

revolution (1905), but also to our second revolution (1917), in which the Jews have played such a disastrous role for Russia. . . . For us who are witnesses of this self-laceration, for us who hope to see Russia's rebirth, this document is all the more significant because it reveals the means employed by the enemies of Christianity to subjugate us. Only if we reach an understanding of these means, shall we be able to fight successfully the enemies of Christ and of Christian civilisation.¹

The *Protocols* were of course far too complicated and sophisticated to be understood by the common soldiers – most of whom were in any case illiterate. At the Berne trial of 1934 Chaim Weizmann recalled the first time he saw the *Protocols*. British officers attached to the 'White' armies brought to Palestine a document of four or five typewritten pages, and explained that just such a document was to be found in the possession of every 'White' officer and N.C.O. On inspection it turned out to consist of extracts from the *Protocols*. From other sources it appears that material of this kind was distributed on a vast scale to literate members of the various 'White' and Ukrainian armies, who used to read and explain it to the illiterate.

New forgeries were also produced to supplement the *Protocols* and bring them up to date. The most celebrated of these was a document said to have been found on a Jewish Bolshevik commander in the Red Army, of the name of Zunder. Copies of this document seem to have been circulated as early as May 1918; and in the winter of 1919–20, when the tide of battle was turning and the 'White' armies, hitherto victorious, were losing battle after battle, it began to figure in newspapers run by the 'White' armies – sometimes in new and considerably expanded versions. It reads as follows:

Secret. To the representatives of all the branches of the Israelite International League.

Sons of Israel! The hour of our ultimate victory is near! We stand on the threshold to the command of the world. That which we could only dream of before is about to be realized. Only quite recently feeble and powerless, we can now, thanks to the world's catastrophe, raise our heads with pride.

We must, however, be careful! It can surely be prophesied that,

¹ *Sionskiye Protokoly* (ed. A. Rodionov), Novoherkask, 1918.

after we have marched over ruined and broken altars and thrones, we shall advance further on the same indicated path.

The authority of the to us alien religions and doctrines of faith we have, through very successful propaganda, subjected to a merciless criticism and mockery. We have brought the culture, civilization, traditions and thrones of the Christian nations to stagger, wherein, among these nations, we found more men than was necessary for our work. We have done everything to bring the Russian people under the yoke of the Jewish power, and ultimately compelled them to fall on their knees before us.

We have nearly completed all this, but we must all the same be very cautious, because the oppressed Russia is our arch-enemy. The victory over Russia, gained through our intellectual superiority, may in future, in a new generation, turn against us.

Russia is conquered and brought to the ground. Russia is in the agony of death under our heel, but do not forget – not even for a moment – that we must be careful. The holy care for our safety does not allow us to show either pity or mercy. At last we have been allowed to behold the bitter need of the Russian people, and to see it in tears! By taking from them their property, their gold, we have reduced this people to helpless slaves.

Be cautious and silent. We ought to have no mercy for our enemy. We must make an end of the best and leading elements of the Russian people, so that the vanquished Russia may not find any leader! Thereby every possibility will vanish for them to resist our power. We must excite hatred and disputes between workers and peasants. War and class struggle will destroy all treasure and culture created by the Christian people. But be cautious, Sons of Israel! Our victory is near, because our political and economic power and influence upon the masses are in rapid progress. We buy up Government loans and gold and thereby we have controlling power of the world's exchanges. The power is in our hands, but be careful – place no faith in traitorous shady powers.

Bronstein (Trotsky), Apfelbaum (Zinovyev), Rosenfeld (Kameney), Steinberg – all of them are like unto thousands of other true sons of Israel. Our power in Russia is unlimited. In the towns the commissariats and committees of food, house committees, etc., are dominated by our people. But do not let victory intoxicate you. Be careful, cautious, because no one except yourselves will protect us.

Remember, we cannot rely on the Red Army, which one day may turn its warfare on ourselves.

Sons of Israel! The hour for our long-cherished victory over

Russia is near; close your ranks! Make known our people's national policy! Fight for our eternal ideals! Keep holy the old laws, which history has bequeathed to us! May our intellect, our genius, protect and lead us!

Signed, The Central Committee of the Israelite International League.¹

For all its absurdity, the Zunder document was a portent; for the idea underlying it – that the Bolshevik revolution was the result of a Jewish plot and fulfilled the age-old strivings of the Jewish people – was to leave its mark on history. Already at that time the idea had become an obsession with many of the 'White' Russians, later it was to become an article of faith with the Nazis, within a generation it was to influence the policy of the German Government at home and abroad. It is worth considering what basis, if any, it had in historical fact.

Until the last few generations, to be a Jew meant one thing only: to be an adherent of the Jewish religion. For Jews in this sense of the word the Bolshevik revolution meant not fulfilment but renewed peril. In the event religious Jews have been at least as much persecuted in the Soviet Union as have religious Christians. At the very time when the Zunder document was circulating in the 'White' armies, the Soviet Government was converting synagogues into workers' clubs, dissolving Jewish religious, cultural, and philanthropic institutions, and banning all Hebrew books, irrespective of their contents. Bolsheviks of Jewish descent felt not the slightest solidarity with religious Jews – on the contrary. When a deputation of Jews called on Trotsky and asked him to do nothing which could provoke the 'White' soldiery to pogroms, he answered: 'Go home to your Jews and tell them I'm not a Jew and don't care about the Jews or what happens to them'.² Here is a gulf, and an unbridgeable one, which antisemitic propagandists have done their best to conceal.

There was another reason why the great mass of Russian Jews could not conceivably support the Bolsheviks: they were mostly small shop-keepers and self-employed artisans. As

¹ Reprinted in *Four Protocols of Zion (not the Protocols of Nilus)*, London, 1921.

² H. Valentin, *Antisemitenspiegel*, Vienna, 1937, pp. 179–80.