

HENRY FORD AND THE JEWS

trate his character. The son of a Christian prostitute in Kiev was killed by several of the woman's street associates. The chief of detectives, Minschuk, had the evidence and was preparing the case when Brasol and fellow members of the Black Hundred concocted the tale that the boy had been killed by Jews and his blood drained for a religious ritual. The police chief protested and was sent off to jail for a year. A Jewish bookkeeper named Mendal Beylis was arrested for the crime, and awaited trial for eighteen months while the Black Hundred attempted to build a case. The strange trial consisted mainly of proving that there was such a thing as ritual murder. The jury, consisting of both peasants and professional people, brought in the curious verdict that yes, Jewish ritual murders did exist, but no, Beylis had not participated in one. Newspapers across Russia protested the ridiculous conclusion, and Brasol's associates went to work closing down fourteen newspapers and fining twenty-two others for objecting to the proceedings at Kiev. Later in America, Brasol would recount the tale of the trial, bemoaning the fact that the prosecution failed to convict the Jew, even while admitting openly that the man was innocent.

In the *Dearborn Independent's* employ, Brasol could far more effectively spread his anti-Semitic propaganda. He wrote for the publication for nearly two years and remained in close contact with Ford's top people until World War II. Brasol also brought in some of his tsarist friends to join the Ford team, one of them Major-General Count Cherep Spiridovich, who became a subscription agent for the paper. In 1921 Brasol wrote to Spiridovich, boasting, "Within the last year I have written three books, two of which have done the Jews more injury than would have been done to them by ten pogroms."³³ It is worth noting here that during Brasol's tenure on Liebold's team, actual pogroms

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were discussed seriously among the Ford secret agent crew. Brasol was later quoted as saying: "There are going to be the biggest pogroms and massacres here and elsewhere; I will write and I will precipitate them."³⁴

Brasol's greatest contribution to the *Dearborn Independent* was his introduction of the *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*. He sold them to Liebold as if they were esoteric and mystical documents, even though the *Protocols* were openly being sold at the time in Russia and France. The *Protocols*, purportedly written by Jews at the Zionist Congress at Basel, Switzerland, in 1897, outlined a worldwide plot to destroy the Aryan nations by providing leadership and financial backing to every activity which would undermine the social and moral institutions of the gentile world. There was, according to the *Protocols*, a single Jewish Sanhedrin, or supreme council, directing the actions of Jews everywhere. The *Protocols* contained twenty-four sets of instructions, ostensibly given in a lecture to the younger Jewish conspirators. The document was an absurd forgery, developed by Serge Nilus, a tsarist agent, for the purpose of inspiring pogroms in Russia. And Nilus had not even been original, plagiarizing the *Protocols* from a mid-nineteenth-century novel by a French lawyer, Maurice Joly, *Dialogue in Hell Between Machiavelli and Montesquieu*, a satirical attack on French political powers. Over the next twenty years, the *Protocols* would be exposed again and again as rank forgeries, beginning in 1921 by the *London Times*.³⁵ In a major court case in Switzerland in 1935 they were finally discussed openly. Germany's Lieutenant-Colonel Fleischhauer argued that they were authentic beyond question. The president of the court concluded: "I am convinced that the *Protocols* are obscene literature and, more than that, namely, ridiculous nonsense."³⁶