

DR JACOB GEWIRTZ EXPOSES

THE LIE OF ZIONIST-NAZI COLLABORATION

THE ALLEGATION of Zionist-Nazi collaboration is not a new one. What is new, and profoundly disturbing, is its vastly increased use by anti-Israel propagandists in the campaign to discredit Zionism.

That Jews were forced to deal with the malevolent authorities of the Third Reich in an attempt to escape the ravages of Nazi persecution is a matter of common knowledge and of common sense. In fact, much of the material which is now being used and distorted by the anti-Israel lobby in this context comes from quite respectable Jewish sources.

It is rather to the credit of Zionists that they foresaw the terrible events that were to follow Hitler's early policy of forcing Jews out of Germany. Thousands of German Jews found shelter in Palestine as a result of the Haavara agreement by which they were enabled to leave Germany and to take with them some of their belongings. They owed their survival to those maligned Zionist negotiators who walked into the lions' den to bargain for Jewish souls.

It is the characterisation of those negotiations carried out under extreme duress as "collaboration" or "sell-outs" that is most difficult to accept with equanimity or detachment.

Ironically, it is the Soviet Union, perpetrators of the Hitler-Stalin pact, that has been most active in purveying the lie of Nazi-Zionist collaboration. The timing of the campaign coincided with the intensification of efforts to pressure the Soviet régime into allowing Jews to emigrate to Israel. But it also reflected the chagrin of the Soviet leadership over the decisive defeat of Russia's client States in the Middle East at the hands of Israel in the Six-Day War. The words "gauleiters," "genocide," "herrenvolk" (master race) and "lebensraum" used in connection with Israel were to become standard fare on Radio Moscow in the early 1970s.

Nor did the virulence of the campaign diminish with the passing years. Articles with colourfully emotive titles such as "The Dirty Tentacles of the Zionists," "Terror, the weapon of Zionism," "Octopus of Espionage" and "Catchers of Souls" purported to catalogue Zionist co-operation with the Nazis

to destroy the Jews of occupied Europe.

Among the wild and unsubstantiated charges levelled against Zionism were that the Israelis captured Eichmann to silence him over "secret deals with the Zionists and collaboration between their secret services and the Hitlerites during the war" and that Nazi leaders "sought to create a pro-fascist Jewish State in the Middle East."

Interestingly enough, the Von Mildenstein episode, which served as the basis for the recent controversial advertisement for "History Today," also featured largely in an article entitled "Danger: Zionism," published in an Odessa periodical in 1975. The author credits the German writer, Hans Hohne, who wrote in detail about Von Mildenstein and the Haavara agreement as far back as 1966, with the quotation, "as long as the Zionists and National Socialists raised race and the nation to the supreme level, it was inevitable that a common bridge should arise between them."

The Soviet allegations of Zionist-Nazi collaboration were later to be exported to Britain via the extreme Left, especially the Trotskyist Socialist Workers' Party, which ironically considers itself "anti-Stalinist." A vital link in the network was the Arab propaganda centre in the Lebanon.

Particularly vicious is the article, "The Secret Contacts: Zionism and Nazi Germany 1933-1941," by the East German journalist, Klaus Polkehn. It appeared in 1976 in the PLO-directed "Journal of Palestine Studies," which originates in Beirut.

Polkehn depicts the grandfather of Nazi antisemitism, Alfred Rosenberg, as a fervent supporter of Zionism; claims that Eichmann visited Palestine in 1937 as a guest of the Hagana despite his own admission at his trial in Jerusalem that he came to make contact with the Grand Mufti, leader of the Palestinian Arabs; and concludes with the charge that the Irgun Zvai Le'ni offered Hitler a pact under which Palestine would become a fascist Jewish State allied to Nazi Germany.

The PLO article also highlights the Von Mildenstein episode. In some aspects it is even more detailed



than the "History Today" account.

Polkehn's article also served as the basis for the Socialist Workers' Party leaflet, "Israel: A Racist State," which received wide distribution at universities and polytechnics in 1977-8 at the height of the campaign to ban Zionist societies on campus.

Working in close co-operation with the SWP is the British Anti-Zionist Organisation, which in its own right was responsible for the dissemination in Britain of the Neturei Karta publication, "The Holocaust Victims Accuse," a fanatically venomous attack on Zionism which resurrects the painful

Kastner affair. But in stark contradiction to BAZO's own line, Neturei Karta blames the Zionists for the Holocaust because they had the audacity "to declare war" on the Nazis.

While Soviet motives in escalating the "Zionism equals racism" libel to "Zionists are really Nazis" are open to conjecture, the objectives of BAZO were spelled out to members in an internal report of the "Zionism and Racism" conference held in Libya in July, 1976.

The conference, which was attended by the chairman and national secretary of BAZO, decided on a two-pronged campaign which

"would not be limited to intrusion of this or that aspect of the policies of the Zionist State," but would be "conducted with a sharp and uncompromising decisiveness."

The conference's Libyan chairman thereupon called for "the exposure of the racist and reactionary nature of Zionism" and the "advocacy of a unitary, democratic, secular Palestine... as an alternative to Zionism" — a well-worn euphemism for the destruction of Israel.

A vital part of BAZO's brief is to win Jews, particularly Jewish students, over to the Arab side. It has not been without some success in its endeavours. By using Jewish and renegade Israeli sources to discredit Zionism, it hopes to undermine Jewry's devotion to Israel.

The "Zionists collaborated with Nazis" campaign is made to measure for BAZO's primary objective, which is to isolate Israel from its diaspora supporters, as it informed its members:

"Special attention will be made in our attempts to win those of the Jewish faith away from support of Zionist Israel... Utilising our principled two lines and paying great attention to combating racist, antisemitic tendencies in Britain, we will be able to sever the highly subjective links that the Zionists have tried to forge between their State and our British nationals of the Jewish faith."

The odious charge of Zionist-Nazi collaboration is a very significant variation of the "Zionism equals racism" theme. The latter was aimed at convincing the Third World that Israel was, like South Africa, a pariah State that had no right to exist.

Much of the Third-World had little experience of Nazism, whereas racism with its overtones of apartheid and colonialism had a direct relevance especially to the African countries, whose friendship Israel coveted. Having effectively divided Israel from its friends in the Third World, the aim now appears to be to undermine Israel's support among the Western democracies, and to isolate it from diaspora Jewry, its last and most reliable line of defence.