Forty years ago Moshe Glickson, editor of Haaretz, wrote a series of articles for his Tel Aviv daily on the subject of Karl Marx's anti-Semitism. In 1961 the Herzl Institute of New York released these articles in pamphlet form, under the title, The Jewish Complex of Karl Marx.¹

The word "complex" was popular at the time Glickson put pen to paper: Freud and Jung had become almost an obsession in intellectual circles; it was thought everything could be explained by the simple process of disinterring the proper "complex" from the deep recesses of the psyche. So Moshe Glickson intended not only to warn the youth of his still unborn nation (he was writing in 1986) not to fall prey to the Marxian blandishments preached by their elders, but to explain how it came about that the grandson of generations of rabbis could have acquired his "blind hatred of the Jewish people."

In the process, Glickson not only discovered the depths of Marx's depraved notions of the Jewish people; he also thought he had found the clue in the German word Selbsthasse, the title of a work by that tragic and twice-converted Jew, Theodor Lessing, assassinated in Marienbad in 1909. In any case, Glickson's journey was, in a sense, a journey of discovery. And it is in this sense that the pamphlet still has meaning for us. As a socialist he was all the more surprised that the leaders in pre-Israel Palestine were seriously considering publishing the collected works of the co-founder of "scientific socialism."

Whether his articles made a positive impression on the youth of his mandated country is not known, but I can tell, from personal experience, that it couldn't have been too much of an impression, for two years after the War of Independence, on my first visit to Israel (and to two of its kibbutzim) - a journey I was to repeat at least a half dozen times since then - the boxed, gray-bearded, portraits of Karl Marx still hang next to that of the black-bearded Theodor Herzl in many of the collectivist settlements of Israel. Which is not at all surprising, since emotional commitments to a cause - any cause - tend to withstand reasonable or rational explanation.

What Glickson had discovered, and what he was trying to tell his fellow Jews in Palestine, was that Marxian socialism was an aberration from the doctrine's mainstream: that it was anti-Semitic and, therefore, anti-human, whereas his notion of socialism was not only democratic but "noble." He invoked the name of Pierre Joseph Proudhon as one who preached "that noble type of socialism that stems from the heart and is based on pure humanitarianism."

(Now this was and remains, nonsense. Glickson seems not to have known it, but Proudhon was at least as much an anti-Semite as Marx, if not more so; I'll come back to that in a moment.)

Even if this tale is by now almost too well known, it is still a tale worth repeating: there are still with us socialists - Jewish socialists, too - who have hailed Marx's vulgar diatribes against...
the Jews and other “inferior” races as representing the best of the Master’s contribution to doctrine.

Marx’s essay, “On the Jewish Question,” first appeared in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* in 1844. (I shall quote from Glickson’s version, translated from the Hebrew by J. S. Abba: there have been six English translations of the essay.) Actually the “essay” was a review of two works by Bruno Bauer (The Jewish Question and The Ability of Jews and Christians to Become Free). It is to Glickson’s credit, however, that he did not confine his criticism to Marx’s review, but to other works by Marx dealing with the “Jewish question,” including his infamous Jew-baiting article, “On the Russian Loan,” which he wrote for Greeley’s *New York Tribune*, January 4, 1856. But what he wrote in 1844 was something so unnerving it prompted many a socialist either to deny that Marx had written it at all or simply to suppress it. It is a startling fact that Jewish (Yiddish-speaking) intellectuals who like to translate almost everything Marx wrote into *mamah loshen* have not yet—more than one hundred years later—translated this seminal work into their own language. Perhaps they find it difficult to explain to their readers, in terms of the socialist Geist, just what Marx meant when he wrote:

The essence of Judaism and the root of the Jewish soul is expediency and self-interest; the God of Israel is Mammon, who expresses himself in the lust for money. Judaism is the embodiment of the anti-social element [in society].

Glickson, almost in a state of shock, finds himself compelled to say at this point: “Karl Marx . . . did not hesitate to besmirch the traditions of the Jewish people and to place a sword in the hands of its enemies.” That it took the ruthless “enemy” exactly one hundred years to employ the “sword” to murder the Jews of Europe may not be entirely Marx’s fault—certainly not for what has so far been cited—but it may have contributed mightily to the bloodshed and the fire to come when he wrote:

Let us not seek the mystery of the Jew in his religion, but let us instead seek the mystery of religion in the real Jew. What is the secular basis of Judaism? Commercialism. What is his secular God? Money. All right, then! The emancipation from commercialism and from money, that is to say from practical, real Judaism, would become the self-emancipation of our time. An organization of society that would eliminate the pre-conditions of commercialism, would make also the existence of the Jew impossible. His religious consciousness would evaporate in the real fresh air of society. Thus we find in Judaism an underlying anti-social element . . . The ultimate significance of the emancipation of the Jews is the emancipation of humanity from Judaism.

Marx asked all the questions, provided all the answers. Now which chutzpanik of a socialist would presume to argue with the Master’s meaning when he had supplied the meaning himself, to wit: If you want a society in which “being a Jew” or remaining one would become “impossible,” then, as a good socialist—a Marxian socialist, at least—the choice was either Hitler’s (he, too, called himself and his movement “socialist”) or Kautsky’s (he preached a sort of benign assimilation that had the practical effect of telling the Jews to merge with the general run of non-Jewish society, the same “society” that Marx had taught could not emancipate itself without first ridding itself of its “anti-social element,” meaning the Jews).
It will also be noted that Marx, the atheist, lashed out at the Jews, telling them, and them only, that it was their Judaism that had to be expunged from the world, and not anybody’s Christianity. Actually, Marx (and other left-Hegelians like Bauer and Ludwig Feuerbach) held rather flattering opinions of Christianity, saying of it that it had been corrupted only by the spirit of practical or “materialistic Judaism,” with Marx going so far as to state that in America it had been put on the auction block for usurious exploitation. This was in keeping with the atheistic or agnostic teachings of the early forerunners of socialism, the philosophers of the French (and German) Enlightenment—Voltaire, d’Holbach, Diderot, Johann Gottlieb Fichte. They had argued that while all religious belief was based on superstition, Judaism carried a noxious stain in the ugliness and barbarism of its practices, with Fichte warning the French National Assembly, in stinging words, not to grant civil rights to the Jews.

Later, the disciples of these philosophers, the early spokesmen for what came to be known as “true socialism,” or “utopian socialism,” in the words of Marx and Friedrich Engels, would pick the bones of this philosophizing to fashion a superstructure of bold and uninhibited anti-Semitism and weld it onto a common doctrine of socialism—“utopian” or “scientific”—that still defies belief. This remains an unspoken embarrassment among those who want their socialism pure and democratic. These comrades are usually most upset when it is disclosed that their favorite socialists—or anarcho-socialists, as was the case with Glickson—are at least as anti-Semitic as were the founders of what is known today as “scientific socialism.”

The fact remains that almost all leading socialist politicians, spokesmen, or theoreticians, in every country of the civilized world, have at one time or another expressed themselves in terms of derogation of the “Jewish nation,” the “Jewish race,” or simply the Jew, meaning all Jews. Nowhere is this more prevalent than in the language employed by Marx and Engels.

It has sometimes been asserted that if Marx did say some unflattering things about Jews, it was about the rich or bourgeois Jews he was talking. But this is simply not true. Some have tried to explain away the problem by arguing that there were “reasons” for 19th century socialist anti-Semitism, as if reason lacked a thousand reasons for being unreasonable. This line of approach is usually summed up in these words: Everybody was an anti-Semite then. But “everybody” was not an anti-Semite then, before, or thereafter. Nevertheless, the all-pervading taint of Jew-hatred seemed to adhere to that social doctrine from which all modern varieties of socialism took sustenance. Let’s start from the beginning.

Early in the last century, one Pierre Leroux (not an inauspicious beginning; it was he who first coined the term “socialism”) lashed out at the Jews:

It is quite evident, is it not, my friends, that when we speak of the Jews we mean the Jewish spirit, the spirit of profit, of lucre, of gain, the spirit of commerce, of speculation, in a word, the banker’s spirit. [Emphasis in original.]

Leroux is perhaps most memorable for his indictment of the Jews as Christ-killers, a term of denigration always popular with the mob. In that same “spirit,” Alphonse Tousené, a disciple of the notorious socialist anti-
Semite, Charles Fourier, saw the Jew as the anti-Christ as well as the very incarnation of the exploiting capitalist. In his book, *The Jews, Kings of the Epoch* (1869), he wrote that the whole rotten system of “industrial feudalism,” as he identified nineteenth century capitalism, “is personified in the cosmopolitan Jew.” (Seventy years later Stalin would call them “rootless cosmopolitans.”) Tousenel (much admired by Marx, as was Leroux) continued: “Europe is under the domination of Israel. This universal domination, of which so many conquerors have dreamed, the Jews have achieved.”

These were only beginnings, but they helped to fashion that framework that the more pliant socialism of a later day would be constructed on and that would provide Marx and Engels with the foundation for their socio-economic contempt for the Jew-as-exploiter. It will be seen that no sooner did socialism—by whatever qualification it would later identify itself, Utopian, Reformist, Anarcho-socialist, National, International, Revolutionary, or Scientific—associate the Jew with the class enemy, the capitalist, it necessarily followed that he would be singled out for special calumny.

But why he and not, say, the Gentle banker, industrialist, landlord, or whatever? After all, there were (and are) more Christian bankers, landlords, merchants, and industrialists than Jewish ones. The answer easily suggests itself: in pointing to the Jew (an established image of greed in the minds of the Christian masses for scores of generations) the early socialist theoreticians, like their confused inspirers among the 18th century *philosophes* before them and later the more “scientific” expounders of the common doctrine, found a ready-made scapegoat for their preachings so that—as the late 19th century German and Austrian comrades would argue—it would help to set the torpid peasant masses into motion, any motion, so long as it led ultimately to the “final conflict,” as the socialist anthem demands.

Leroux had, in fact, pointed to the Jew as representative “of all those who show great greed for money and eagerness to make it,” emphasizing, “The merchant is the real Jew,” in his article for the *Revue Encyclopédique* in 1854. This encyclopedic description is with us still in the sacred pages of the refined *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) which defines the word “Jew” in these words: “2 . . . a name of opprobrium or reprobation; spec. applied to a grasping or extortionate money-lender, or usurer, or a trader who drives hard bargains or deals craftily.”

This identification of the Jew with the class enemy has become a staple of socialist teaching so far as the “Jewish question” is concerned. And it largely explains why it is as deeply embedded in the “rootless cosmopolitan” Jew-hatred of the Soviet brand of socialism, and the anti-Zionist, anti-Israel, propaganda of the New Left and Arab socialism, as it is in the learned texts of all the elder statesmen of international socialism.

When Charles Fourier got around to the subject, he took advantage of the inbred hatred of the Church-oriented masses of France for the image of Judas Iscariot not only as the betrayer of their Lord, but as the personification of all the prevailing evil in the world. Thus he selected none other than Judas as his prototype of the Jewish businessman who, throughout the ages, has gone about the world bankrupting decent, honest (Christians) merchants. In his “Tale of Judas Is-
cariot.” Fourier tells how this happens, with illustrative examples, A, B, C, D, E, and F, in an explosion of lunatic economics that could only attract the strange imagination of Engels who hailed it, praised it, and translated it into German, from which noble translation the leaders of World Socialism during the “glorious days of the Russian Revolution,” Lenin and Trotsky, had it re-translated into Russian so that the new Soviet intelligentsia could read it in the Bolshevik theoretical journal, *Under the Banner of Marxism*, April, 1922. In another volume *(Théorie de l’unité universelle)* Fourier said, “The Jews, by virtue of their dedication to trade, are the spies of all nations and, if need be, informers and hangmen.”

On reading this Engels became so infatuated that he wrote to his collaborator, Karl Marx (March 7, 1845), “We are getting ready to put out a library of outstanding foreign socialists. The best to begin with is Fourier.” Having learned what was “best” in the socialism of the French Masters, Engels was soon prepared to go it on his own, so that when Marx became editor of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in 1848, the world was to witness something new in the way of defamation. On August 9, 1848, the new “democratic” periodical founded by Marx printed the following from Engels’s pen:

> The sudden sympathies that the Jews have obtained for themselves of late ... have found here [in Germany] an official expression. Rendered infamous far and wide ... as a full embodiment of profiteering, miserliness and filth [the Jews] have suddenly become German brothers. Honest Michel with tears of graciousness is pressing them to his bosom and Herr Schtensel, in the name of the German nation, claims them as Germans who wish to remain Germans. (This refers to Professor G. A. Schtensel, who had argued that those Polish Jews in the Grand Duchy of Pozen who wanted to opt for German citizenship should be permitted to do so. M.G.)

A few weeks later (September 1), Engels wrote another article on the same theme, this time not only mocking the Jews’ pretensions to German citizenship, but ridiculing their “horrible jargon”: “It is too bad old man Arndt [a contemporary, popular, anti-Semitic versifier] writing his song, did not think of the Polish Jews and their German language.” The “song” contained a couplet the exact meaning of which Engels gives in the last sentence of the following quotation:

> “Is there a person,” he asks sarcastically, “who is not familiar with the old obligations of the nobles to the Jews who, in the course of centuries, have become respectable? What was overlooked by the old plebian has been noted by the Knight Likhnovsky.” This refers to the parliamentarian, Prince Felix von Likhnovsky. Engels continues, paraphrasing Arndt: “Every place where, corrupting the German language horribly, the Polish Jew usurer cheats, gives short weight, clips a coin, or engages in common swindling—there is the Fatherland of Herr Likhnovsky.”

A few months later, on April 29, 1849, in the same sheet hailed by Lenin as a “model of revolutionary journalism,” the paper accused the Jews of robbing churches, burning villages, and beating defenseless Poles to death. These outrageous slanders against a people who lived in daily dread of the very crimes they were accused of by Marx and Engels helped stamp into the movement of international socialism an indelible imprint that no apologetics can erase. Feeding this kind of
material to the masses was like injecting a benign tumor with the virus of cancer. However, to get the full flavor of their Judenhass, it is worth recording how the twin founders of "scientific socialism" felt about the poorest of the poor Jews of Europe—the Polish Jews. They concluded their articles on the Polish question: "The German-national fools and speculators from the Frankfort parliament, in their census gathering, still describe as Germans the Polish Jews, although this filthiest of all races, neither by its jargon, and only perhaps by its passion for greedy gain, could be related to Frankfort."8

Commenting on this, Franz Mehring, the "official" biographer of Marx, wrote: "The Polish articles in the Neue Rheinische Zeitung breathe a spirit of real revolutionary passion that raises them above the usual pro-Polish phrases indulged in by the common run of democrats; even today they stand as an eloquent proof of the penetrating insight of their authors."9

I mentioned Proudhon before only because Moshe Glickson had referred to him as exemplar of a "noble," "humanitarian" socialism. But Proudhon—who, by the way, first used the phrase "scientific socialism" which Marx and Engels appropriated when they made a "German ideology" out of it,10 and who first called for the "destruction" of the Jews (in his Memoirs) although Glickson was probably unaware of it—still does not properly belong in the mainstream of world socialism, but more in the related anarchist movement. I omit for this reason Bakunin's anti-Jewish vituperations, as well as the Narodnaya Volya's hate tactics. I refer the interested reader to Zosa Szajkowski's scrupulously researched essay in the scholarly journal, Jewish Social Studies (January, 1947), entitled "The Jewish Saint-Simonians and Socialist Anti-Semitism in France," which concludes with a pathetic postscript to the reader telling him that try as he did he could not find a single kind word spoken for the Jews in the whole of French socialist literature for the hundred years from 1820 to 1920, including such luminaries of the movement as Jaurès and Guesde. In this latter instance, it is sad to record what Jean Jaurès wrote (before he seemed to undergo a change of heart at the close of the Dreyfus Affair) in the Socialist Review in 1892. Chiding Fichte for his shortsightedness on the matter of powerful groups operating as "States within States," he asked rhetorically:

What are the Jews, closely knit to each other, and separated from other men as enemies and who are set apart effectively by blood, religion, lucrative profession, and by a common hatred of the rest of humanity; who monopolize all business and wealth, and who bend all free men under the yoke of money? What is therefore this Jewry if it is not a dangerous State within a State?11

A little later (January 28, 1898) the French socialist press published a manifesto on the Dreyfus case calling for "non-participation in the Dreyfus affair on the ground that while the reaction wishes to exploit the conviction of one Jew to disqualify all Jews, Jewish capitalists would use the rehabilitation of a single Jew to wash out 'all the sins of Israel.'"12 Among the signers of this "manifesto" were such socialist big-wigs as Alexandre Millerand, Marcel Sembat, Jules Guesde and Jean Jaurès. The anti-Semitic daily, Libre Parole, edited by the most recent father of all French and world anti-Semites, Edouard Drumont, not only hailed the manifesto but singled out Jaurès for its "bravos." Drumont, by the way, was introduced to the socialist movement by none other than Benoît Malon, a leading spirit behind the
Paris Commune, who had early demonstrated his socialist contempt for the Jews by calling them "a particularly harmful caste [the language here resembles Kautsky's] of rapacious hucksters [here the language recalls Marx] and unscrupulous usurers." And so on into the 20th century (1911) when the socialist deputy Pierre Myrens defined a "kike" (youtre) in these unforgettable words: "The kike is an Israelite by religion, a Jew by race, and, moreover, a capitalist."  

There is no record that he was ever castigated by his party for these words. But his words were gentle by comparison with Victor Merrick, who said, defiantly, "I, a socialist revolutionary, firmly intend to attack the Jews whenever I see fit." He saw "fit" often and offensively, up till the day when he left to join the Communists, after the Socialist Party split in 1920. Before we leave France to return to Germany, let it be noted that it was French socialism that introduced the virus of anti-Semitism into Arab politics in Algeria.

Space does not permit me to dwell on such contributions to human culture as Gustav Tridon’s Le Molochisme juif—the title is enough to make one shudder!—and George Duchesne’s L’empire industriel, this “industrial empire” being, naturally, in control of the “international Jew.” (Incidentally, both of these comrades were high in the councils of the Paris Commune.)

Let us pause for a moment in Algeria, where socialist theoretician Lucien Chaze proclaimed: “Socialism is a local form of anti-Semitism.” But before Chaze, we are informed by Mr. Szajkowski, “the first impetus to a planned and organized form of Algerian anti-Semitism was given by the socialist Fernand Gregoire.” After that—in 1884, to be exact—the first pogroms occurred, or as Szajkowski puts it, “From that time on, the Jews found very little peace in Algeria, being robbed, murdered and defiled,” adding: “Left anti-Semitism in Algeria did not limit itself to just chattering... It became the very foundation of the program of the Left.” And when it is asked where the Ba’th Socialists of Syria get their venom to belabor their Jew-hatred, and where Arafat gets his anti-Zionism, one must look to those early days when the poor fellah of the Maghrīb heard the peddlers of communal hate and found to his delight that he had heard it all before, even if from the mouths of less secular prophets.

So far it has not been my intention to suggest that socialism must be anti-Semitic: I only wish to point out what Professor Silberman told an audience in Jerusalem: “The doctrinaire may argue that it is absurd to speak about socialist Jew-hatred, since no ‘genuine’ socialist can be an anti-Semite. Yet whatever the doctrinaire may wishfully think, it is not in his power to alter facts that conclusively prove that many great socialists were anti-Semites.” He added: “Socialist anti-Semitism is indeed almost as old as modern Socialism, and is not limited to any particular country.”

So if we leave France for Germany (and other nations) it is in order to find a root cause for this disturbing phenomenon. Perhaps Wilhelm Liebknecht, who headed the Second (Socialist) International, provides the clue we have been seeking: “Yes,” he once said, “the anti-Semites plough and sow, and we social democrats will reap. Their successes are therefore not at all unwelcome to us.”

In Rehearsal for Disaster, the authoritative Paul Massing quotes August Bebel’s resolution, adopted at the Cologne Convention of the German
Social Democratic Party in 1893: “The Social Democratic Party fights anti-Semitism as a movement which is directed against the natural development of society but which, in spite of its reactionary character and against its will, is bound to become revolutionary.” (Emphasis added.) Of course it became “revolutionary—in the Nazi sense: Hitler, too, was a mighty revolutionary in his own right.

Meanwhile, the official organ of German Social Democracy, Vorwärts, soon rushed into print with an editorial (to bolster the Cologne Resolution) dated June 26, 1893: “It is fortunate that the process of putrefaction is so swift. Anti-Semitism itself must further it. Barbarous as it is, it is a bearer of culture against its will—cultural menace for socialism in the truest sense of the word.” This socialist apologetics for anti-Semitism soon took hold of the Austrian socialists as well, and their party organs (they had many) soon began to vie with their German brothers, in editorials whose main theme spelled out in bold headlines: “Anti-Semitism is the Seed of Socialism.”

Nevertheless, however vulgar and short-sighted, there was at least some attempt at a rationale for that particular type of socialist scapegoatism. But there were others, like Edmond Picard, the distinguished socialist senator from Belgium whom the venerable Emile Vandervelde hailed as the “intellectual flower of the nation” in his Souvenirs (published in 1939). This “intellectual flower” preached a brand of “Aryan” anti-Semitism whose full force was not to be felt until the advent of the National Socialists in Germany some fifty years after Picard had called for a modification of the Communist Manifesto to read: “Aryan-Proletarians of the world unite.” In his books, La Synthèse de l’antisemitisme and Aryano-Semitisme, he had declared that “the Semite in general, and the Jew in particular, is a parasite,” chiding Bebel for his notion that anti-Semitism was, at best, a tactical necessity, useful only to spur the “stupid” and “illiterate” masses into action. For Picard it was “the best” thing socialism had to offer by way of “scientific” theory. (After Hitler took power the Nazis put up a monument to his memory.)

Things were not too much different across the channel, where the early movers of English socialism—the Chartists and Fabians—picked up the theme in their own press, with Justice (April 5, 1885) warning the plebs that “Jew money-lenders now control nearly every foreign office in Europe.” A half-dozen years later, this esteemed journal of British Social Democracy ran an article by the notable socialist Henry Hyndman titled “Imperial Judaism” which warned against the impending imposition of an “Anglo-Hebraic empire in Africa.” Three years later (April 7, 1899), and in the same revolutionary periodical, he named names—Beit, Echtstein, Barnato, Oppenheimer, Steinkopf, Levi—whom he sarcastically castigated as the “true-born” who are trying “to drag” us common Englishmen into the war in the Transvaal for which “we, not they, shall pay in person, in money, and in blood.” At the same time Marx warned the English electorate not to let itself be beguiled by the franchise and permit the seating of a Jew—a Rothschild, yet—in Parliament. Said Marx: “It is doubtful whether the British people will be very much pleased by extending electoral rights to a Jewish usurer.”

As for Beatrice and Sidney Webb, perhaps the less said the better. These two worthies—founders of English Fabianism, which attracted a passel of bright British anti-Semites to its ranks
—found freedom in the Soviet Constitution but no Jewish proletarians in their massive History of Trade Unionism. Peculiarly repugnant is the distasteful side of this pair of socialist sycophants. She found the poorest of the poor Jews of London especially repulsive, saying of them in particular, and of all Jews in general, that “it is the love of profit, as distinct from other forms of money-earning [that is] the strongest impelling motive of the Jewish race.” She said other, still more offensive things, but to read her is to sicken the mind, to quote her is to give her greater due than she deserves. We can leave England without dwelling on the enormous success of Merrie England—it circulated in the millions, both in England and in America—by socialist Robert Blatchford, who taught the laboring classes that “the Jew gets his interest forever” (his italics), that is why he is always ready to “lend money for public works.”

Summarizing—having touched only the tip of the tip of the iceberg—it can be seen that socialism, before, during, and after Marx, made use of the anti-Semitic tactic largely because the identity of the Jew-usurer had long been fixed in the minds of many of the “great Socialists,” as Professor Silbenern called them. They had been brought up on it, and couldn’t quite disgorge it even when they found all religion suspect. Thus Voltaire, who seemed to mock all supernatural beliefs, singled out the Jews for special opprobrium. In his Philosophical Dictionary he had written: “Hebrews have ever been vagrants, or robbers, or slaves, or sedulous. They are still vagabonds upon the earth, and abhorred by all men, yet affirming that heaven and earth and all mankind, were created for them alone.”

But if “naive” socialists saw the Jew in terms of the class enemy, or adhered to anti-Semitism as a tactic in the ongoing struggle for men’s mind, or as a way of setting the sullen masses into motion, there remain instances where the Jew-hatred is so intrinsically personal and brutal it deserves special mention. This applies especially to Marx and Engels: we began with them and it is just as well I finish this essay with them except to note, in passing, that “great” Plekhanov once referred to the Jews as belonging “to a tribe of snakes.”

Perhaps the story of Moses Hess will help illustrate this socialist-anti-Semitic syndrome. Hess may be an apt example and an early warning of the insidious nature of revolutionary socialism, which not only permits no divided loyalties, holy or profane, but demands an open manifestation of anti-Semitism—if you are a Jew.

In the early 1840s, when he took under his wing the fledgling socialists Marx and Engels, he penned some of the most poisonous words with which to defame what he later discovered was his “people.”

“The Jews, who in the natural history of the world of social animals, had the world-historical vocation of developing man into a beast of prey, have now at last accomplished their professional work.” I forbear from quoting further; I move to the year in the mid-60s of the 19th century when his Rome and Jerusalem appeared. He had by then broken with much of his “socialist” past, and had observed, with horror, that the first time he heard the “HEP” cry of the modern anti-Semites and the ancient Roman Legions—the HEP was perdita—it was of his own Social Democratic Party. After this, both Marx and Engels, having outgrown their apprenticeship in the ranks of a primitive socialism
taught by Hess, lashed out at him, calling him the “communist rabbi”; (they vilified his wife as a common harlot).

But the ardor of their rancor was left for a competitor in the ranks of German Social Democracy—Ferdinand Lasalle. They not only tried to demean him by calling him a “dirty, greasy, fawning kike” (the epithets are grouped together to save space), they also found him to be a “Jewish nigger.”

It was to discover this black and infamous background of their arch-rival for the affections of the German proletariat that they undertook their researches into the religions of the ancient world.

Finally, on May 10, 1861, Marx wrote to Engels a “Dear Fred” note telling him that “Lepsius has proved in his extensive work on Egypt that the exodus as described by Manetho [a pre-Christian Egyptian anti-Semite] which told of the expulsion of a people of lepers headed by an Egyptian priest named Moses. Leprous Lazarus, therefore, is the prototype of the Jew. And Lazarus is Lasalle. Only with the case of our Lazarus, leprosy seems to have affected his brain. His disease represents a badly-healed syphilis of the second stage.” It will be observed that this was written in 1861. Lasalle was still alive, and one can—if one has that kind of sultry imagination—put it down to the kind of language “permissible” among political rivals. But for sheer meanness, one must look to Marx’s collaborator, Engels.

Four years after Lasalle had been killed in a duel by the Roumanian (Wallachite) aristocrat, Count Janko von Racowitza, Engels wrote to Marx (August 22, 1868) about a “comical” thought that had just come to his mind while thinking of “Baron Ikey,” one of the less defamatory appellations the Master Defamers employed in their correspondence about Lasalle. Engels told how the thought had come to him that “Ikey” had become unsexed when the notorious “Wallachite” shot Lasalle’s testicles out from under him. At this point Engels stooped to the gutter to dredge up a nasty little pun, saying that with one shot “Baron Ikey” had been turned into a “Wallach,” ha, ha, ha! (In German “Wallach” means a castrated horse.)

Midway in his little book on Karl Marx, Glickson paused to observe: “What is significant in Marx is his deep, aggressive antipathy, his bitter grudge against Judaism, which borders on the desire to see it destroyed,” concluding with these fateful remarks: “The anti-Semitic spirit of this analysis of Judaism has not prevented Marx’s disciples from hailing his ‘great discoveries’ with their profane halleluyas.” As if to spite Glickson, and to thwart common sense, Erich Fromm introduces the latest—and most turgid—translation of Marx’s “Essay” with these incredible words:

The paper “On the Jewish Question” is one of the most brilliant of Marx’s treatises. . . . To designate Marx as an anti-Semite is nothing but cold war propaganda.

“Cold war” or not: “brilliant” or no, it is best to let Marx have the last words:

Money is the jealous god of Israel, beside which no other god may exist.

The bill of exchange is the real god of the Jews.

That which is contained in an abstract form in the Jewish religion—contempt for theory, for art, for history, and for man as an end in himself—is the real conscious standpoint of the man of money. Even . . . the relation between man and woman, becomes [for the Jew] an object of commerce.

As soon as society succeeds in abolishing the empirical essence of Judaism—
huckstering and its conditions—the Jew becomes impossible.

Be it noted: The quotations imme-
diately above are from the spruced up translation of Mr. T. B. Bottomore so effusively admired by Fromm.

Footnotes

1. Herzl Institute Pamphlet No. 20.
2. This oversight is now being corrected by the writer who is preparing a Yiddish translation for publication.
3. In his "Essay on the Jewish Question," Marx had also written: "The materialistic rule of the Jew over the Christian world has in the United States reached such acceptability that the propagation of the Gospels, the teaching of Christianity itself, has become an article of commerce."
4. "Throughout all the countries of Europe there is spread a powerful hostile-minded State which is involved in constant war with all others... I refer to the Jewry. It is not [merely because it is] a closely knit State... but because this State is created on the basis of a hatred of the entire human race... With respect to such a people one should expect something other than what we find, namely, that in a State where the unrestricted king may not take from me my paternal cottage... the first Jew who so wishes attacks me with impunity." Translated by Prof. E. S. Schaub from Fichte's Beitrage... über die französische Revolution.
5. Jewish Social Studies, vol. XII.
7. See Lenin's The Imperialist War, chapter on Karl Marx.
8. Other unflattering references to Jews appear in the issues dated September 22, 1848, October 15, 1848, February 24, 1849.
10. In his preface to The Peasant War in Germany, Engels wrote: "German scientific socialism is the only scientific socialism that ever existed."
11. Reprinted in his Œuvres (vol. 3) chapter headed De L'état Chez Kant et Fichte.
13. Ibid.
14. In his book, Duchene remembered well what his Masters had taught in the Neue Rheinische Zeitung: "Citizens," he warned the Communards, "when you hear it said that in a reputedly barbarous country, the population handles the Jews roughly, do not believe one treacherous word: it is simply honest people charging rascals, usurers, exploiters of labor; religion has nothing to do with it." Cited in J.S.S., April, 1948.
15. See Edmund Silberner's "Inaugural lecture" delivered at the Hebrew University, January 4, 1953, reprinted as a pamphlet under the title, "The Anti-Semitic Tradition in Modern Socialism." An excellent overview of some of the French (and English) material cited in this article.
16. From the "Inaugural lecture."
18. Grigori Aranson, in his article (in Yiddish) in The History of the Jewish Labor Bund, quotes from the Leniniski Almanac (vol. 1, Moscow, 1924): "Concerning the Bund, Plekhanov shows a remarkable intolerance, calling it an exploiting organization... He said our purpose should be to expel the Bund from the party... that the Russian party should not allow itself to become a captive of the tribe of snakes." Of course Lenin is doing all the quoting, and he was no more a lover of the Bund than was Plekhanov.
19. In My Life (page 210), Trotsky writes about Marx and Engels in these unbelievable words: "Vulgarity could not stick even to the soles of their boots. Their appreciations, sympathies, jests, even when most commonplace, are always touched by the rarefied air of spiritual nobility."