

About the origins of anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe; and the devastation it has wrought in German science.

# *The* Unwanted Jew

## I. THE JEW IN CENTRAL EUROPE

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THE first question a traveler stopping today at the Hungarian border will be asked by the customs official is one regarding his religion. This formality, previously overlooked, was first established by Hungary immediately following Austria's annexation to the Reich. It is but another proof of what is already too well known, namely, that Germany is today the greatest Power in the heart of Central Europe. Not only her influence, but also her ideas expand and flourish with extraordinary swiftness. In consequence, there is a new consciousness of the problem of anti-Semitism.

How could it be otherwise? The problem is constantly present in every-day conversation. The papers are full of it. As soon as you are introduced to anyone, your first concern, in order to avoid embarrassment, is to find out discreetly whether your interlocutor is a Jew or not. The thing becomes an obsession—so much so that it has become an idle, but significant, custom as one travels in the street cars

and buses to try to find out to what race your chance neighbor belongs. Little by little, without being overly proud of it, you begin to be grateful to the fate that has caused you to be born on the right side; at least, it saves you many annoyances.

The progress made by National Socialism in these regions is due less to its highly advertised struggle against Bolshevism than to that which it carries on against Jewry. Actually, there is no immediate Bolshevik danger in the States of Central and Eastern Europe. The Communist Party, outside of what remains of Czechoslovakia, has practically ceased to exist. Its underground work presents no real threat to the Government, except perhaps in Poland, where the working masses are definitely opposed to the régime. The truth is that active revolutionaries in these States no longer belong to the extreme Left; extreme Right parties, like those led by Codreanu in Rumania and Szalassy in Hungary, are much more of a men-

ace. Germany's dynamism, being victorious, exerts more influence on the masses than that of the U.S.S.R.

It was an Aryan leader of a great anti-Nazi Hungarian party who told me emphatically that anti-Semitism is nothing but a disguised form of anti-capitalism. The expropriated capital happened to belong to the Jews, but if it had belonged to pure-blooded Aryans, it still would have been taken away.' What happened in Austria and what will probably happen in the Sudeten territories is proof of this contention. The rich Jews were despoiled of their fortunes in the name of racial principles; the genuine Aryans suffered the same fate because they were accused of having subversive ideas. The pretexts were different but the effect was the same. In Rumania, during the ephemeral anti-Semitic régime of the late M. Goga, Moldavian peasants, after pillaging Jewish stores, proceeded to 'occupy' castles that belonged to purely orthodox noble families. As a Viennese worker told me: 'We didn't mind their despoiling the Jews and the rich, but all the spoils went back to Germany and we saw nothing of them.'

But nobody will profit by the lesson. Zealous propagandists are already today tackling the Hungarian peasant, who lives in dreadful poverty. They point out to him the houses of rich men, many of whom are Jewish. In order to fight against the efforts of these demagogues, the Budapest Government has embarked upon necessary reforms, which already have been delayed for too long. But not all promises can be fulfilled, and the Nazis may win another victory. It is interesting to note that a program such as that of Szalassy, which is so popular, does not

vary essentially from that of the Government that he is fighting. Both of them are for revisionism, which is an article of faith for all patriotic Hungarians; the present Government would be more certain to carry out the proposed agrarian reforms than the Nazis would. There remains anti-Semitism, which is not a new problem in Hungary nor in any other States of Central Europe, where the Jews play such a significant rôle in banking, commerce and industry, not to mention the liberal professions. In Hungary, besides, they own a disproportionate amount of land. From the beginning of the depression, this discrepancy between their numbers and possessions bred an increasing anger and envy among the youth, particularly the unemployed.

Several measures have since been taken to remedy the situation. The Jew, for example, has been excluded from administrative posts. A *numerus clausus* law, which limits the number of non-Aryan students to 10 per cent has been promulgated and then replaced by a selective system that actually benefited the Christian population very little. These measures, admittedly only palliatives, were succeeded by a more decisive one, limiting the number of Jews in all branches of business.

Obviously, in the present state of things a law of this magnitude can only be applied with the maximum of caution and the minimum of haste, to avoid immediate bankruptcy of Hungarian economy. This slow procedure, however, is not to the taste of Germany, which does not want to annex Hungary, but rather wishes to make an economic and military vassal of her. Under the clearing agreement existing between the two States, the

Reich cannot absorb all Hungary's agricultural products, without importing an equal amount of industrial products in exchange. Therefore, it is in her interest to weaken Hungarian industry. Since industry is largely in the hands of the Jews, the *numerus clausus* law, if incautiously enforced, would accelerate its destruction. The Hungarian Nazis are sacrificing national to foreign interests in the name of a common ideology when they proclaim in Parliament that the existing laws are not enough and that they want a radical solution based upon racial principles.

## II

What is this impeccable racial principle? The naïve men who believe that racism has no other object except to protect the German or Magyar race against all contamination would not long keep this illusion after investigation into racial legislation. The application of the Nuremberg Laws, according to which one's race is determined by the status of one's grandparents, has resulted in a host of absurd situations in Central Europe. The letter constantly refuses to agree with the spirit of the law. Sometimes the legislator sees the Jew as a heterogeneous element incapable of ever being assimilated by the nation that has given him refuge. Sometimes, he holds the Jew capable of assimilation by the mere virtue of baptism, and does not bother about race.

I cite the case of a Viennese woman fifty per cent Jewish, mistress of an important Nazi, to whom in 1934 she gave refuge. A decree made her 'Aryan of honor.' In Hungary a Jew, who has been converted to Catholicism or another Christian religion before Au-

gust 1, 1919, is considered an Aryan. This date has not been chosen at random. After the fall of the Béla Kun régime, a host of his co-religionists hastened to assume the Christian faith. The widows of Jewish veterans as well as Jewish war orphans are Aryan in the eyes of the law. But the children of the latter lose that privilege, which is not hereditary, and reënter the ranks of Jewry. Better still, if a Catholic of purely Aryan origin has become a Protestant after August 1, 1919, he is declared to be a Jew. I know a son of a Hungarian count who in 1923 married a Jewess who was baptized after the fateful date. According to the latest decree, he has become a Jew, while the son of two full-blooded Jews baptized before that date are held to be Aryan.

In Rumania, during the Goga Ministry, an attempt was made to distinguish between Jews of long established residence in that country and those who had entered it after 1919. Immediately the legislation encountered insuperable practical difficulties. Many people did not know the birthplace of their grandparents and didn't remember the name that was theirs under the Turkish domination. Archives have disappeared. If the régime had continued, the authorities would have had to decide at random who was Aryan and who was Jew; and this will be the same in all the Balkan countries, and in Poland and Czechoslovakia, or wherever the doctrine of anti-Semitism may be carried out.

When the Nazis tell you that in a year there will not remain a single Jew in Germany, it is hard not to smile. They may eliminate all the Jews whose race has been decided, but at the present moment in Austria alone one

can roughly estimate at 900,000 the number of persons who, strictly speaking, have no right to be called Aryan.

To speak about race after this is an insult to one's intelligence. The racial theory is quite impracticable and can be only used as a synonym for anti-Semitism, which is a much less pretentious and convenient word. Deprived of its racial trappings, anti-Semitism as it exists in the East of Europe is purely of economic origin. The Jews owe their preponderance in industry and commerce to the economic conditions prevailing in the nineteenth century. In Central European countries like Hungary, where the nobility was a large part of the population, contempt for commerce and industry went hand in hand with extravagant living. These neglected fields were left open to the Jew, who had only to pick up the money that was virtually thrown out of the windows. 'While we danced, they worked,' an old noblewoman from Warsaw told me. 'Today we have to work for our livelihood and they can dance.' In Rumania it was the peasant who disliked and neglected trade. In Bohemia, however, no such prejudices existed and, as a result, there was a much more equitable distribution of commerce among Jews and Christians.

### III

Today, however, the young Pole, the young Hungarian, the young Rumanian and their neighbors have discarded their ancestors' prejudices. Their ideas have advanced and the last crumbs of ancient fortunes, joyfully squandered, have disappeared. Somehow, they have to live. Contempt for trade, industry and banking is

gone, but now they find that most of the good places have already been taken. For this reason, the young Hungarian is today ravished by Hitlerian theories. The Jew is seen by the youth as the only, or at least, the principal culprit. It is no use arguing that he cannot be held responsible for the changes that have taken place in the world, or the world depression. A scapegoat is needed and the Jew shares that doubtful honor with the makers of the Trianon Treaty. The young Hungarians of the higher and middle class are convinced that life would be much easier for them in a Hungary whose lost territories have been returned. But before this ardently awaited hour arrives, they must live somehow. They cannot get jobs without displacing the Jew, who for that reason is public enemy number one.

Consider, too, his character. The Jew is much more affable, of a more cosmopolitan spirit, and his patriotism lacks the rabid quality that is so prevalent in these regions. He speaks all the Western languages easily and fluently. He is open to criticism. He is the one to tell those amusing anecdotes that poke fun at the excesses of governments, dictatorial or otherwise. For this reason, he will probably tell you more about things as they really are beneath the surface than his Aryan fellow citizen, who would have a tendency to hide the worst sides of his country. It is logical that the latter should be irritated at the attitude of these intelligent and unconventional gossips.

This does not mean that the Jew lacks patriotism. In Central Europe, if he belongs to a well-to-do social class, he is almost always a conserva-

tive with a liking for strong, anti-Communist governments. One Budapest journalist, who does not attempt to hide his race, told me: 'There is no Jew here with good common sense who did not regret Léon Blum's coming to power.'

And a big Rumanian industrialist of the same race told me: 'I want to be treated like any other Rumanian citizen. I have a right to it, since my family has lived in Bucharest for more than seventy years. But I would not object against a law that would, for example, forbid Jews to mingle in politics. We are incapable of running a country. It is not that we are lacking in patriotism, but rather in national instinct. Besides, we are only a minority. But I do object when M. Goga or M. Cuza forbid me to have in my employ a woman servant less than forty years old (such a decree has actually been promulgated in Bucharest at the beginning of this year). I don't mind being limited in the fields of commerce and industry, but I do mind liberal professions being closed to us.'

A member of a preceding Hungarian Government, especially interested in the Jewish question, told me: 'I am not a savage anti-Semite and do not approve of what is happening in Vienna. I do believe that the State should control to some extent the wealth of the Jews because, without

mincing words, I have not much confidence in their patriotism. If you remember, before Hitler's coming to power, our own good Jews were pushing us into the arms of Berlin. Now, naturally, they are transformed into the most violent opponents of such an entente, because the new Chief of its Government is anti-Semitic. I understand and excuse their legitimate disgust and rage, but you will recognize that I have some reason for believing that, unconsciously, they are reasoning as Jews and not as Hungarians.'

Racism, or anti-Semitism, seems to an objective observer a doctrine least suited to solve the Jewish question. The day approaches when other States will refuse to give access to Jewish émigrés in their territory. Then Germany and the countries that imitate her will have to face one of two solutions: either to exterminate them, in the literal sense of the word, or to assimilate them. Unless humanity disintegrates into a complete state of barbarism, they will have to embrace the second solution, willingly or otherwise. The laws aiming at eliminating the Jew or isolating him from the rest of the population are on the wrong road, because only laws that provide for his progressive assimilation can ultimately solve a problem of such great significance for the greater part of Europe.

## II. ARYAN SCIENCE

By E. J. GUMBEL

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**T**HE mass dismissals by the National Socialists of German scientists have greatly decreased the importance

of many German universities. Somehow Nazi ideology had to justify this process. The campaign against science