenship status. On January 18, 1871, the Second Reich (the second German empire) was established, and Germany was unified into one nation.⁹

The consolidation of Germany transformed the face of Europe, and the German empire became the greatest power on the European continent. King Wilhelm I of Prussia was proclaimed emperor, being maneuvered into place by the political genius of Bismarck and the might of the Prussian army. The founding of the Second Reich was such a remarkable success that it uplifted the whole nation, and many Christians felt that God was instrumental in founding this "Christian" state. Political parties, social and economic institutions, and even some scientific societies called themselves "Christians." A civil religion developed, equating "German" with "Christian." It was a religion that continued to romanticize the Germanic heritage; a heritage that was unique to the German *Volk* (common people) and *Volksgeist* (national character).

Both *religions* and *racial* anti-Semitism were to be found in the Second Reich. *Religious anti-Semitism* insisted that a Jew could not retain his Jewish identity, and it demanded that he convert and assimilate. Friedrich Paulsen, a prominent liberal humanist and outspoken critic of racial anti-Semitism, explained in his *System of Ethics* that "to remain a complete Jew and a complete German is impossible."¹⁰ That a liberal would construct such an obstacle for Jewish identity underscores the enormity of the problem facing the Jewish community in the very conservative Second Reich.

Racial anti-Semitism treated the Jew as a parasite, a biological inferior that conversion and assimilation would not cure, a danger to the body politic. For example, Paul de Lagarde, an outspoken critic of Christianity and Christian theology, condemned those "who—out of humanity!—defend these Jews or who are too cowardly to trample this usurious vermin to death." "With trichinae and bacilli one does not negotiate," he explained, "nor are trichinae and bacilli to be educated; they are exterminated as quickly and thoroughly as possible."¹¹ Lagarde died in 1891, but his racial anti-Semitism continued to flourish.

Today one hears protests that the word *anti-Semitism* should not be used, because there are other Semites besides Jews. The term, however, was coined in 1879 by a racist named Wilhelm Marr. He was searching for a more scientific-sounding term than *Jew* when he founded the League of Anti-Semites. In the European context, the word *Semite* was used strictly for the Jews, and everyone knew that *anti-Semite* meant *anti-Jewish*. In his treatise *The Victory of Judaism over Germanism*, published in 1873, Marr applied the word *Semite* to Jews,

9. For primary materials from works by these individuals, note chapter 7, "Political and Racial Anti-Semitism," in Paul R. Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, eds., *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History* (New York: Oxford U., 1980).

10. Uriel Tal, *Christians and Jews in Germany: Religion, Politics, and Ideology in the Second Reich, 1870-1914*, trans. Noah Jonathan Jacobs (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell U., 1975), p. 291.

11. Davidowicz, *The War Against the Jews*, p. 32.

speaking of "destructive Semitism" and "Jewry" interchangeably. He also exhibited racist contempt for Christianity (after noting Jewish control of society, politics and thought) when he wrote:

Further, we cannot count on the help of the "Christian" state. The Jews are the "best citizens" of this modern, Christian state, as it is in perfect harmony with their interests . . . German culture has proved itself ineffective and powerless against this foreign power [the Jews]. This is a fact; a brute inexorable fact. State, Church, Catholicism, Protestantism, Creed and Dogma, all are brought low before the Jewish tribunal, that is, the [irreverent] daily press [which the Jews control]. . . . Dear reader, while you are allowing the German to be skinned alive I bow my head in admiration and amazement before this Semitic people, which has us under heel. Resigned to subjugation to Jewry, I am marshalling my last remaining strength in order to die peacefully, as one who will not surrender and who will not ask forgiveness.¹²

Lest one believe that racism against Jews was only a European or German problem during this period, consider that in 1877 a Jewish lawyer was blackballed by the New York Bar Association, solely because of race; and that businessman Joseph Seligmann and his family were the same year refused lodging at the Grand Union Hotel in Saratoga Springs, New York because of their race. In America also, the Jew was seen by some as an alien.¹³

CHRISTIAN RESPONSES

ADOLF STOECKER AND CHRISTIAN ANTI-SEMITISM

In the midst of such venomous German racial anti-Semitism, the Reverend Adolf Stoecker stands as an enigma. A conservative Lutheran minister from the grass roots of German society, Stoecker rose in 1874 to the exalted position of Court and Cathedral Preacher in Berlin. He possessed a charismatic personality and was very energetic. Displaying a fervent devotion to the fatherland, he was concerned about the spiritual and material welfare of the lower classes. He endeavored to preach *only* the Word of God—"the pure Word of Scripture." He believed that politics did not belong in the pulpit on Sunday mornings, but he was deeply involved in the political arena during the week. He defended this by asserting that one's Christian convictions should be applied to public life; that religion belonged in the chambers of parliament just as much as it belonged in the believer's private life.¹⁴

12. Wilhelm Marr, *The Victory of Judaism over Germanism*, trans. Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, in *The Jew in the Modern World*, pp. 271-72.

13. Paul E. Grosser and Edwin G. Halperin, *The Causes and Effects of Anti-Semitism: The Dimensions of a Prejudice* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1978), p. 221.

14. Paul W. Massing, *Rehearsal for Destruction: A Study of Political Anti-Semitism in Imperial Germany* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1967), pp. 22-31.

Stoecker, viewing the incumbent Social Democratic Party as liberal, atheistic, and materialistic, in 1878 launched his own "Christian" party—the Christian Social Workers' Party. In 1879 he began a vigorous campaign against the Jewish people, declaring that they were the most corrupting influence in society. In a speech delivered at a Christian Social Workers' Party rally on September 19, 1879, entitled "What We Demand of Modern Jewry," he told his audience that he intended to deal with the Jewish question "in the spirit of Christian love, but also with complete social truthfulness." He declared Jews to be "a great danger to German national life." He denigrated Judaism as an archaic religion in which the concepts of religious freedom and tolerance do not fit. "Hatred of the Jews is already flaring up here and there, and this is repugnant to the Gospels," he explained. But then, putting the blame on the Jewish people for anti-Semitic outbursts, he said, "If modern Jewry continues to use the power of capital and the power of the press to bring misfortune to the nation, a final catastrophe is unavoidable. Israel must renounce its ambition to become the master of Germany." Stoecker suggested that "Jewish social abuses" should be "eradicated by wise legislation." Jewish capital should be curbed, Jewish judges should be limited; and Jewish teachers should be removed from the grammar schools. He proposed that the "Christian-Germanic spirit" be strengthened, concluding:

Either we succeed in this and Germany will rise again, or the cancer from which we suffer will spread further. In that event our whole future is threatened and the German spirit will become Judaized. The German economy will become impoverished. These are our slogans: A return to a Germanic rule in law and business, a return to the Christian faith. May every man do his duty, and God will help us.¹⁵

Stoecker reiterated that he was just a good Christian, *defending* his nation and its religion against attack by the Jews. Through this religious anti-Semitic stance, he gained wide publicity for himself and for his party.

In the fall of 1880 the "Anti-Semites' Petition" was circulated. When it was presented to Bismarck in 1881, it had garnered over 250,000 signatures. Among them was that of Adolf Stoecker, who had debated whether signing such a petition was the Christian thing to do. A number of pastors followed his lead.¹⁶ Stoecker was elected to the Reichstag (parliament) the same year, a position he held from 1881–1892 and from 1898–1908. While in that post, he influenced the Conservative Party's *Tivoli Programme of 1892* (its political platform) to include a paragraph which read: "We oppose the many-sided thrustful and disintegrating Jewish influence upon our national life. We desire to have a Christian Government for our Christian people and Christian teachers for our pupils." Many Conservative delegates wanted to add the modifying clause, "We repu-

15. Adolf Stoecker, "What We Demand of Modern Jewry," trans. Massing, *Rehearsal for Destruction*, p. 287. Note pages 278–87 for a total text of the speech.

16. See Lucy Dawidowicz, ed., *A Holocaust Reader* (New York: Behrman House, 1976), pp. 28–30 for the text of the petition.

ciate the excesses of anti-Semitism," but for some reason Stoecker successfully opposed it. The *Tivoli Programme* remained in effect until the outbreak of World War I.¹⁷

Amiable and energetic, Adolf Stoecker tried to make an alliance between his party and the more radical racial anti-Semites. He found this an impossible task, because the racial anti-Semites were highly critical of Christianity—especially of the evangelical, Reformation variety. Stoecker did not believe in racial anti-Semitism; he did not believe Jews were subhuman. He was, however, so imbued with the theories of "German Christian *Volks-consciousness*" and the international Jewish conspiracy that he was actually a great help to the cause of racial anti-Semitism within the religious community.

In the same fashion, another prestigious Protestant, Heinrich von Treitschke, professor of history at the University of Berlin, got caught up in the anti-Semitism of the 1870s. As editor of the prestigious *Prussian Annals*, he added credibility to the racist position among intellectuals; and this even though his plea was for rapid assimilation of the Jewish people into German society. Treitschke coined the phrase "the Jews are our misfortune," a phrase later adopted by the Nazis.¹⁸

THOSE WHO SPOKE OUT

To their credit, a number of pastors, theologians, and Christian politicians spoke out against Stoecker and the upsurge of anti-Semitism. Some pastors wrote and preached that believers in Christ should not associate themselves with anti-Semites and anti-Semitic political parties. Others warned their congregations to beware of those who declared to be speaking "in the spirit of Christian love" against the Jews. They stated that the true enemies of the gospel and of Christ were the extreme nationalists. Moreover, they said, Christians who fanned the flames of hatred were threatening Christianity itself.

Michael Baumgarten, a professor of theology and a Reichstag deputy, warned the church that she was getting too close to a deceitful alliance with the anti-Semites. In the pamphlet *Stoecker's Falsified Christianity*, Baumgarten insisted that Stoecker's words and actions were anything but Christian. He called upon the German church to shed "tears of honest repentance" to wash the stains of anti-Semitic propaganda. In a second pamphlet, entitled *Christian Voice on the Jewish Question*, he declared that the church, not the Jews, needed to be reformed. He called for the church to organize an official day of repentance to eradicate Stoecker's "barbarous dishonour" to the Christian faith. The church, however, in the words of Richard Gutteridge, "was uneasy, but deemed it to be prudent to keep silent, though a motion put to the Berlin District Synod recommending that Stoecker should be given a brotherly admonition to refrain

17. Richard Gutteridge, *Open Thy Mouth for the Dumb: The German Evangelical Church and the Jews, 1879–1950* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1976), p. 7.

18. Note his speech, "A Word About Our Jewry, 1879," ed. Ellis Rivkin, trans. Helen Lederer, in *The Jew in the Modern World*, pp. 280–83.

from his anti-Jewish agitation, as unbefitting to his office as an evangelical clergyman, was only defeated by a narrow majority."¹⁹ The leaders of the German church had once again failed.

Across the Atlantic Ocean, in the United States, fundamentalist-evangelicals seemed to sense the danger European anti-Jewish propaganda posed to the Jewish community. Ernst F. Stroeter, a German Methodist and professor at Denver University, was one who was aware of some of the same hatred and bias toward Jewish people in the United States. After joining Arno C. Gabelcin's Hope of Israel Movement in New York in 1894, Stroeter was asked by a Christian clergyman if he had found any Jews *worth saving*. Stroeter was incensed at such a question, for he was a staunch defender of the Jewish people. In the latter 1890s he emigrated to Germany and traveled throughout Europe lecturing and writing on behalf of the Jewish people and defending biblical Christianity.²⁰

In 1897 S. M. Vernon wrote an article published in *Our Hope* magazine entitled "The Hated Jew." Vernon summed up not only the situation of Jew-hatred throughout the world at the end of the nineteenth century, but also provided a commentary of its historical effect when he concluded: "Christendom has no greater shame, no deeper sin, nor a better proof of low spiritual life and poverty of thought, than its hatred of the Jews."²¹ Such racial and religious hatred would bear bitter fruit in a united "Christian" Germany.

4

Chamberlain, the War, and Weimar

The United Nations Women's Conference was held in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1980. Jewish feminists in attendance were appalled to find that anti-Semitism was not only a product of right-wing lunatics, but that it also permeated their left-wing bastion of hope, the entire feminist movement. There they heard statements reminiscent of those by brutal female guards in Nazi concentration camps: "the only good Jew is a dead Jew"; "the only way to rid the world of Zionism is to kill all the Jews." These statements raged from the lips of those who hated right-wing groups; from lips that simultaneously cried out against racism and oppression around the world. A United Nations' staff person told Esther Broner, a Jewish professor of English at Wayne State University (Detroit), that the Germans "only did one thing right: they killed the Jews." Esther choked audibly, and the staff person asked: "Oh, did I hurt your feelings? Are you German?"¹

Racism in general and anti-Semitism in particular have through the centuries infested the cultured parlors of Western civilization as well as the seedy barrooms of the illiterate. They have hidden behind a polished veneer of proper clichés and impeccable etiquette and, as these women found, are often cancerous lesions on movements and organizations that appear to offer the most hope for struggling humanity.

19. Guttridge, *Open Thy Mouth for the Dumb!*, pp. 5-6.
20. Refer to my book *Zionism Within Early American Fundamentalism 1878-1918: A Convergence of Two Traditions* (New York: Edwin Mellen, 1979), pp. 225-37 for information on Stroeter.
21. S. M. Vernon, "The Hated Jew," *Our Hope* 4 (August 1897), p. 59.

1. "Bitter Fruit: Anti-Semitism at the Copenhagen Women's Conference," *Mt. magazine*, June 1982, pp. 49-50. Compare Letty Cottin Pogrebin, "Anti-Semitism in the Women's Movement," pp. 45-46, 48, 62, 65-72 in the same issue.

H. S. CHAMBERLAIN—"SCHOLAR" OF ANTI-SEMITISM

The nazification of German culture is a fascinating study. Respectable college professors, theologians, physicians, scientists, artists, and musicians marched to the beat of Hitler's drum. Composer Richard Wagner (noted earlier) was a harbinger of this bizarre tendency. He and his wife Cosima gathered their disciples together in societies, using the small Bavarian town of Bayreuth as a base of operations. After Wagner's death in 1883, the cult was carried on by Cosima, who lived to open the decade of the 1930s. Cosima, the daughter of Hungarian pianist and composer Franz Liszt, was a rabid anti-Semite who devoted her life to sponsoring literature and speakers for the Aryan cause. The Bayreuth Music Festivals brought pilgrims of class and culture into the Wagner circle. One such devotee was Houston Stewart Chamberlain, author of *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* (1899), a popular two-volume set (twelve hundred pages) that has had significant impact on racist thinking in the twentieth century.²

Houston Stewart Chamberlain (not to be confused with Neville Chamberlain, later Prime Minister of England) was the son of an English naval officer. In 1870, at the age of fifteen, he was sent to Germany to be cured of an illness. There he completed his education through private tutors. Chamberlain was totally captivated by Wagner's works and the Germanic "race." A year before Wagner's death, Chamberlain attended the music festival at Bayreuth. As a result he became increasingly close to Cosima. Later, in 1895, he published a book on Richard Wagner, and with Cosima's encouragement wrote the *Foundations*. The *Foundations* gives a sense of the ideology of the Bayreuth circle, and Cosima was particularly delighted with passages dealing with Germans and Jews and their relation to religion. After leaving his first wife, Chamberlain in 1908 married Cosima's daughter Eva. They moved to Bayreuth in 1909. Claiming to be plagued by "demons" and visions that drove him on to new fields of study and compelled him to write, he was in ill health most of his life and was later partially paralyzed.³

In 1923 Hitler attended the music festival in Bayreuth and visited Chamberlain. They were quite impressed with each other. Hitler later criticized the political policy of the Second Reich in *Mein Kampf*: "the official authorities of the government passed by the observations of a Houston Stewart Chamberlain just as indifferently as this is still the case with us today." The "insightful" Chamberlain is contrasted by Hitler with politicians "too stupid to think for themselves, and too vain to learn which is necessary from others."⁴

2. Note Robert W. Gutman, *Richard Wagner: The Man, His Mind and His Music* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1968). Compare Leon Stein, *The Racial Thinking of Richard Wagner* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1950), and Geoffrey Skelton, *Wagner at Bayreuth* (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1965).

3. Houston Stewart Chamberlain, *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, trans. John Lees, with an intro. by George L. Mosse, 2 vols. (New York: Howard Fertig, 1968), pp. v-xix. On Cosima note Richard Du Moulin-Eckart, *Cosima Wagner*, trans. Catherine Alison Phillips, 2 vols. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1931).

4. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1939), p. 369.

Hitler was well aware of the *Foundations*. The work had catapulted Chamberlain to fame, and by 1942 had gone through twenty-eight printings of more than a quarter of a million two-volume sets. Chamberlain collected information from a vast array of history, philosophy, religion, and science to support his theories. He distorted findings to prove conclusions he had come by intuitively. German readers, as well as others, were swept away by his apparent command of facts that portrayed the Aryan race as superior, the savior race through all of human history. Using the words *Nordic*, *Teutonic*, *Aryan*, and *Germanic* interchangeably, Chamberlain carefully led his readers through the ancient world, the medieval age, and the modern era. He sought to prove that the Teuton or "moral" Aryan was responsible for all the important contributions to civilization. The "alien Jew" was portrayed as the disrupter of civilization—a corrupting influence. Even Jewish religion was pictured as a hybrid of polytheistic systems having nothing in common with monotheistic Christianity.

The confidence and authority Chamberlain projected in declaring and "proving" that he had mastered the theme of the history of mankind drew the commitment of a generation, ranging from the barely-educated to the highly-educated classes. His technique is like that used by racists today: voluminous facts are arranged, listed, and twisted into an astounding array of pseudoevidence. Accurate history is wrenched from its very foundation, and the uninformed are overwhelmed. Experts are cited, but are carefully edited and judiciously quoted if they are not in agreement with the overall thesis of the book. Arguments against the thesis are simplistically dismissed and obliterated with ridicule. And often, like Chamberlain, the modern racist "scholar" declares that he is not anti-Semitic, but only an honest student of history trying to get at the truth. Chamberlain in fact admitted admiring a number of individual Jews, but emphasized that their race was "mongrel" and must be eradicated from German culture.⁵

5. Many scholars underscore the fact that the *Foundations* "soon became the Bible of the racists and their anti-Semitic cohorts" [Joseph Tenenbaum, *Race and Reich: The Story of an Epoch* (New York: Twayne, 1956), p. 10], and yet Chamberlain stated in his introduction to the volume:

For I have become convinced that the usual treatment of the "Jewish question" is altogether and always superficial; the Jew is no enemy of Teutonic civilisation and culture; [Johann Gottfried] Herder may be right in his assertion that the Jew is always alien to us, and consequently we to him, and no one will deny that this is to the detriment of our work of culture; yet I think that we are inclined to underestimate our own powers in this respect and, on the other hand, to exaggerate the importance of the Jewish influence. Hand in hand with this goes the perfectly ridiculous and revolting tendency to make the Jew the general scapegoat for all the vices of our time. (p. xi)

In racial history and anthropology, the *Foundations* have been plagiarized more than cited by modern racists. Alfred Rosenberg, the Nazi theoretician who wrote *Myth of the Twentieth Century* (1930) was deeply influenced by Chamberlain. Even the modern Hungarian Marschalko, discussed in chapter 2, in *The World Conquerors* calls Chamberlain "that great thinker" (Louis Marschalko, *The World Conquerors: The Real War Criminals*, trans. A. Suranyi [1958; reprint, United States: Christian Book Club, 1978], p. 38). Marschalko quotes Chamberlain several times, giving the impression that Chamberlain's vast study totally supports his own conclusion. This is not so. For example, Marschalko twists a passage from the Old Testament to portray David as the master of a concentration camp and first gas chamber—an inhumane Jew. Then he

Chamberlain mustered "facts" to prove that Jesus was not a Jew, but an Aryan. He claimed Galilee was not a Jewish center, that Jesus taught the Aryan idea of grace as opposed to the Jewish idea of law. In his section "The Galileans," Chamberlain exclaimed:

Whoever makes the assertion that Christ was a Jew is either ignorant or insincere: ignorant when he confuses religion and race, insincere when he knows the history of Galilee and partly conceals, partly distorts the very entangled facts in favour of his religious prejudices or, it may be, to curry favour with the Jews. The probability that Christ was no Jew, that He had not a drop of genuinely Jewish blood in his veins, is so great that it is almost equivalent to a certainty.⁶

By the same process, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Dante, Leonardo da Vinci, Voltaire, Napoleon, and others were made Aryans and noble Teutons.

Martin Luther was appealed to on approximately eighty pages of the *Foundations*. In fact, the main body of the first volume begins: "The world," says Dr. Martin Luther, "is ruled by God through a few heroes and pre-eminent persons."⁷ To Chamberlain, Luther was one of those heroes, a noble Teuton. "Luther is above all a political hero," wrote Chamberlain, "we must recognise this in order to judge him fairly and to understand his pre-eminent position in the history of Europe." Luther, "the German patriot and politician," was devoted first and foremost to the nation and is quoted as stating, "For my Germans I was born, them I will serve!" Chamberlain reiterated Treitschke's emphasis, saying Luther believed that the "State is in itself a moral system," and concluded:

That Luther was more of a politician than a theologian naturally does not preclude the fact that the living power which he revealed flowed from a deep inner source, namely, his religion, which we must not confuse with his Church. . . . Luther's fervent patriotism was a part of his religion.⁸

notes: "The Jew shaped his own fate!" wrote Houston Stewart Chamberlain referring to these things." In fact, Chamberlain believed that David and other important early Jewish personalities were Aryans or at least had a good portion of Aryan blood as indicated by their great accomplishments. After noting David's "fascinating qualities," he said that David "treated the Philistines generously in war, but the Hebrew peoples with frightful cruelty, as though they were repugnant to him." Marschalcko criticized Solomon as well, but Chamberlain viewed the David-Solomon era as "nothing else but an 'episode' brought about by the exultant strength of an entirely different [Aryan] blood. . . ." (*Foundations*, 1: 385-86; *The World Conquerors*, p. 16). Ironically, Chamberlain the racial "expert" was taken out of context by Marschalcko in the same manner in which Chamberlain had taken others out of context. This example should underscore once again the deception that permeates contemporary racist material and its attraction for the unsuspecting reader.

6. Chamberlain, *Foundations*, 1:211-212.

7. *Ibid.*, 1:3.

8. *Ibid.*, 2:375. A section devoted to Martin Luther is found on pages 366-77 of volume 2. Chamberlain also stated on page 370: "Luther, however, while calling upon princes, nobles, citizens and people to prepare for the strife, does not remain satisfied with the merely negative work of revolt from Rome; he also gives the Germans a language common to all and uniting them all, and lays hold of the two points in the purely political organisation which determined the success of nationalism, namely the Church and the School."

Luther's "religion," according to the *Foundations*, saw the Jews for what they were. Throughout, Luther was used to defend racial slanders and anti-Semitic stereotypes. Chamberlain later declared that Luther was "genuinely Germanic, the child of a fortunate union,"⁹ boldly proclaiming near the end of volume one: "And whoever says 'Anti-Luther' says Anti-Germanic—whether he is conscious of this or not."¹⁰

During Hitler's Third Reich, much was made of the "science" of physiognomy—the art of judging character by physical features. We have noted previously the modern utilization of pictures to point out "inadequacies of non-Whites" in such racist publications as the *Christian Vanguard*. Chamberlain entitled an entire section of the *Foundations* the "Science of Physiognomy," which he claimed is "at once spirit and body, mirror of the soul and anatomical factum." To him, the countenance of Dante Alighieri "is a characteristically Germanic countenance!" He continued:

Not a feature in it reminds us of any Hellenic or Roman type, much less of any of the Asiatic or African physiognomics which the Pyramids have faithfully preserved. A new being has entered into the history of the world! Nature in the fulness of her power has produced a new soul: look at it, here she reflects herself in a countenance such as never was seen before!¹¹

Chamberlain provided the reader with a sketch of Dante followed by one of Martin Luther on the next page. It is quite apparent that these men, revered as noble Teutons, are quite dissimilar in physical appearance; but Chamberlain lamely explained: "Luther's countenance, like Dante's, belongs to all Germanic peoples. . . . Dante and Luther are the extremes [in the spectrum] of the rich physiognomical scale of great Germanic men."¹²

One of the most enthusiastic readers of the *Foundations* was the German Kaiser, Wilhelm II. They met soon after its publication and maintained a strong friendship until Chamberlain's death in 1927. "It was God who sent your book to the German people, and you personally to me," the Kaiser wrote. Chamberlain later responded that he had placed Wilhelm's picture in his study, opposite one of Jesus Christ, so that he could walk between his Savior and his sovereign. Chamberlain often supported Kaiser Wilhelm in written works and for his efforts received the Iron Cross from the grateful monarch. He became a naturalized citizen of Germany during World War I.¹³

9. *Ibid.*, 1:522.

10. *Ibid.*, 1:573.

11. *Ibid.*, 1:538-39.

12. *Ibid.*, 1:541. Immanuel Kant and his philosophy is also a particular favorite of Chamberlain, and near the end of volume 2 Kant is declared "a true follower of Luther; the work which the latter began Kant has continued" (p. 495).

13. William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany* (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett, 1959), pp. 156-58.

A DEVASTATING WAR

On August 3, 1914, the Germans launched seventy-eight infantry divisions against French, British, and Belgian divisions in what was intended to be a short war. Instead, it was the beginning of World War I, a war that would claim nearly 8.5 million servicemen and cost more than \$337 billion. The assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, by a Serbian nationalist on June 28, brought two huge power blocs into conflict. Supporting Serbia were the Russians, and obligated to Russia by alliance were France and England. On the other side, Germany was tied to Austria-Hungary by alliances. Both power blocs were convinced they could win decisively, and events moved rapidly. On July 28 Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia. Two days later Russia ordered a general mobilization of her forces to the borders of Austria-Hungary and Germany. On August 1, Germany declared war on Russia; and on August 3, on France. After early German victories gave the false impression that the Germans had planned the conflict while the other nations were innocent, the war settled down to a stalemate on the land. In fact, all parties of both power blocs were responsible for the war in a number of ways, and were surprised and saddened by the outcrop of total war.¹⁴

Nevertheless, the rhetoric of the nineteenth century, culminating in the *Fourteen*, did little to encourage the Kaiser to try to mediate the situation. Emphasis on the superior Germanic race and the responsibility of the Teuton to lead the world into new heights of grandeur was embedded in the psyche of the German population. The German church enthusiastically embraced the patriotism of the *Volks*. Ministers preached the sacredness of the fatherland's cause, and prayers for victory rose from congregations. Liberals and conservatives wholeheartedly participated in the national fervor. A Lutheran periodical proclaimed in the spring of 1918: "What God has begun He takes pains to fulfill. He does nothing by halves. If England still possessed clear-sighted Christians, they would be bound to arise and cry out in alarm to their Government: 'Enough! The Lord is on Germany's side!'"¹⁵ On April 22, 1915, Germany introduced poison gas to the battlefield during the Second Battle of Ypres.

Jews of all nations enlisted in large percentages to prove their loyalty to their respective countries. In Germany, one hundred thousand Jews out of a population of six hundred thousand served in the German armed forces, twelve thousand dying for the fatherland—a high percentage for a small community. Sadly, their show of loyalty was for naught. The anti-Semitic atmosphere promoted caricature and scapegoating against the Jewish community and Jewish soldiers as misfortune and hardship enveloped Germany. Jews were accused of using the

14. Especially helpful in ascertaining joint responsibility for World War I is Joachim Remak, *The Origins of World War I, 1871-1914* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967). Note especially chapter 5, "A Question of Responsibility," pp. 132-50.

15. Richard Gutteridge, *Open Thy Mouth for the Dumb: The German Evangelical Church and the Jews, 1879-1950* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1976), p. 27.

war to dominate the nation; their soldiers were accused of inhibiting the march of the mighty Teutons.¹⁶

Germany's problems, however, resulted from being blockaded by the British and French from the sea. International law distinguished between munitions or raw materials used for munitions (*contraband*), and food and clothing (*noncontraband*). Noncontraband was to be allowed free passage even in wartime. Ignoring the protests of the United States, Britain and France disregarded international law and totally blockaded Germany. Germany countered with the only effective weapon she had available, the submarine. Enumerating the flagrant violations of international law, Germany announced in February of 1915 that she would torpedo any enemy ship in the waters surrounding the British Isles, regardless of status. On May 7 the *Lusitania*, a British passenger liner carrying munitions, was torpedoed by a German submarine. Approximately twelve hundred persons drowned, including 118 Americans. Although the Germans had warned Americans (even publishing warnings in New York newspapers against traveling on the ship), citizens of the United States believed international law guaranteed that they could travel wherever they pleased and on whatever ship they pleased, as long as they were on peaceful errands. Such an uproar arose after the sinking of the *Lusitania* that Germany scaled down her use of the submarine. When Germany found it necessary to declare unrestricted submarine warfare once again on February 1, 1917, the United States responded two months later with a declaration of war on Germany.¹⁷

The German High Command rightly assumed that the United States would not be able to field a full-scale army for at least a year. They erred, however, in assuming they could crush the British in half that time. The entrance of the American army spelled the death knell for the German war effort. The German High Command, including General Erich von Ludendorff, informed the German government in September 1918 that they could not possibly win the war, asking that an armistice be arranged. Ludendorff would later claim (and the fledgling Nazi party would systematically spread the rumor) that Germany had not lost the war on the battlefield, but rather had been "stabbed in the back" by politicians and Jews at home. On November 9, Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated and Germany was declared a Republic. On November 11 the armistice was signed by Germany. The German troops that remained deep in the Western front trudged home.¹⁸

A BITTER PEACE

Early in 1919 the representatives of the new republic met in the small town of Weimar to draft a new constitution. Woodrow Wilson, President of the United

16. Tencenbaum, *Race and Reich*, p. 11.

17. Note R. R. Palmer and Joel Colton, *A History of the Modern World*, 5th ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), pp. 666-74.

18. On Ludendorff and the war effort, note D. J. Goodspeed, *Ludendorff: Genius of World War I* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966).

States, had insisted that the new government be democratic; and the German people, craving peace, hoped the victors would deal more kindly with the democratic Weimar Republic.

The Weimar Constitution was a progressive document that pledged to protect the civil rights of all citizens. Intending to pattern itself after the dominant political tradition of the West, it was drafted by a German Democratic Party constitutional law professor who viewed the British parliamentary system as relatively stable. It provided for a president, popularly elected, to take the place of the British monarch as a check and balance on the powerful and popularly elected German legislature, the Reichstag. The Reichstag was given most of the legislative power, and had authority to approve or disapprove the political executive or chancellor. The president served as a check and balance, in that he nominated the chancellor and, in case of an emergency, had the power to dissolve the Reichstag and rule alone (or appoint another to rule). Political parties were very important to the system; even the smallest one could gain parliamentary representation in the Reichstag. (It was through this system that Adolf Hitler was to rise to power legally.) German socialists in the Social Democratic Party committed themselves to moderation in their role as leaders of the Weimar Republic. They lashed out against radicals who suggested sweeping revision of the social and economic system. It appeared that the Weimar Constitution might serve as the basis for a stable, democratic Germany.¹⁹

Alas, to Wilson's chagrin the English, French, and Italians—who had entered the war in 1915—were bitter and greedy. They refused Germany a part in the peace discussions. They insisted on a ruthless and humiliating peace treaty, the Treaty of Versailles, which forced Germany to confess that she alone was responsible for World War I. They reduced her original territory by one-eighth, took away all of her colonies, and depleted both her farm land and her factories. In addition, Germany was to make reparations for the total war damages, civilian as well as military. The sums were so astronomical that the treaty provided for a future commission to determine the payment schedule. Immediately, the Germans were to make coal deliveries, surrender their merchant marine, and relinquish private property owned by their citizens abroad. All of this was leveled not upon a militarist emperorship, but rather on the newly formed democratic republic.

The Treaty of Versailles was a deep blow to the Weimar Republic and was to pave the way for the Nazi regime. When the Germans were first presented with the document in May of 1919, they refused to sign. They considered it an outrageous amalgam—a travesty of justice. The victors consequently threatened to attack Germany and devastate her land. On June 28, 1919, two shaken representatives of the Weimar Republic performed the hateful task of signing the treaty. The German nationalist newspaper, *Deutsche Zeitung*, carried the head-

19. Note the discussion in Arnold J. Heidenheimer, *The Governments of Germany*, 3d ed. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1971), pp. 15–19.

line, "Vengeance! German Nation," and continued: "Today in the Hall of Mirrors, the disgraceful Treaty is being signed. Do not forget it. The German people will with unceasing labour press forward to reconquer the place among nations to which it is entitled. Then will come vengeance for the shame of 1919."²⁰

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR JEWS

The Weimar Republic spelled freedom for the Jewish community. According to the constitution, Jews could now participate freely in the political and social life of the nation. Willing to make democracy work, Jews were involved in the politics of the nation as never before. Several leaders within the German Democratic Party and the Social Democratic Party were Jews. Hugo Preuss, a Jew, had drafted the Weimar Constitution. The brilliant Walter Rathenau became Minister of Reconstruction, and later Foreign Minister of the republic (he was murdered in 1922 by right-wing extremists).

The Jewish community finally had the opportunity to advance both economically and socially. They were generally middle-class and felt quite well off. Education was now open to the Jewish community, and soon more than one-third of the doctors and lawyers in the large cities were Jews. According to the 1925 census, there were 564,379 Jews in the Weimar Republic, representing a little less than one percent of the population. Two-thirds had migrated to large cities, while another third lived in more than three thousand towns and villages.

Jews involved in radical movements such as the Communist Rosa Luxemburg disassociated themselves from their Jewish heritage. (In spite of this, the Jewish community was held responsible for their actions, as well as for the few Jewish financial scandals that occurred.) But on the whole, the German Jew became the most assimilated of all during this period. Mixed marriages and conversions to Christianity abounded. During the period 1921–1927, 44.8 percent of all Jewish marriages were to a Gentile, and Jewish Christians multiplied at the rate of five hundred a year. Jews were again trying desperately to be good Germans. They thought of themselves first and foremost as German citizens and regarded their German culture as the most enlightened in the world.²¹

CULTURAL STRIDES; ECONOMIC COLLAPSE

The culture and innovation in the new republic was incredible. Germans were a brilliant, talented, and fun-loving people. Creativeness in art, music, and theater gave rise to the expression "Weimar Renaissance." Novelists, playwrights, and historians excelled during the "Golden Twenties." German universities were intellectual centers, on the vanguard in science, philosophy, sociology, and psychology. Peter Gay has stated that "it was the cultural task of the Weimar Re-

20. This quote may be found translated into English in Tony Edwards, *History Broadsheets: Hitler and Germany 1919–1939* (Edison, N.J.: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1972), 3:11.

21. *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, s.v. "Germany: 1914–1933," 7:483–85.

public to capitalize on such noble sentiments [of healing, peace, and kindness], to restore the broken ties . . . the brilliance of the refugees from Hitler is a measure of that success."²² Of those German refugees, the United States would receive Albert Einstein (physicist), Thomas Mann (author), Erwin Panofsky (art historian), Walter Gropius (architect), Paul Tillich (philosophic theologian), and many others.

But the economy was collapsing. The loss of industrial and farm areas; the occupation by the French of the Ruhr (the center of Germany's iron and coal production) in January of 1923; the massive reparation payments; all caused an inflationary spiral that was an unbearable burden on the German populace. In July 1914 four German marks equaled one United States' dollar. In January 1919 it had risen to nine marks per dollar; and by January 1922 to 192. From January 1923 to November 1923 it rose from an unbelievable 17,972 to 4.2 trillion marks per dollar. German citizens literally raced to the grocery stores with their bags of money to try to beat the hourly rise in prices.²³

Inflation hurt the Jewish community as much as anyone else. The middle class was heavily hit by the social and economic crises. Nevertheless, anti-Semitic propaganda capitalized on the increased visibility of the Jewish people and their activity in the despised Weimar Republic. To divert the attention of the populace away from the actual beneficiaries of inflation—the giant financial and industrial complexes of "pure Aryan" barons of commerce—the Jew was once again scapegoated. The Jews were blamed for both capitalism and Marxism by the anti-Semitic press.

THE DNVP AND THE CHURCH'S RESPONSE

In the mid-twenties, most of the middle class voters deserted the German Democratic Party in favor of the moderate right-wing German Peoples' Party (DVP) and the more critical right-wing nationalist Protestant German National Peoples' Party (DNVP). It is estimated that seventy to eighty percent of the Protestant pastors allied themselves with this latter *Deutschnational Volkspartei*.²⁴

The large majority of Protestant clergy in Germany viewed the Weimar democratic government as too liberal and non-Christian. They believed that the fatherland had incurred a monstrous stab in the back as they looked with nostalgia on the lost glory of "Christian" Imperial Germany. As one pastor declared: "From our Christian way of looking at life, we seek to act as breakwater against the democratic waves of the present time. All efforts to make the State democratic are basically designed to dechristianize the *Volk*. We Christians remain reactionaries by God's Grace."²⁵

22. Peter Gay, *Weimar Culture: The Outsider as Insider* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), p. 8.

23. Gustav Stolper, *The German Economy 1870 to the Present*, trans. Toni Stolper (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967), 73-124. A table of the inflation is on p. 83.

24. Gutteridge, *Open Thy Mouth for the Dumb!*, p. 35. Compare *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, s.v. "Germany: 1914-1933."

25. *Ibid.*

Anti-Semitism became an integral part of the DNVP program through the 1920s. This amalgam of conservatives, radical nationalists, and anti-Semites claimed to fight "against the Jewish predominance in government and public life." In the 1924 election campaign, DNVP posters called for resistance to Jewish influence on all fronts. One pastor defined "Christian anti-Semitism" as "Genuine Germans and convinced Christians—the best weapon against alien infection." A Bavarian pastor admitted, "When I make contact with a Jew, I have an instinctive repugnance, and feel myself to be uncomfortable. I say to myself involuntarily: he is one of the race that killed your Saviour." He prided himself on "not only being a Christian but an Aryan Christian." In addition, the principal church weekly publications in the 1920s consistently supported this "Christian" nationalism, preaching Jewish responsibility for the collapse of the "Christian and monarchical order."

This constant bombardment weakened the moral resistance of many church members to the initial anti-Semitic measures of the Nazis, blunting basic Christian humanity and outrage at sinful anti-Semitism. William Laible, editor of a Lutheran weekly with the largest circulation in the country, propagated anti-Semitic slanders, and in 1929 he editorialized that because of the Jews' responsibility for the religious, economic, and moral decline of the nation, readers should welcome "for the sake of the German people . . . every expression of justifiable anti-Semitism."²⁶

Ernst Helmreich in *The German Churches Under Hitler* summarizes this period:

There were few denunciations of anti-Semitism in German pulpits in the 1920s, or for that matter in most pulpits of the Christian world. There were far more condemnations of bolshevism, of increasing secularization, and of the decay of morality and old Christian virtues. These the Nazis also decried. Political allegiances ran strong, and denunciations of National Socialist activity by Protestant and Catholic leaders were more often in the nature of rallying support for other parties than repudiating Nazi ideology.²⁷

Nevertheless, a few individual pastors, such as Eduard Lamparter in Stuttgart, courageously stood alone and without compromise against anti-Semitism. In a 1928 booklet entitled *Evangelical Church and the Jews*, Lamparter condemned the expanding anti-Semitism within the church. He wrote that the church ought "to feel it her duty to bear witness against the anti-Semitic violation of Right, Truth and Love." He denounced racial theories, saying they had no authentic scientific foundation. According to Lamparter, the church must right past wrongs and prevent future injustices; she must explode anti-Semitic stereotypes that

26. *Allgemeine Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung*, 1 February 1929, quoted by Gutteridge, *Open Thy Mouth for the Dumb!*, p. 2. See Gutteridge's chapter 2, "Anti-Jewish Sentiment in the Weimar Period," pp. 35-68 for many more quotes.

27. Ernst Christian Helmreich, *The German Church Under Hitler: Background, Struggle and Epilogue* (Detroit: Wayne State U., 1979), p. 125.

“worked like poison” within the Christian. In 1931 the Church of Württemberg, pastored by Lamparter, attempted to get the German Evangelical Church to pass an official motion condemning anti-Semitism. Their effort failed.²⁸

In 1923, when Houston Stewart Chamberlain for the first time met Adolf Hitler at Bayreuth, Hitler had few followers. The magnetism of Hitler’s personality, however, fascinated the aged racist scholar, for he wrote to Hitler the next day:

You have mighty things to do . . . My faith in Germanism had not wavered an instant though my hope—I confess—was at a low ebb. With one stroke you have transformed the state of my soul. That in the hour of her deepest need Germany gives birth to a Hitler proves her vitality; as do influences that emanate from him . . . May God protect you!²⁹

5

The Rise of Hitler and the Nazi Party

When speaking to members of Nazi organizations in the United States today, I have been amazed by their fervor, dedication, and sense of mission; I have been stunned by their cold, calculating spirit and overt racism. These modern-day followers of Adolf Hitler invariably claim that the Holocaust did not occur. They say of the well-documented extermination of millions of Jews, that it is a hoax fabricated by the “establishment press,” which is controlled by Jews. Nevertheless, within the first fifteen minutes of any given conversation, they declare that, in fact, a few hundred thousand Jews may have been killed, adding that “if more were killed, it still wasn’t enough . . . they should have gotten *all* of them.” An anti-Jewish diatribe then ensues as the Nazi rants against the Jewish community that supposedly controls the world, fosters Communism, cultivates pornography, mixes the races in movies and on television, and mongrelizes the white world with Blacks and Asians.

As soon as they find out I am a Christian, they quickly inform me that the Jews killed Jesus. One Nazi said to me, “Jesus was a Christian, you know,” implying that if I were a good Christian, I would hate Jews and work to eliminate the Jewish presence from the midst of our white society. As a letter from the National Socialist White People’s Party (NSWPP), one of the many Nazi organizations in the United States today, explained while soliciting a contribution, “More importantly, you will have the satisfaction which comes from knowing that you are doing your part to assure a better world for your Race and your

28. Guttridge, *Open Thy Mouth for the Dumb!*, p. 57.

29. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, p. 158.