

WARRANT FOR GENOCIDE

extreme Right, such as the Deutsch-völkischer Schutz and Trutzbund (Defensive and Offensive Alliance) and the Ehrhardt Naval Brigade; several of them had taken part in the first attempt by the Right to overthrow the Republic, the Kapp *putsch* of 1920. They were grouped in an organization known as 'Organization Consul' which, like the young Nazi party, was based on Munich. This body was dedicated to terrorism and 'Shoot down Walther Rathenau, the God-accursed Jewish sow', is a fair sample of the kind of thing these young people sang about the streets.

The imagination of the assassins was steeped in the *Protocols* and the lore which had gathered around them. The man who planned the murder, Willy Günther, admitted this quite frankly during his preliminary interrogation. The reason why Rathenau had to be killed, he said, was that according to Ludendorff he was the one man in Germany who knew the membership of the secret Jewish government, which had caused the war. The same picture emerged at the trial at Leipzig, in October 1922, of the driver of the car from which Rathenau was shot (of the two who had done the actual killing, one was shot by the police and another shot himself to avoid capture).³¹ This is how the accused, Ernst Techow, described the plot as it had been propounded by its originator, the dead Erwin Kern:

Kern said that he proposed to murder Minister Rathenau. And that I must bind myself to help him, whether I wanted to or not. Otherwise he would be prepared to carry the job out alone. And that it was all one to him what the consequences might be. At the same time he gave various reasons which in his opinion were decisive, although that was not my view. He said . . . that Rathenau had very close and intimate relations with Bolshevik Russia, so

31. The account given by one of the plotters, Ernst von Salomon, in *Die Geächteten*, Berlin, 1935, makes no mention of the *Protocols* or the secret Jewish government, and in his famous post-war book *Der Fragebogen von Ernst von Salomon*, Hamburg, 1951, he even denies that Rathenau's Jewishness had anything to do with the murder. But even if some of those involved saw the assassination in other terms, Techow's evidence stands.

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that he had even married off his sister to the Communist Radek.

Finally he said that Rathenau had himself confessed, and boasted, that he was one of the three hundred Elders of Zion, whose purpose and aim was to bring the whole world under Jewish influence, as the example of Bolshevist Russia already showed, where at first all factories, etc., were made public property. Then at the suggestion and command of the Jew Lenin, Jewish capital was brought in from abroad, to bring the factories into operation again, and so in this way the whole of Russian national property was now in Jewish hands...

The President of the Court: You say that Rathenau had close relations with the Bolshevist Radek, so that he even married his sister off to him.

Techow: That is supposed to be the fact. I don't know.

President: To my knowledge Rathenau has only one sister, who is married to a Dr Andreae in Berlin.

Techow: I don't know.

President: How could this great industrialist come to have such relations with the Russian refugee and Communist Radek? Does it seem likely to you?

Techow: No, it was simply a conjecture, which Kern gave as if it was a fact. So I had to suppose it was right.

President: To continue: Rathenau is supposed to have confessed that he was himself one of the three hundred Elders of Zion. The three hundred Elders of Zion come from a pamphlet. Have you read it?

Techow: Yes.³²

On the eve of the trial a packet of poisoned chocolates had been sent to one of the accused, Willy Günther, in prison. The public prosecutor, in the statement which he issued, made it clear why: for fear that 'those who stood behind the murderers of Foreign Minister Rathenau would be betrayed by the evidence which Günther would be giving at the trial'.³³ How far these people can be identified with the leaders of the young Nazi party remains uncertain, but we know what Goebbels wrote

32. K. Brammer, *Das politische Ergebnis des Rathenau-Prozesses*, Berlin, 1922, pp. 26-9. The book contains a shorthand record of parts of the trial.

33. *ibid.*, p. 42.