Why the Jews?

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

The spreading influence of Communist-inspired anti-Semitism has swelled the flood of refugees pouring into West Berlin and led to the arrest of Jews in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania. In the West reports multiply of defections from Communist ranks, not only by Jews but by thousands of other members who regard anti-Semitism as a basic betrayal of party tenets—a "deviation" more flagrant than any charged against the "wreckers" and "traitors" of recent purge trials. Whatever its purpose, the Russian attack on Jews has touched off emotions which may well undermine whatever forces in the West are still working for peace.

These are facts which the Kremlin must have discounted in advance. Soviet leaders could not have hoped that the outside world would believe the accusations of plotting and murder, under British-American direction, brought against nine distinguished doctors; still less that it would regard the attack on Jews and Zionists as merely new manifestations of the established practice of the purge. For the singling out of Jews, identified as such, has added a new dimension to the old pattern. Not only does Communist doctrine forbid such discrimination, but Russia's best claim to world approval has been its handling of the many national minorities in its vast area. Purges and repressions, however ruthless or unjustified, have been carried out for political reasons, and Soviet sympathizers have found excuses for them in the harsh dialectic of communism.

By the same logic, no distinctions are allowed within the camp of the faithful: Jew, Mongol, Great Russian all are equal—at least in theory. But the moment the word Jew is placed after the name of an accused man, the theory falls to pieces and with it a large part of the structure of Communist dogma. That this was in the mind of the Kremlin leaders is shown by their use of "Zionist" and "Joint" as tags of identification. But since no informed person believes that Zionists or representatives of the Joint Distribution Committee, as such, are degenerates, murderers, or spies, the labels only exposed the anti-Semitism behind the attacks. And there was no subterfuge in the comment on certain arrested men published last week in Ukrainin Pravda of Kiev: "The profound hatred of the people is aroused by all these Kahns and Yaroshetzkys, Greensteins, Kaplanis, and Polyakovs."

There are other reasons why the evil effect of the new purge must have been foreseen in Moscow. Chief among them is the horror with which the left, in Europe and throughout the world, together with intelligent people of every political grouping, reacted to the Nazi extermination of the Jews of Europe. The genocide accomplished by Hitler's executioners in the human slaughterhouses of Germany and Eastern Europe has made anti-Semitism a synonym for the greatest crime of this terrible era of mass-murder. On this issue the nerves of the civilized world are raw. For Stalin to conjure up images of new Auschwitzes and new Dachaus would seem sheer recklessness; yet that is what the current anti-Semitism in Russia and its satellites has done.

What motives led Moscow to invite the shocked reaction already becoming evident? Why was the attack launched against the Jews?

No doubt Stalin wants to win the good-will of the Arab states and check any progress there may be toward an eastern Mediterranean pact under NATO. An attack on Jews as Zionists and on Zionists as agents of Western imperialism is well conceived to please the leaders of Arab states still hoping for ultimate victory over Israel.

No doubt he hopes to capitalize on the growing anti-Western feeling in Germany, marked by the recrudescence of Nazi activity on both sides of the line. The announced purge of "cosmopolitans" in the East German Communist hierarchy may foreshadow a closer tie between the party and the "reconstructed" Nazis.

On another page Mark Gayn analyzes the motives underlying the purge as a general method in dictatorships. Some of these motives apply today. There may have been rivalries and top-level plotting that led to Zhdanov's death—and now to the arrest of the nine doctors. That some such dark doings are being concealed behind trappings of "Zionist conspiracy" is possible, but outsiders can only guess.

In addition to these factors there is the mounting fear of war in the whole Soviet area—a fear which has its obvious counterpart, with comparable though milder results, in the United States. Security measures designed both to root out and to arouse fear of subversive elements are evidently on the increase. Moscow's top officials and its trusted agents in the satellite capitals may be embarked upon a purge of all who stand even a little apart from the regime, who have interests, relatives, secondary allegiances outside the Communist state. Girding for war, fearful of spies acting under the orders of Washington—spies financed, perhaps, by that famous $100,000,000 voted for counter-revolutionary operations in Eastern Europe—intent upon establishing an impregnable bloc of states ruled by hard-core Communists, the Kremlin may well be using anti-Semitism for its historic purpose. The Jews, or selected Jews, become scapegoats, symbolizing those genuine "cosmopolitan" qualities which in normal times and democratic countries are recognized as the finest ingredient of patriotism.

We have no desire, at this infinitely dangerous moment, to fan existing hatreds or sharpen heartbreaking anxieties. Many are using the occasion to do both who, by their records, have never defended either the Jews or
the cause of peace. Yet we view the possible consequences of the current purge with terrible misgivings. What is to happen to the 3,000,000 or more Jews of Eastern Europe? We may guess that the Russians do not intend to set off a chain-reaction of pogroms or to institute a mass purge of Jews. We may hope that Communist discipline will be applied to curb excesses in case official acts against Jews reanimate the traditional mass anti-Semitism of Eastern Europe. But we cannot be sure that the ruling Communist groups intend to put on the brakes or could do so if they tried—once the infection spreads. We cannot be sure; and we recall all too vividly the refusal of all but a handful in the West to credit the first reports of anti-Semitic outrages under Hitler. The civilized skepticism of the outside world was largely responsible for the slaughter of millions of European Jews. Dare we rest on our doubts today?

On the contrary, it is essential that just those groups and persons who have urged, and still urge, a negotiated settlement with Russia must take the lead in pointing out the dangers implicit in these first open acts of anti-Semitism. Only a protest joined in by leaders of liberal thought everywhere stands a chance of bringing home to the Russian leaders the international price they will have to pay if they pursue their present course.

"Since the end of the war," he writes, "the balance of forces between the East and the West has definitely shifted in favor of the Communists. It is for this reason that security for the West cannot be found in the reciprocal balance of the two huge military establishments. Experience has shown that Europe as at present constituted is incapable of a military effort great enough to withstand the initial shock of a massive invasion." M. Bernard sees a definite peril in expecting that a parity of strength between the two blocs will eventually be reached, first, because "time is working on the side of the Soviet Union" and, second, because, as one year after another goes by in an unavailing and economically exhausting arms race, the West might be tempted to force a showdown at the worst possible moment for itself. Since, as he sees it, the West now has atomic superiority over Russia, he believes that Russia should be approached—in a most direct way: "Do you want negotiations or do you want war?"

But M. Bernard lays down two basic conditions for the West, if it is to follow the course he proposes. First, the Western leaders must cease to "draw the wrong conclusions from their analysis of the present state of affairs." They must "moderate their demands" and "take the real situation into account." "Politics," he adds, "is the art of the possible, and there is no possibility that we can wrest from the Russians what they have taken." Without mentioning Mr. Dulles by name, he repeatedly pronounces himself against the policy of "liberation" from without. The second condition is that the West should attach its proposal of negotiation to an issue which would be tempting to the enemy. M. Bernard believes Germany is that issue.

"It is impossible," he says, "to formulate a program for the settlement of the cold war without taking a clear-cut position on the German problem, no matter whether the reunification or the definitive division of the country is favored. For several reasons German reunification constitutes necessarily a condition of an amicable settlement of the cold war. Whether the cold war comes to an end will depend on whether Germany can be reunited with the consent of all interested powers and on a basis which is without peril for all."

M. Bernard recalls that the late German Socialist leader, Kutt Schumacher, shortly before his death declared to a group of American reporters: "The partition of Germany is the trump card of Soviet foreign policy." Schumacher used this enigmatic phrase to indicate that the incompatibility of German unification with Germany's integration in the West offered the Russians an opportunity for political and psychological pressure that the Western powers had no possibility of countering. Or, as M. Bernard puts it: "Russia in theory could at any time rupture the military and economic ties binding West Germany to the Western coalition by offering to

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**We Can Still Negotiate on Germany**

BY J. ALVAREZ DEL VAYO

A reader has written: "You talk of negotiating with Russia; but Mr. Vishinsky rejected the Indian proposal on Korea. Do you really think there is any subject left on which we could still negotiate?" I think the answer to this question is still—Germany. I have said this often in the last three years and have found support in many indubitably anti-Communist and authoritative quarters. In *World Politics*, published by Princeton University [Volume V, Number 2, January, 1953], for instance, this suggestion is proposed and discussed by S. Bernard, a Belgian, strongly pro-Western, who served under Paul-Henri Spaak in the Belgian Ministry of the Interior. At the moment he is at work on a report on the Schuman Plan for the Institut des Relations Internationales in Brussels, which will be published in book form in Paris early in 1953.

M. Bernard is a right-wing Socialist. His point of view differs fundamentally from mine, inasmuch as he believes that the present superiority of the West in atomic power should be used now to place before Russia the alternative of negotiating or risking a full-scale war. But this difference apart, his argument supports a basic position I regard as unassailable.

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