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159

Box  
57

Folder  
604

How to Defend Israel, 1940.

WRHS

HOW TO DEFEND ISRAEL

Which are the valid methods for Jewish self-defense and which should be abandoned?

By  
Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

At  
The Temple

On  
Sunday morning, March 3, 1940





I recall that as a student twenty-five or twenty-six years ago, I attended a Seminar at the College, at which time the leader of the Seminar discussed with us and with the students of that group, that notorious anti-Semitic book of Houston Stewart Chamberlain, "The Foundation of the Nineteenth Century". The book became the Bible, so to speak, of present-day German anti-Semitism which led to the Nazi Movement, and which misled a whole generation of Germany. In this book, too, the whole thesis of the inferiority of the Jewish race is discussed ..... also the doctrine of the Nordic superiority, and the destiny of the Germanic race to rule the world.

I recall the reaction of the students who attended that Seminar at that time to this book. As one of them said - it was such a waste of time to discuss a thing so bizarre, so fantastic, a thing which could in no way touch the life abroad, and certainly not here. And I suspect that sentiment reflected pretty generally the mood of men and women in this country at that time. It was all talk of another world, gibberish and it had no relevancy to life today.

Some years later, following the World War, I was in Vienna attending an international conference. Vienna at that time was seething with anti-Jewish demonstrations, and I found myself one day in a group of Jews from Central and Eastern Europe who were discussing anti-Semitism in Europe. And in the course of the informal conversation, one of the men turned to me and said, "What are you doing about anti-Semitism in the United States?". I was rather taken aback. Why, we are doing nothing. We haven't got it at all. They were rather amazed and received my statement with lifted eye-brows. But I was expressing a conviction which I am sure was shared by all Americans in those days. Anti-Semitism was not a problem concerning which Jews had to



take concerted action. There was some anti-Semitism manifested which expressed itself in groups, etc., but that did not particularly disturb the even tenor of our people in this country and did not particularly call for action. And that condition prevailed all through the Twenties. There was, of course, here and there anti-Semitic thinking of more serious nature - for example that expressed in the Dearborn Independent, but that was, we felt, the expression of an individual who had a personal grudge to satisfy. It was a temporary thing and was liquidated seemingly to the satisfaction of everybody.

There was the organized movement of the Ku Klux Klan which did disturb Jewish life - but we felt it was not particularly directed against the Jews in the United States but against other non-Jewish movements in the United States, and that movement itself disappeared with the growing economic prosperity of our nation. That was in the Twenties.

But the whole climate seemed to have changed in the Thirties. Today we are all conscious of a sharp increase of anti-Semitism. Numerous organizations, large and small have sprung up, whose avowed purpose is the dissemination of anti-Semitism. Rallies, meetings in various parts of the country, of an anti-Jewish quality are being held. Attacks on Jews via radio are made, and every Jew in the United States has become aware, keenly aware of this anti-Semitism. It has become a sort of shadow in the life of every Jew, a sort of Banquo's Ghost at every dinner table. Some Jews are extremely worried and frightened about it, and have sought, in fear, to escape from it. Others, greatly aroused about it, have set about discovering, organizing many furious activities to counteract this anti-Semitism.

And the non-Jewish ~~world~~ world has become greatly aware of anti-Semitism.



And from the press and from the pulpits of this nation, very often the subject is now discussed. National organizations of non-Jews or of Christians and Jews have been created to counteract that propaganda. Our Federal Government through Congress, or through other departments has set about investigating anti-Semitism as one form of subversive movement which has spread through our nation in the last decade.

What has happened in these Thirties. What was the change of climate, so to speak, of this nation? Did the Jews of the United States in the Thirties, suddenly become bad and wicked, so bad, and so wicked as to have aroused the indignation of our non-Jewish fellow citizens? What transformed the situation in these United States? And you don't have to look for the answer very far.

Early in 1933, the Nazis came into power in Germany. One of the main theses, one of the basic principles in the Nazi program was the extermination of the Jews, and they set about the execution of that program right away. They were unable to put through any other ideologies in their program, but this one they were able to do and to complete. The Jews in Germany represented a rather small and harmless minority. They set about exterminating it with quick brutality. And in order to justify that Twentieth Century attack, brutal attack upon a religious and racial minority, the Nazis sent their agents abroad to explain, so to speak, their actions.

The Jews were communists, and therefore they had to be destroyed. An extensive propaganda campaign was launched throughout the United States to popularize the idea that the Jews were linked with communism and were, therefore, a menace to the civilization of the Western World. There are many Germans in the United States, some loyal to their native land, and others smarting under the criticism which their Fatherland is receiving, who are



all too ready to accept this doctrine and to spread it. There were others in these United States, who out of their hatred of Communism, and out of fear of Communism, were glad to have another excuse to discredit this thing. Another thing offered by the Nazis was that Communism was a Jewish creation and a Jewish conspiracy to overthrow the world.

As the Nazis continued in office and as their power increased, their cruelty increased, their suppression and conquest of other small neighboring nations increased, they naturally intensified the propaganda of the world. And the first money spent by the Reich was to foster a special department in Germany for that purpose - the National News Service supplied doctored news in all parts of the world. When the signal was given from headquarters in Germany to the nuclei of propaganda in all parts of the world, camps were organized, meetings and rallies were organized and Nazi propaganda was disseminated which was saturated at all times with anti-Semitism. The Nazis in this country and in every country catered to every group which they thought could be won over to a united front with them. In this country they catered to all forms of New Deal enemies, and particularly to the foes of the CIO. They found a link between them, the Nazis and these organizations.

The Catholic Church of the United States was very much interested in fighting communism and here, the Nazis felt, was another possible link for it and the Nazis, the arch-foes of communism in the world. And it was not difficult to persuade some Catholics who were crusading against Communism, that the Nazis were not to be blamed for their attitude toward the Jews because Jews were linked with Communism in all parts of the world. It was necessary to do away with the Jews. And many a Catholic in the United States, <sup>was</sup> beguiled by this clever Nazi propaganda, and so the poison



spread. The Nazi-Soviet pact, of course, dealt the Jewish-Communist thesis a tremendous body blow. But the Nazis were not discouraged by these facts. Now that the Nazis and the Bolshevies have become close bosom friends, they can no longer capitalize on the Jewish-Communist canard. It was necessary for them to discover another slogan. And that slogan was not far to look for.

The Nazis were defenders of world peace against Jewish war-mongers. The Nazis found themselves at war. They had invaded Austria and got away with it. They invaded Czechoslovakia and got away with it. They invaded Poland and did not get away with it. They found themselves entangled not with an insignificant power but with two of the greatest powers in the world, with England and France, the two powers which liquidated Germany before. They didn't want that war. First of all, they had to tell their own people that this war in which they had entangled their people was not a war of their making, just as the war of 1914 was not of their own making, but a war made by Jews. This war in Poland was brought about by Jews. The Jews in Poland egged them on. Certainly the English people and the French people never wanted to fight Germany. It was the Jews in both countries who egged their countries on.

Now - and this is the catch - you smile at this again, it is so fantastic. Yet it is the kind of fantastic propaganda which is dangerous and difficult to counteract. The American people want peace, and the Nazis are capitalizing upon this normal, wholesome desire for peace. And so, here again they found a link to tie up Nazi x propaganda with prevalent sentiment among the American people. The American people want peace. Every-body wants peace except the Jews, the Jews who are war-mongers in this country, the Jews who are going to drive the American



people into war out of revenge and in order to satisfy the Jewish international bankers who profit from war. It is the Jews who profit from the Embargo.

And unfortunately some Americans are being beguiled by that sort of propaganda. So that anti-Semitism today, my friends, in this country, is almost entirely a German product of German agents who have also told Americans who are interested in defending certain privileges, how to exploit anti-Semitism.

When once you understand the origin and the nature and purpose of this anti-Semitism which was spread through this country, you learn the true way to combat it. And of this, I want to speak briefly this morning.

First of all, you recognize your own limitations in an effort to combat it. You recognize that this propaganda is being planned, directed by powerful government which has vast imperial plans and ambitions, which is determined to exploit every avenue to achieve its ends - once you realize that fact, that that government will not cease its propaganda until it is destroyed, you also realize that in a very real sense what you can do about it to counteract it is rather limited. Even today, while Great Britain is at war with Germany, Germany is able to pump into Great Britain the most damaging anti-British propaganda. And The British can't do anything about it. There are limitations to what you can do. Once you realize that there are limitations, you become far less impatient.

Secondly, after you understand the origin, you recognize that it is not enough to defend the Jews, but in a counter-attack upon Nazism,



and that skillful counter-propaganda requires that we united with all liberty-loving, freedom-loving men and women in this country to fight reaction and to preserve and advance the American way of life.

We should recognize that this use of the conspiracy motif is an old trick used by all the reactionaries throughout the ages. During the Middle Ages, a reactionary church used the conspiracy motif against the Jews. They popularized the notion of the Jews conspiring to destroy Christendom during the Black Plague. And when hundreds of Christians perished, and of course, among them large numbers of Jews as well, the legend was broadcast that this visitation which had come to the Christians, this visitation of death was brought about by the fact that the enemies of Christendom, the Jews, were destroying them. They also publicized the conspiracy of the ritual murder - that the Jews required the blood of Christian children for the baking of Passover Matzoth.

During the Nineteenth Century, when the power of the Church had waned to a large extent, and when dogmatics were no longer being employed, the reactionaries of the Nineteen Century - those who feared the spread of democracy - resorted to conspiracy charges to discredit the Jews and liberalism in Europe. And so the legend was broadcast that the Jews were opposed to the people in whose midst they lived and that they were conspiring against the people among whom they were living. In France the Jews were charged with seeking to destroy their country and the climax of that was the Dreyfus Affair when a Jew was accused of selling military secrets of France to Germany.

When the Revolution of 1905 broke out in Russia, and the Czarist Government was frightened and was about to ~~yield~~ yield to some of the demands and liberalize the Russian Government, an official of the Synod forged the "Protocols of Zion" and placed it in the hands of the ~~the~~ Czar of Russia



in order to convince him that the Jews were plotting to overthrow the government and that this tendency should be immediately stamped out in blood and pogroms. Following the World War, when Bolshevism triumphed in Russia and the whole world was in danger of being over-run by Communism and radicalism, the reactionaries took this forgery and had it translated in German and in England, and through Henry Ford, in these United States. And no one has popularized this conspiracy attempt as have the Nazis.

Our principle defence, therefore, is not that we are not conspirators. Our principle motif of defence therefore is not to shout from the housetops that we are not conspirators. That is putting ourselves on the defensive, and to give the Nazis their first great victory. He who defends himself accuses himself in the eyes of many people. Our tactics is to attack them to expose them for the vicious enemies of civilization which they are, to convict them out of their own mouths, that they are gangsters who mean to rule the world, to sow dissention and disunion in every country.

Our line of attack is to show the world what these Nazis have done first to their own people in Germany and then to the other people whom they have subjugated. It is our task to make them as they have fortunately become, a hissing and a byword. It is our job to point to the world what the Nazis have done to religion and to the standards of ethics in the world. We must demonstrate to the world, I think, that they are not only the enemies of the Jews, but that this is an attack upon civilization, upon humanity, upon America.

In other words, we must cease being on the defensive. We must assume a sustained and relentless offensive in the name of civilization,



not in the name of <sup>a</sup>persecuted Jewish group or in the name of good will. We don't need to plead for tolerance. We don't owe our rights in this country to anybody. We are not indebted for the privileges which we have either to Protestants or to Catholics. They are indebted for their privileges to the same things to which we are indebted - the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, etc. which if ever they become a scrap of paper, not only our people but they as well will become slaves. Either rights are shared by all or shared by none.

It is the wrong tactics to try to coax Catholics and Protestants to say nice things about the Jews as though we live because of their tolerance and indulgence of us. It is important to emphasize over and over again that those basic ideals which subscribe to - the right to freedom and peace are being attacked by one common enemy. Perhaps the Catholics and the Protestants are not yet fully aware of it. The Poles weren't until last September of last year. They are aware of it now. The Catholics in Poland are aware of it now. They weren't a year ago. We had to raise money for persecuted Jews in Germany because of what the Nazis had done. Now the Catholics have to do the same. We had to ask Catholics and Protestants to raise money for our persecuted. Now they have to ask us to help them.

Let us not spend too much of our energy in fighting this incident of anti-Semitism which crops out here and there in all parts of the country. Of course if an incident of anti-Semitism thrusts itself upon the individual Jew it is different. No Jew ought to pocket an insult. There is nothing to be gained by keeping quiet and hoping that the thing will blow over.

Furthermore, the attack must be on Nazism - as something which is foreign to America - upon Nazism which is the foe of civilization, the foe of religion. And ~~our interest~~, therefore, is not to defend the Jews but to defend



men everywhere. We ought to regard ourselves as the foremost defenders of civilization because we have been singled out as the foremost enemies of totalitarianism, regimentation, dictatorship in the world today. Because we have been singled out as their chief foe, we ought to accept the challenge and we ought to fight anti-Semitism at home by fighting reaction and joining up with hundreds of thousands and millions of Americans. That is our salvation as it is the salvation of all Americans.

Whenever reaction threatens the way of life by prolonged unemployment, wherever Americans are oppressed, wherever there is economic wrong and political corruption, the Jew ought to stand as the champions of human rights and human liberties and in so doing you will be helping to keep America American.

Propaganda will not destroy the American government nor the American way of live, but the unhappiness of our own people over a long period of time can. In other words, we Jews ought not to be driven into silence because of any fear that our enemies will say: Look at the Jews! They are radicals. Quite the contrary! We ought to bring the battle to the very doorsteps of our enemies, always remembering the American way and the sure way is not the way of revolution and violence, but the way of law. That is the Jewish way, and that is the Jewish way of life.

I recommend, therefore that we rediscover our spiritual elan, our self-confidence, our prophetic passion for social justice and social reconstruction, and if we have to go down in defending our rights, as I pray God, we do not, let us go down with our banners lifted high. Let us not pity ourselves. Let us not get the feeling that we are the only people oppressed in the last few years. Look at Finland, an independent people living in their own land - not a minority people, but an independent nation asking nothing of anybody - Finland within the last few weeks has been broken, trampled under foot. Why pity ourselves?



Look at China! Look at Spain, a year ago! Look at Poland, Czechoslovakia! All minorities are going through Hell, and have gone through it in the last few years. And there will be no hope for them and for us, or for my people, until the reign of tyranny will have disappeared from this earth. Let us not think that we are singled out. We are suffering along with a suffering humanity.

Finally, friends, in order to defend Israel, we have to defend ourselves inwardly, not merely against our foes, externally. We must reinforce our own spirits. We must cultivate pride, self-respect in ourselves, in our children. I very often hear people say: I am a Jew and I am proud of it. Just what do they mean? ..

If there is anything they can be proud of, it is the fact that their race gave to mankind, Religion, a God, Ethics, the Bible, and that this race has lived through cruel centuries loyal to this God, that prophetic code, that way of life. In other words, they gave dignity to our lives and to our civilization - and we, are we giving that kind of pride to our children? I see so many busy people, busy-body Jews fussing, running all around the country trying to do this and that for Jewish people - hospitals, defense work, playgrounds, etc., etc. and yet the whole heart of the problem seems to be unknown to them, the main line of Jewish survival. For them there is no line. Religion? They know that there are synagogues in the world, that is all. It is good for some people, but not for proud Jewish successful businessmen. They don't require it.

We have to rekindle our self-pride and our self-respect in ourselves - and particularly in our children - by rekindling, by restoring to us and to them, our spiritual heritage, by revitalizing faith, religion, Jewish learning, Jewish ideals in our lives.



There is a war on, my friends, and three things might happen - either the Allies win the war, or lose the war, or there will be a patched up entangling peace. If the Allies lose the war, and the Nazis triumph, Jewish life will be liquidated, and Jewish life will become hard in many parts of the world - and will perhaps be liquidated...

If the Allies win, a new day will dawn for mankind, for all minority peoples. We are not at all certain at this time what will happen. Regardless of what will happen, our strategy is crystal clear in the world. We must continue with renewed faith, with renewed concentration, with renewed determination to attack that incarnate evil which has arisen to break the world. We must ~~mm~~ utilize all of our resources, all of our ingenuity and join forces with all other people who love the things we love, and we must fight that foe relentlessly. We must both continue with increased devotion and concentration to serve things which are truly American - freedom, justice, opportunity for all, economic justice. We must keep ourselves strong inwardly, spiritually, by feeding of the food, and drinking of the deep, refreshing waters which the prophets and seers and sages have prepared for us.... With the aid of God we will come through these deep waters safely as did our fathers over and over again in the long long history of our people.



1. "Found. of the 19 C" - inferior - existence - Germany  
1/25 yrs ago - Seminar + Bibb - misled - shattered - Too big -  
After World War - Violence - True! Social At -  
all these Twenties - Henry Ford - K. K. K.

But To-day - sharp increase - Orgs - riots - radio -  
Every Am-Jew - aware - Shadow - Bangor's Threat - Frightened  
Aroused - Furious Activity

non-Jews - Press of Belfast - describes - Nat orgs - Swift -

2/ What has happened? Changed climate? Jews from East?

Nazis came to Power early in 1933 - new chapter -

Cardinal doctrine - Destroy Jews - Rationality - abroad - Agents

"Jews as communists" - Germans in U.S. - accepted & spread

Others - Fear & Hatred of Com. - glad to have another excuse  
for discrediting -

As Nazi power increased - their cruelties - conquered -  
interpreted - vast sums - honor service - "Bunds"

"Franks" - Rational - these - better writing  
Cared to every race - link up -

Enemies of "New Deal" - "C. I. O."

Catholic Church - How was a link! - For war not

Nazis Arch-foes of C. - not difficult to persuade -

Crusades - only reason for persecut. Jews - ring leaders

Required - And 20 prison spread!

Nazi-Soviet Pact - body - blow! - not discouraged!

If "Jew-Co" say cannot be worked any more -



(2)  
If Nazis as defenders, the. Anti ag. Jew. Both.  
Nazis as " Peace, World - J. - war-mongers!  
Nazis were at war! Had invaded -  
who was framing him - Poland -

3/. Americans wanted Peace - him, Link - Embargo -  
only Jews - Arms - Inter. Bankers  
'Civil War' - Pacifists - now  
And many Amer. helped!

4/. So that to day - almost entirely a Ger. Product -  
work of Ger. Agents - who have also taught -

To understand origin travellers purpose - you have to  
combat it -

① Recog. our limitations - Prep. will not cease until

② Not enough to defend Jews - Attack Nazis  
Vote with all liberals - Reaction -



7/ Let us not stand in tolerance - Good will  
P As they are right are process - invited to Post. or Call  
P They are washed  
P When we have no right - other part as right -  
- Slaves also

P Let us not spend ourselves - pour all our energy  
into "argument" every Anti - "Jew-Curriers"  
- "Hit back" - Substance - no results - Hand - at home - abroad -  
P Sustained & relentless attack on Nazis - in name  
- European - Barbaric - Pagan  
- American - Heavenly - subversion

P Not to defend Jew - but Man - Free child / free  
P We are the defender - and - English art - deputy / Mar etc.  
- Total - Regiment - Isolation - Detention -  
P Let us fight barbarism at Home - Even / Israel / Free  
- Good Amer. all around us - Publ. freedom -  
P Carry on with the cause / the cause

P Where ever Freedom is threatened - oppression -  
depressed - shame - Grave / Wrath - Unemployment - OK / OK  
P then Democr. way - Method - fight / with  
Law - not / Violence - Radicals - 16th / 21st

P Remember our land / our / Self confidence!  
P Let us not / Pity ourselves  
- Finland - it - Re-employment - Dignity -  
P Prove Jews - Refugees - What are they good for? / Success / Ship-Keper  
Scholarship / Refugees / Warfare - 9.11 / hated  
P There is a / War / is - There are / himits - Finland - Hard / on / all / Weather - Our / May / be / Refugees



It is not to defend the Jews as much as to fight Nazism. 3  
It is not to ~~cooperate~~ with all liberal Jews in an aggressive  
attack upon Reuther - to prevent radicalism in church  
+ the time. May 5 45 -

5/A reactionary Church in Middle Ages - Conspiracies  
- ritual murder - Passing walls - to destroy this - Black Pt

Reutherians in 19C - waning Church influence - had to invent  
other conspiracies - in France - to discredit Third Republic +  
democracy - reactionary church monarchist circles -  
charged Jews with seeking to destroy France -  
Captain Dreyfus

Revolution 1905 - Russia - liberal refers  
an opponent of the Soviet forged "Protocols  
"Zion" - to persuade Jews to Jewish liberal  
movement in Russia in blood + property

Following World War - "Protocols" - Egypt - America - +  
Germany - and again revised by Father  
C - last year -

Nazis have popularized this Conspiracy as of  
to maximum - Added to it Racial Theory -  
Popular in Germany - boys - They are by "nature" Good -  
whatever is in disfavor at the moment - German - Black - but - total war



6/ Our prime defense is not that we are not

Communists - (Put us on Defense) - (Publicize charges)

P } an ~~lose~~ accusation & dishonest accusation -

P But attack them! Expose them - for the vicious enemies

P } and that they are -

P Connect them out, there are warriors - Their

Plan for military domination, world - Their

Nihilist tactics - Disrupt - Disseminate -

P What they have done to their own people -

What " " " " to enslaved people -

P (A) It is weird at times to hail a lie - to  
expose a forgery - Nazis not discouraged - Expose  
the lie! -

P (B) Wash them a heavy soapy - used!

Sanctions that they are - Agents here - War-machines!

P What they have done to Rabbits - standards /  
morality -

P their inter. conferences with their new  
foe - Russia -

P their unions to Humanity - to America!