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BRITISH ANTISEMITISM IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

By

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To the E.S.R.C.

"It is as if a physical scientist were told:  
'I want you to tell me whether I can find certain  
metals in the Antarctic. I forbid you to go there,  
or to talk to people who have been there; I shall  
give you no funds whatsoever for carrying out your  
research; and I want an answer immediately'."

H.J. Eysenck, Uses and Abuses<sup>of</sup> Psychology (Harmondsworth,  
Middlesex, 1953), 305.

## SUMMARY

### British Antisemitism in the Second World War

This thesis examines both antisemitism and Jewish-Gentile relations in Britain during the Second World War. It argues that although hostility to Jews has rarely become violent, antisemitism has still made a strong impact on Anglo-Jewry and the whole of British society. Firstly, the thesis outlines a tradition of organized antisemitism which managed to survive the war and also helped to increase 'Jew-consciousness' in Britain. Secondly, it shows how hostile stereotypes of Jews continued, despite the close contact of Jews and Gentiles in the conflict, and the sympathy created by the plight of European Jewry. Thirdly, it analyses tensions caused by shortages of goods as well as other domestic problems that arose during the war and which led to Jews becoming scapegoats. Finally, the thesis suggests that antisemitism has not been alien to the British experience, and can indeed become respectable in times of crisis, as was the case with the internment panic in the summer of 1940.

The basic difference between British antisemitism in the war and that of Germany or France was the role of the state. The thesis illustrates how the British government, in principle, was opposed to antisemitism, but that this did not mean it was immune from hostility towards Jews. Indeed, its antipathy partially explains the feeble response to the crisis of European Jewry and the scale of alien internment. The continuation of British liberal democracy has put restraints on the success of antisemitism - without being able to destroy it. Antisemitism has thus survived in Britain, putting a dual and contradictory pressure on Anglo-Jewry both to assimilate and to keep apart from Gentile society. The net result has been to create an atmosphere unlikely to produce a healthy Anglo-Jewish identity.

Tony Kushner



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Abbreviations

A.D.S.	:	Animal Defence Society.
AIR	:	Air Ministry.
A.J.	:	Anglo-Jewish Archive.
A.P.I.D.A.	:	Association for Preventing the Immigration of Destitute Aliens.
A.R.P.	:	Air Raid Protection.
B.B.C.W.A.C.	:	British Broadcasting Corporation Written Archive Centre.
B.B.F.C.	:	British Board of Film Censors.
B.B.L.	:	British Brothers' League.
B.C.C.S.E.	:	British Council for Christian Settlement in Europe.
B.E.U.	:	British Empire Union.
B.I.P.O.	:	British Institute of Public Opinion.
B.M.A.	:	British Medical Association.
B.N.P.	:	British National Party.
B of D	:	Board of Deputies of British Jews.
B.P.P.	:	British People's Party.
BT	:	Board of Trade.
B.U.F.	:	British Union of Fascists.
CAB	:	Cabinet Office.
C.C.J.	:	Council of Christians and Jews.
C.I.G.S.	:	Chief of the Imperial General Staff.
C.P.G.B.	:	Communist Party of Great Britain.
ED	:	Board of Education.
E.N.A.	:	English National Association.
E.N.S.A.	:	Entertainments National Service Association.
F.J.P.C.	:	Foreign Jews' Protection Committee.

F.O. : Foreign Office.  
 H.O. : Home Office.  
 I.F.L. : Imperial Fascist League.  
 I.L.P. : Independent Labour Party.  
 INF : Ministry of Information.  
 I.W.M. : Imperial War Museum.  
 J.D.C. : Jewish Defence Committee.  
 J.P.C. : Jewish People's Council.  
 J.S.M. : J.S. Middleton papers.  
 MAF : Ministry of Food.  
 M.C.P. : Militant Christian Patriots.  
 MEPOL : Metropolitan Police files.  
 M-O A : Mass-Observation Archive (D: Diarist;  
 DR: Directive Respondent; FR: File Report;  
 TC: Topic Collection).  
 M.P.A. : Medical Policy Association.  
 N.C.C.L. : National Council for Civil Liberties.  
 N.C.U. : National Citizens Union.  
 N.J.C. : National Jewish Committee of the Communist  
 Party.  
 N.S.L. : National Socialist League.  
 N.S.W.P. : National Socialist Workers' Party.  
 N.U.J. : National Union of Journalists.  
 P.C.A.I. : Parliamentary Committee on Alien Immigration.  
 P.C.L.P. : People's Common Law Parliament.  
 PCOM : Police Commission files.  
 P.E.P. : Political and Economic Planning.  
 P.P.U. : Peace Pledge Union.  
 PREM : Prime Minister's Office.  
 P.W.E. : Political Warfare Executive.

- R.S.P.C.A. : Royal Society for Prevention of Cruelty  
to Animals.
- S.S.I.D.A. : Society for the Suppression of the Im-  
migration of Destitute Aliens.
- S.T.D.L. : Stepney Tenants' Defence League.
- T.A.C. : Trades Advisory Council.
- T.J.H.S.E. : Transactions of the Jewish Historical  
Society of England.



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## Introduction

The horror of the attempted extermination of European Jewry in the Second World War remains a unique experience, not only in Jewish, but in world history. It is hard if not impossible to find a parallel, and as far as our understanding of it, the Holocaust is "the unconquered Everest of our time".<sup>1</sup> Thus to compare British antisemitism in the years 1939 - 1945 directly with the Nazi experience is quite meaningless; if studies of British antisemitism are to be valuable not only in analysing the security of the Jewish minority but also in throwing light on the nature of British society, they must be strongly rooted in the economic, social and political context of that country.

Since the readmission in 1666, opposition to Jews has never reached the same level of violence as that across the Channel. The state, though not necessarily sympathetic, has refused to condone attacks on the Jewish community, a factor of great significance elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> As Todd Endelman suggests, Anglo-Jewish history "cannot be subsumed under the general category of Western European Jewish history".<sup>3</sup> In Britain, Jewish emancipation never became a major political issue, and when the final legal disabilities were removed in 1858 it was achieved without any loss of blood or indeed any great interest on the part of the British or even the Jewish population.<sup>4</sup>

Does this suggest that Anglo-Jewish history must be studied in strict isolation from events elsewhere? The answer must be no, for although British Jewish development

followed a different path from that of Continental and East European Jewry, there were features that were common to both experiences, and the impact of events abroad were to have their effects at home. With the issue of antisemitism, there is little to compare in Britain with the Russian pogrom<sup>5</sup> or Nazi brutality, or indeed with the show-case trials in France (the Dreyfus case), Russia (the Beiliss case) or indeed America (the Leo Frank trial). However, this lack of violence, or prominence in national politics, does not mean that British antisemitism should be dismissed as unimportant. Gisela Lebzelter in her Political Antisemitism in England 1918 - 1939 has justified her research by suggesting that "one cannot reduce the subject of antisemitism to its German variant alone if one wants to assess its rank with modern history in general",<sup>6</sup> yet it must be suggested that there are wider benefits from such studies; analysing antisemitism, which tends to cut across lines of class, intelligence, sex and age, can reveal much about the receiving society.

The term antisemitism must be defined before going any further. The disreputable nature of being labelled an antisemite is well illustrated by the refusal of any of the leading anti-Jewish campaigners to accept the tag.<sup>7</sup> The word is of recent origin and has been credited to Wilhelm Marr<sup>8</sup> who in a pamphlet in 1879 attacked what he saw as the Jewish domination of Germany.<sup>9</sup> Marr differentiated antisemitism from previous attacks on the Jewish religion which he dismissed as idiotic.<sup>10</sup> Marr was concerned with the effects that Jewish emancipation was'



having upon German society and he defined antisemitism as being opposed to Jewish power. Marr's definition presupposes the existence of a Jewish influence but his attack on Jews as Jews will be the starting point in defining the term. James Robb has suggested that hostility towards Jews, to be categorized as antisemitism "must be associated definitely with the quality of being a Jew", and this study will follow Robb's definition.<sup>11</sup>

There are many serious problems with this definition and they must be examined before it can become functional. Firstly, it covers possibilities ranging from polite tea-room type attacks to advocating and embarking upon genocidal policies. There is no room within this definition to solve the contradiction of those like Harold Nicolson who could write: "Although I loathe anti-semitism I do dislike Jews".<sup>12</sup> Nicolson's attack on antisemitism was not confined to his diary - he was active in trying to put pressure on the British government to do more for the Jews of Europe during the war.<sup>13</sup> However, Nicolson's remarks, in suggesting that there is something in someone being Jewish that he objected to, must be defined as antisemitic. It is clear, therefore, that there are many types of anti-semitism and as Geoffrey Field suggests: "The qualitative differences between this (social dislike for Jews) and political anti-semitism should not be minimized".<sup>14</sup> The term 'antisemitism' readily conjures up images of Nazi concentration camps, yet despite this, it must be used for many other forms of hostility to Jews.

A second difficulty with defining antisemitism as



hostility to Jews as Jews is that historical events do not always fit so clearly within an antisemitic/non-antisemitic pattern. A good case in point, illustrating the complexity of the subject, was the dismissal in January 1940 of the only Jewish member of the Cabinet, Leslie Hore-Belisha, Secretary of State for War. Few have gone as far as the champion of Jewish refugees, Colonel Wedgwood, who suggested that Hore-Belisha was removed from office simply because of his Jewish origins,<sup>15</sup> yet the fact that the Minister of War was a Jew cannot be dismissed as irrelevant to the question.

Hore-Belisha had joined the War Office in 1937 and had recorded in his diary that Duff Cooper, of the Treasury Department, had told him "that the military element might be very unyielding and they might try to make it hard for me as a Jew".<sup>16</sup> Hore-Belisha's background, apart from being Jewish, was middle-class and there was much opposition to his appointment from Conservative die-hards, as well as from the Army, where colonial privilege had managed to remain undisturbed until his appointment.<sup>17</sup> Hore-Belisha immediately set about democratizing the Army and as if this was not bad enough, he carried out his reforms without going through the 'proper' channels, further alienating the military élite.

By the time of the outbreak of war the opposition to the Minister of War from the military and high social castes (despite Hore-Belisha's popular appeal)<sup>18</sup> had become near-conspiratorial. On November 24 1939, Hore-Belisha summonsed Major-General Pakenham-Walsh, the chief

engineer of Lord Gort (Commander-in-Chief in France), concerning weaknesses in the British sector. Hore-Belisha was eventually to be proved correct on the B.E.F. Defences, but his criticism lost him any remaining support he had in the War Office. After this incident Gort, Ironside (C.I.G.S.) and the king's brother worked to get Hore-Belisha removed<sup>19</sup> and on the 4 January 1940 the Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, told the Minister of War to resign.<sup>20</sup> When asked for an explanation, the Prime Minister told Hore-Belisha that "there was a prejudice against him",<sup>21</sup> and the latter interpreted this as being antisemitic.<sup>22</sup>

Hore-Belisha's fears cannot be dismissed as those of an egocentric politician suffering from paranoia. After his dismissal, he was to have been offered the Ministry of Information, a position he would have suited perfectly. However, Lord Halifax, the Foreign Secretary, vetoed the idea because he felt it wrong for a Jew to become Minister of Information,<sup>23</sup> and his Under-Secretary, Sir Alexander Cadogan, summarized the view of the Foreign Office: "that Jew control of our propaganda would be a major disaster".<sup>24</sup> A week after Hore-Belisha's resignation, Captain Ramsay, the antisemitic M.P. of Peebles, distributed copies of the 12 January 1940 issue of Truth to all M.Ps in the Commons, in which there were allegations about Hore-Belisha's financial activities.<sup>25</sup>

Despite the efforts of Ramsay and Truth to give the issue a definitely antisemitic flavour, it is difficult to analyse how important the Jewish factor was in Hore-Belisha's dismissal. Had Hore-Belisha not been Jewish



and he followed the same policies, the opposition to him would still have been strong; the fact that he was Jewish made the situation even less tolerable. An examination of the diaries and letters of Hore-Belisha's political allies and foes shows an acute awareness of his Jewish origins, and while it is wrong to suggest that he was dismissed because he was a Jew, it would be naïve to believe his Jewishness was irrelevant to his removal.<sup>26</sup>

The Hore-Belisha case poses several other questions about the defining of antisemitism. Captain Ramsay and Truth were not the only ones who welcomed the removal of the Jewish Cabinet Minister; the B.U.F's Action celebrated the resignation of Hore-Belisha, "this little Jew who was inflated to become Minister of War in a time of grave national emergency".<sup>27</sup> However, it was only a small, distinct minority who attacked Hore-Belisha's Jewishness so clearly. As John Higham has perceptively pointed out, referring to the terms antisemitism and philosemitism: "most people waver between conflicting attitudes and seldom enjoy an undivided state of mind".<sup>28</sup> Attitudes to Leslie Hore-Belisha illustrate this point clearly. Neville Chamberlain admired his abilities: "his courage, imagination and drive" and felt that he "appeared to have special qualifications" for the job as Minister of Information, yet the Prime Minister also believed Hore-Belisha was "so impatient, ebullient - so Jewish..."<sup>29</sup> Sir Henry 'Chips' Channon M.P. was a great friend of Hore-Belisha through the 1930s and 1940s, a frequent dinner guest, who could none-the-less be des-

cribed by Channon as "an oily man, half a Jew, an opportunist, with a Semitic flare for publicity" or as "'the Jew boy' bundling and self-important....(yet) I am fond of him".<sup>30</sup>

The ambivalence in attitudes towards Jews, where many are "both pro and anti-Jewish at the same time"<sup>31</sup> shows the complexity of the area, and the danger of relying too heavily on concepts such as philo and anti-semitism. It is indeed revealing that the image of the Jew in extreme antisemitism is only matched in its unreality by that of 'the Jew' in extreme philosemitism. Todd Endelman has suggested that to 17th Century English philosemites "'the Jews' were little more than the personification of some abstract religious idea or feeling, Like the negatively charged symbols of the Beast and the Antichrist".<sup>32</sup> Stephen Spender remembers that in the Second World War he regarded the Jewish people in the concentration camps collectively as "sacred"<sup>33</sup> and in 1943 Ada Jackson in an award winning poem could describe the Jews as "manna-bringers, prophets, seers".<sup>34</sup> It must be suggested that the vast majority of the British population in the Second World War neither viewed the Jews as "timid mice"<sup>35</sup> nor as a "dirty, stinking, lot of swine: nothing but a lot of parasites battenning on decent people".<sup>36</sup> Most people are much more irresolute, capable of complex and often contradictory views on Jewish matters, as this study will reveal.

Another issue that the defining of antisemitism as a hostility against Jews as Jews does not take into account, is the highly controversial question of the Jewish



role in the occurrence of antisemitism. Colin Holmes has suggested that to understand antisemitism, one "needs to take account of the interests and activities of both sides in the conflict equation"<sup>37</sup> and to attempt to achieve objectivity in the subject, this is important advice. In the example of the Hore-Belisha case, it is impossible to understand the tension that arose without including the impact of the Minister of War's personality. Hore-Belisha was at times brilliant and could be charming, but he was also arrogant and "aggressively tactless".<sup>38</sup> His democratization of the Army and his social origins had alienated the Military élite but it was his tactless handling of a difficult problem that was the catalyst in his removal from office. Had Hore-Belisha been a member of the Anglo-Jewish aristocracy and had he been merely a mouth-piece of the military caste (as was expected of him), it is possible that opposition to him as a Jew would not have been so prominent. To understand why the antisemitism towards Hore-Belisha became so intense one has to take account of the deeply held social prejudices in the War Office, but also Hore-Belisha's personality as well as his policies.

Since the publication of Oswald Mosley's autobiography in 1968<sup>39</sup> and more importantly, Robert Skidelsky's study of the B.U.F. leader in 1975,<sup>40</sup> there has been a heated debate on the scapegoat versus interactionist, or convergence explanation of antisemitism. Memories of the street fights involving fascists in the 1930s still provoke strong emotions and it must be suggested that the passion that the topic arouses has hindered a clear

understanding of the problems of both interactionist and scapegoat models. At its worst, the interactionist explanation can degenerate into a simple well-earned theory of antisemitism such as Mosley's own contention: "There is not the slightest doubt that some Jews began it (the 'quarrel' with the B.U.F.) in Britain",<sup>41</sup> or Skidelsky's explanation of why the B.U.F. became increasingly anti-semitic: "the attitude of Jews themselves".<sup>42</sup> Equally, with the scapegoat model there is a danger in Yinger's and Simpson's words that "it does not explain the direction that prejudice takes".<sup>43</sup> A study such as Geoffrey Alderman's on the riots against Jews in South Wales in 1911 shows the strength and weakness of a 'scapegoat' explanation.<sup>44</sup> Alderman locates the tension that existed in the South Wales Valleys in 1911 and suggests that the problems created by the coal and railway strikes led on to the antisemitism: "As has so often happened, the Jews became scapegoats for economic distress".<sup>45</sup> This contextualising of the riots is vital in understanding the hostility, but Alderman suggests the limitations of the scapegoat model when he examines why the tension was channelled towards the Jews; as he points out: "The true nature of that (antisemitic) cause is difficult to discern".<sup>46</sup>

Colin Holmes, using an interactionist approach, has also stressed the economic and social pressures operating in South Wales at that time, but additionally points out that "Jews (in this area) had special characteristics which made them visible".<sup>47</sup> The Jews' role as economic



middlemen, as landlords and shop-owners, must be taken into account if the disturbances are to be understood, suggests Holmes. In re-examining the case in the light of the recently released Home Office papers he puts further stress on the Jewish role in creating the conflict.<sup>48</sup> There is a danger in going too far in this approach and over-emphasizing the role of individual Jews in producing the causes of antisemitism. The Home Office papers pay particular attention to the activities of a Mr. Joseph Cohen, a Jewish landlord in Tredegar.<sup>49</sup> In these papers the Superintendent of Police in the area is reported as saying "that this Mr. Cohen is the man who... is, more than any other Jew, the cause of the anti Jewish feeling".<sup>50</sup>

Cohen's role in creating the conflict needs to be severely qualified in regard to this statement. He was probably the only Jew involved in blatant rack-renting and although some Jewish shopowners exploited the problems of the local residents, they were no worse than their Christian counterparts. Despite this, "stories of financial dishonesty on the part of Jews were widely believed in the riot areas".<sup>51</sup> Cohen was one of the few Jews who was outstanding in abusing the local population, but the economic and social tension was so great, and the image of the Jew as exploiter strong enough, so that all Jews in Tredegar were attacked as Mr. Cohens. What is being suggested here is that the Jewish role does not need to be great for it to be taken into account. In a tense situation, the tiniest of half-truths, when combined with a powerful prevalent image of Jews, can be-

come significant. In the South Wales example, there is a strong need to examine what the images of the Jew were in Wales prior to the riots before a more complete explanation can be reached.<sup>52</sup>

What does this suggest about the scapegoat/interactionist debate? It will be suggested here that the discussion has suffered from ill-defined terms. The 'scapegoat' school suggests that the interactionists pay too much attention to the Jewish role, and the latter that the former theory is one that suggests "that Jews themselves play no part in creating antisemitism".<sup>53</sup> Neither side really does the other justice. On the one hand, the Jewish role does not have to be very great to become important in a conflict situation,<sup>54</sup> and on the other, as Gordon Allport has pointed out: "Scapegoats need not be lily-white in their innocence".<sup>55</sup> What is important is that the historian of British antisemitism (as well as other countries) needs to study not only the groups who attack Jews, but the Jews themselves, the economic and social background of the conflict and the image of the Jew in society. The continuous nature of antisemitism does not justify an ahistorical approach to the subject; studies need to be firmly rooted in the economic and social conditions of their time. However, it needs to be remembered that although there is a danger of under-contextualising antisemitism, there is also a risk of over-contextualising. One can explain how individuals or groups became antisemitic to an extent, but as J.M.Roberts reminds us, "something remains".<sup>56</sup> One



has to also take account of the irrational, the unexplainable. How else does one understand the contention, made throughout the war, that Hitler, Arnold Leese and other leading antisemites were controlled by the Jews?<sup>57</sup>

With all these difficulties associated with defining antisemitism as a hostility to Jews as Jews, should the term not be dropped and replaced by examining attitudes to the 'Jewish Question'?<sup>58</sup> The answer, I would suggest, must be no. Firstly, referring to the Jewish Question gives the subject an element of legitimacy. It has been pointed out that many leading British antisemites rejected the word antisemitism, claiming they were impartially interested in the Jewish problem or question. Secondly, and linked to the last point, by using the term the 'Jewish Question', one is refusing to categorize attitudes to Jews. It is true that only a tiny percentage of the population can be regarded as having totally negative views on Jews, and that most people show ambivalence on the subject, but it does not mean that one should be afraid to use the term antisemitism, even with those who can simultaneously attack and praise Jews (as Jews). It is vital to differentiate between different forms of antisemitism; they will vary in their importance and implications. However, one must not totally lose sight of the connections of the various attacks on Jews. Ideas do not exist in social and economic vacuums, and in the Second World War, many, such as Orwell, re-examined their own antisemitism in the light of Germany's policies.<sup>59</sup> The late E.H.Carr pointed out

the need for historians to generalize,<sup>60</sup> and as a generic term, antisemitism as defined as a hostility to Jews as Jews, will be a useful tool in analysing the various forms of reactions to Jews in the 1939 - 45 era in Britain.

FOOTNOTES

1. Laurence L.Langer, The Holocaust and the Literary Imagination, (New Haven Ct., 1975), 7. This point does not minimise Nazi violence to other groups such as gypsies, or ignore other attempts at genocide.
2. For Germany see Paul Massing, Rehearsal for Destruction (New York, 1949), 37, Russia, L.Schapiro, 'The Russian Background of Anglo-American Jewish Immigration', Transactions of Jewish Historical Society of England XX (1959 - 61), 215-31.
3. Todd M.Endelman, The Jews of Georgian England 1714 - 1830 (Philadelphia, 1971), ix-x.
4. See U.R.Q.Henriques, 'The Jewish Emancipation Controversy in 19th Century Britain', Past and Present, 40 (July 1968), 126-46; Israel Finestein, 'Anglo-Jewish Opinion During the Struggle for Emancipation 1828 - 1858', T.J.H.S.E. XX (1959 - 61), 113-144, and M.C.N.Saltstein, Jews in Britain (East Brunswick, N.J., 1982).
5. Two events in recent Anglo-Jewish history, the South Wales riots in 1911 and riots in Mile End Road after Cable Street in 1936 have been termed pogroms, but both events had only a superficial resemblance to the East European experience, and no life was lost.
6. Gisela Lebzelter, Political Anti-Semitism in England 1918 - 39 (London, 1978), 1.
7. See Joseph Banister, England Under the Jews (London, 1907), preface to second edition (1902), iii. Arnold Leese and Captain Ramsay preferred the term 'Jew-wise' and Admiral Barry Domvile denied he was even anti-Jewish. Arnold Leese, Out of Step: Events in the Two Lives of an Anti-Jewish Camel Doctor (n.l., 1951?), 70; Barry Domvile, From Admiral to Cabin Boy (London, 1947), 86-7; A.H.M.Ramsay, The Nameless War (Chawleigh Devon, 1968), 89-90.
8. Encyclopedia Judaica, vol.3 (Jerusalem, 1971), 87.
9. For an analysis of Marr's Jewry's Victory over Teutonism (Bern, 1879) see P.Massing, op. cit., 8-10.
10. ibid.
11. James H.Robb, Working Class Anti-Semite (London, 1954), 11. For a similar definition see Colin Holmes, Anti-semitism in British Society 1876 - 1939 (London, 1979), 1.
12. Nigel Nicolson, ed., Harold Nicolson: Diaries and Letters 1939 - 1945 (London, 1967), 469 entry for 13 June 1945.



13. ibid., 266 (entry for 9 December 1942) and 344 (letter to B. and N.Nicolson, 11 January 1944). See also chapter 4 p.335 for further discussion of Nicolson's ambivalence.
14. Geoffrey G.Field, 'Anti-Semitism with the Boots Off: Recent Research on England', Wiener Library Bulletin Special Issue (1982), 32.
15. Hansard H.C. vol.356, cols. 61-2 (16 January 1940). Geoffrey Alderman also hints this was the case, see his The Jewish Community in British Politics (Oxford, 1983), 119. For a general discussion of the reasons behind Hore-Belisha's dismissal see A.J.Trythall, 'The Downfall of Leslie Hore-Belisha', Journal of Contemporary History, 16 no.3 (July 1981), 391-412.
16. R.J.Minney, The Private Papers of Hore-Belisha (London, 1960), 17.
17. ibid., 18.
18. A Mass-Observation survey "The Content of News-reels" suggested that Hore-Belisha was well received by the public. See Norman Longmate, How We Lived Then (London, 1971), 98 and 531.
19. J.R.Colville, Man of Valour (London, 1972), 160.
20. Minney, op. cit., 268.
21. ibid., and 275.
22. Hore-Belisha told the editor of The Guardian, W.P. Crozier, on 20 January 1940 that the military and high social castes had objected to him because he was "a Jew and an ordinary person". See A.J.P. Taylor, ed., W.P.Crozier: Off the Record Political Interviews 1933 - 1943 (London, 1973), 132.
23. Ian Macleod, Neville Chamberlain (London, 1961), 286-7.
24. David Dilks, ed., The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan 1938 - 1945 (London, 1971), 241-2. See also J.Colville, The Fringes of Power: Downing Street Diaries 1939 - 55 (London, 1985), 55-6 entry for 3 January 1940.
25. See Sir Henry Morris-Jones, Doctor in the Whips' Room (Bungay, Suffolk, 1955), 114-5 for Ramsay's role and Truth 127 no.3305 (12 January 1940).
26. See Dilks, op. cit., Earl of Birkenhead, Halifax: The Life of Lord Halifax (London, 1965), 447; R.R.James, ed., Chips: The Diary of Sir Henry Channon (London, 1967), 23-4, 120-1, 181, 227-8;

- Keith Feiling, The Life of Neville Chamberlain (London, 1946), 434; John McGovern, Neither Fear nor Favour (London, 1960), 134, on Beaverbrook's attitude to Hore-Belisha; Colville, op. cit., 137; R.Macleod and D.Kelly, ed., The Ironside Diaries (London, 1962), 24; Brian Bond, ed., Chief of Staff: The Diaries of Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Pownall, vol.1, 1933 - 40 (London, 1972), 203.
27. 'Belisha Bluff Breaks: War Bursts Jewish Bubble', Action 201 (11 January 1940).
  28. John Higham, 'Anti-Semitism in the Gilded Age: A Reinterpretation', Mississippi Valley Historical Review 43 (March 1957), 562.
  29. See Feiling, op. cit., Macleod, op. cit., and Austin Stevens, The Dispossessed German Refugees in Britain (London, 1975), 248 for Chamberlain's mixed views.
  30. James, op. cit., 23-4, 120-1.
  31. Higham, op. cit., 564.
  32. Endelman, op. cit., 56 and for similar comments David Katz, Philo-Semitism and the Readmission of the Jews to England 1603 - 1655 (Oxford, 1982), 244.
  33. Stephen Spender, The Thirties and After (Glasgow, 1978), 96.
  34. Ada Jackson, 'Behold the Jew', Poetry Review 34 (July - August 1943), 201.
  35. ibid., 205.
  36. N.C.C.L. 310/5. An anonymous letter sent to the N.C.C.L. secretary, Elizabeth Allen, from Manchester, May 5 1943.
  37. Holmes, op. cit., 35.
  38. Lawrence Thompson, 1940: Year of Legend, Year of History (London, 1966), 34.
  39. Oswald Mosley, My Life (London, 1968).
  40. Robert Skidelsky, Oswald Mosley (London, 1975).
  41. Mosley, op. cit., 337.
  42. Skidelsky, op. cit., 381.
  43. J.M.Yinger and G.Simpson, Racial and Cultural Minorities: An Analysis of Prejudice and Discrimination (New York, 1972), 74.



44. Geoffrey Alderman, 'Anti-Jewish Riots of August 1911 in South Wales', Welsh History Review 6 (1972-3), 190-200.
45. ibid., 196.
46. ibid.
47. Holmes, op. cit., 100.
48. Colin Holmes, 'The Tredegar Riots of 1911: Anti-Jewish Disturbances in South Wales', Welsh History Review 11 (1982), 214-225.
49. See H.O. 144/1160/212987/1-13 quoted by Holmes, op. cit., 217-222.
50. H.O. 144/1160/212987/3a.
51. Alderman, op. cit., 195-6.
52. See Holmes, op. cit., 223 for similar sentiments.
53. Robert Skidelsky, 'Reflections on Mosley and British Fascism', in K.Lunn and R.Thurlow, British Fascism (London, 1980), 84 and Holmes, Antisemitism, 31.
54. Holmes, Antisemitism, 97 and 22 makes this point clear.
55. Gordon Allport, The Nature of Prejudice (Reading, Mass., 1954), 245-6. For the original meaning of the term see J.H.Hertz, ed., Pentateuch and Haftorahs (London, 1971), 481.
56. J.M.Roberts, The Mythology of the Secret Societies (London, 1972), 358-9.
57. See the Social Crediter 1939 - 45, for the Leese accusation, the 27 April 1940 issue (vol.4, no.7).
58. In a recent review article, David Feldman hints that the term antisemitism should be replaced by a more general concept such as a 'discourse' on Jews: 'There was an Englishman, An Irishman and a Jew... Immigrants and Minorities in Britain', The Historical Journal vol.26, no.1 (1983), 196-9.
59. For Orwell see David Walton, 'George Orwell and Antisemitism', Patterns of Prejudice 16 no.1 (January, 1982), 24. For similar occurrences amongst Mass-Observers see Field, op. cit., 40-3.
60. E.H.Carr, What is History? (Harmondsworth, 1980), 62-66.

Chapter 1 : British Antisemitism 1881 - 1939

"The history of anti-semitism", it has been suggested, "bears the signs of being a seamless garment",<sup>1</sup> and any attempt at a chronological division of this subject in Britain needs to take this point into account. Antisemitic images and ideas are striking for their persistence, even when their original terms of reference have long since disappeared.<sup>2</sup> However, if on the one hand one must be aware of the continual nature of antisemitism, on the other it is important to distinguish between different periods of Jewish history. Reactions to Jews in world history have often followed a cyclical pattern - times of toleration or indifference following on from years of brutal persecution. The holocaust itself marked the culmination of a period of hostility stretching back to the 1870's, a period which could well be called the classical age of antisemitism.<sup>3</sup>

The 1870's marked a turning point in the development of antisemitism. On the continent, Jews were being attacked less for traditional religious reasons and more for their alleged national and racial influence. The organised antisemitic movement in Germany and the anti-Dreyfusards in France, linked the issue of Jewish emancipation to the growth of modernism, liberalism and marxism.<sup>4</sup> Jews were seen as the embodiment of the enlightenment, as the leading force of 'progress' which the largely conservative antisemitic groups rejected.<sup>5</sup> Similarly in Britain at the time of the Eastern Crisis, Goldwin Smith questioned the policies of the Prime Minister Disraeli, and



at the same time attacked the political, social and financial influence of Jewry but denied any religious hostility on his behalf.<sup>6</sup> Both a recent and a turn of the century historian of British antisemitism have marked Smith's campaign, which began in 1876, as the starting point of the new form of hostility to Jews in Britain.<sup>7</sup> There has indeed been a strain of opposition to Jewish emancipation in Britain of which Smith was part, and which reached its peak with the 'Chesterbelloc' campaign surrounding the Marconi Scandal in the years immediately before World War I.<sup>8</sup> This tradition was strong enough to continue through to the second half of the twentieth century, through the medium of the journal Truth.<sup>9</sup> However, anti-modernist forces which demanded the reversal of Jewish emancipation never reached the level of significance in Britain that they did in other European countries, and it was only with the influx of East European Jews in the last two decades of the nineteenth century that the 'Jewish Question' became an issue of national importance in Britain.

The assassination of Alexander II in 1881 marked the start of the rapid exodus of the Russian Jewish population, approximately two million of whom had left by 1914.<sup>10</sup> Of these over 100,000 came to Britain with peaks in the years 1881-3, 1890-3 and 1899-1906.<sup>11</sup> What was the reaction to these immigrants? At one extreme, to the pamphleteer Joseph Banister, the influx of these alien Jews was part of a plot to destroy the British race. Banister attacked all aspects of the aliens' lives suggesting that "there are



black sheep in every flock, but of the alien sheep who flock here, about 99 per cent appear to be black".<sup>12</sup> Yet Banister was exceptional in that his attack on alien Jews, and indeed all Jews, was totally comprehensive. Banister is one of the very few individuals who can be identified as a pathological antisemite in British society, and it is doubtful whether his privately printed pamphlets had any impact at all on the aliens' question at the turn of the century.<sup>13</sup> Banister's importance lies in his contributions to the world of extreme antisemitism - in the 1920's The Britons were publishing his works,<sup>14</sup> and as late as 1939 the Militant Christian Patriots were printing articles by him.<sup>15</sup> Individuals such as Banister by contributing to extremist journals and organizations, help to establish an antisemitic tradition in Britain, and attempt to achieve legitimacy even though they are operating on the outside of mainstream society. Later antisemites can then refer back to earlier works such as Banister's and can claim credibility as they are operating as part of a tradition, and not as isolated mental freaks.<sup>16</sup> This can be seen as a way of rationalising irrational feelings and to avoid internalizing the view of the outside world, which in the British case generally labels extreme antisemites as miscreants. It is thus interesting to note that in his 188 Advisory Committee, Oswald Mosley defended his antisemitism because he saw it as part of a long tradition in Britain and that "it is probably latent in the racial or traditional consciousness of a great many (Britons)".<sup>17</sup>

Unlike the hysterical outbursts of Banister, most of

the contemporary opinion on the aliens' question is less easily definable as antisemitic. Much has been made of the unrespectability of antisemitism as a political tool, limiting its importance in the aliens' debate.<sup>18</sup> However, whilst it is true that most, if not all, the anti-alienists, including Banister himself, denied any antisemitic inclination, it does not follow, as has been suggested that "the question of antisemitism is irrelevant".<sup>19</sup> The vast majority of the immigrants were Jewish and this factor was of some importance to many of the anti-alienists.<sup>20</sup> It is significant that Arnold White, a social imperialist whose chief interest was the supposedly negative impact of Jewish immigration on the native stock, was largely responsible for the first organized anti-alien group - The Society for the Suppression of the Immigration of Destitute Aliens formed in 1886.<sup>21</sup> This organization was short-lived but those which followed such as the Association for Preventing the Immigration of Destitute Aliens and the British Brothers' League had leaders who viewed the aliens' question in an antisemitic light.<sup>22</sup> There is no straight forward relationship between anti-alienism and antisemitism, but the personal prejudice against Jews of many of the restrictionist leaders needs to be taken into account.

The majority of the Jewish immigrants settled in London, and of these, 90% settled in the East End.<sup>23</sup> The Jewish population of Stepney increased from roughly 40,000 in 1882 to over 100,000 at the turn of the century.<sup>24</sup> Such an influx was bound to create local problems, but with an unfortunate twist of fate, this alien expansion occurred at the time that middle class London was rediscovering the



'dangerous classes', and with them the forgotten East End.<sup>25</sup> By the mid 1880's concern over lower class poverty was being replaced by a fear of working class insurrection and the East End came to represent the seriousness of the problem.<sup>26</sup> Thus the aliens' question turned from what would have been simply a local issue to one of national importance.<sup>27</sup>

The East End in the 1880's was suffering from an economic crisis consisting of cyclical and seasonal depressions aggravating a general structural decline in its traditional industries. On top of this, in the first six years of the decade 20,000 Jewish immigrants settled in the area, swelling an already under-employed local population.<sup>28</sup> The only way the clothing trade, boot and shoe trade, and to a lesser degree, the furniture industry could survive was to cut their wage levels so as to compete with provincial and foreign producers. It was to these industries that the immigrants flocked, and the net result was an intensification of the sweating system, and a displacement of 'native' labour by the new arrivals. It must be pointed out that firstly, despite anti-alienist claims, the Jewish immigrants did not create the sweating system in the clothing, footwear and furniture trades, they "only reinforced this tendency".<sup>29</sup> Secondly, although these industries generally saw a replacement of Gentile with Jewish labour, they would have declined further had new techniques not been employed. However, it is not surprising with the misery created by the depression, that

local working class feeling turned against the aliens, and on an organised level, that trade unions and socialist groups attacked alien undercutting.<sup>30</sup> Equally, as most of these alien workers and their bosses were Jewish, it is not difficult to understand why an element of antisemitism was brought into the left-wing and radicals' campaign against the sweated industries.<sup>31</sup>

The government, concerned about the condition and possible danger of the working classes, responded to this local feeling and in 1888 launched its first Select Committee on Alien Immigration and at the same time started an investigation into the sweating system.<sup>32</sup> The results of these studies eased some of the fears concerning immigration. More importantly, the atmosphere of fear concerning the working classes gave way to a return of middle class confidence in the early 1890's.<sup>33</sup> It is important, however, to remember that although the aliens' question ceased to attract much attention at the national level at this point, the issue did not disappear at the local level - either in the East End, or in the other major immigrant settlement areas, such as Leylands in Leeds or Cheetham in Manchester.

Immigration into the East End continued and briefly increased in the early 1890's as the Russian state applied more economic restrictions on the Jewish community.<sup>34</sup> What impact did the immigration have on Jewish-Gentile relations in the East End? In attempting to answer this point one needs to realise that the area in question was by no means homogeneous and that in reality "there were many



East Ends".<sup>35</sup> Moreover, one needs to be aware of the dangers that are inherent when generalizations are made concerning inter-group relations. Personality factors on both sides, ranging from extreme prejudice to total acceptance, could make a great difference to actual human relations, possibly outside the results that a simplistic categorization would lend one to expect. Hence in Robert Roberts pre-1914 world of Salford, the general antisemitic atmosphere (as a rule) precluded Jewish tradesmen entering the area. However, it did not stop Roberts's mother from helping and befriending a Jewish glazier, much to the neighbourhood's disgust.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, although Bethnal Green was one of the most violently antisemitic areas in London (if not Britain) in the late 19th and 20th centuries,<sup>37</sup> it could also be host to harmonious relations between Jews and their Christian neighbours. Contact, whether in the form of the 'shabbos goy' or in other simple relations, could produce a common humanity united by poverty, overcoming the barriers of religion and nationality.<sup>38</sup>

However before the 1914-18 conflict, one of the most significant features of East End life was the lack of contact between Jews and Gentiles.<sup>39</sup> A housing survey undertaken in 1899 revealed that Jewish and Gentile areas within the East End were clearly defined, with most streets containing at least 95% of one part of the community or the other.<sup>40</sup> Such a development was hardly accidental. Jews came to the East End for a variety of reasons, one of the most obvious being the desire to be close to fellow Jews and Jewish institutions. This explanation however hides some of the complexity of settlement patterns; it

was not so much fellow Jews as Jews from one's birthplace or 'landsman' that attracted immigrants to various areas or streets in the East End. To talk of a unified Jewish East End, ignores the intra-ethnic conflicts such as those between Polish and Lithuanian Jews,<sup>41</sup> as well as ignoring the class aspects of the community.<sup>42</sup> Indeed one of the attractions of the East End and other settlement areas in Britain has been the economic factor - the importance of finding work with Jewish employers.<sup>43</sup>

On the other side of the equation, Gentile East London did its best to limit the Jewish population to its specific area in Whitechapel. To the south of Cable Street in St Georges in the East, the largely Irish population, would, in the words of Toynbee Hall investigators "have no dealings with the Jews and will not live with them".<sup>44</sup> Landlords in the area usually refused Jewish tenants, and the few immigrants who did manage to find accommodation soon moved on, due to intimidation or actual violence. To the north of Whitechapel, in Bethnal Green a similar reception awaited any Jewish trespassers, this time from the highly immobile indigenous population.<sup>45</sup> In the comedian Bud Flanagan's words "Bethnal Green was a hostile, different world, Gentile and very anti-Jewish".<sup>46</sup>

Even though there was friction between the two communities, actual violence against Jewish aliens in the early 1890's appears to have been rare.<sup>47</sup> It would seem that in the housing question a form of equilibrium was reached with the Jewish community keeping to its allotted area. Where anti-alienism manifested itself in this period



was over employment, typified by the Trades Union Congress which passed anti-alien resolutions in 1892, 1894 and 1895.<sup>48</sup> On a local level, the 'native' hostility to Jewish infiltration of local industries is well illustrated by the Bethnal Green branch of the National Union of Boot and Shoe Operators, which put forward an anti-alien resolution to the London Trades Council in 1894. The resolution was defeated and the branch left the Council, claiming it was now dominated by "Jew cliques".<sup>49</sup> Such antisemitic feeling probably stopped many Jews from entering non-Jewish firms, with the hostility coming from employer and worker alike.<sup>50</sup>

Despite the obvious tension over employment, no disturbances occurred and the antisemitic riots that hit the East End at the end of the century centred around the issue of housing due to a disturbing of the balance that had been reached at the start of the 1890's. Although Jewish immigration was at a relatively low level until 1899, those that did come to the East End put more pressure on the already over-crowded Jewish quarter. This factor, coupled with an increase in rents (due to commercial pressure from the City in the west), created a sudden housing crisis in the areas surrounding Whitechapel.<sup>51</sup> Local profiteers, both Jewish and Gentile, indulged in rack renting, and evictions of 'native' East Enders in 1897 led on to the first housing riot around John Street in St Georges-in-the-East.<sup>52</sup> In June of that year over 100 people were involved in a street brawl, and in the following years violence continued in St Georges, if on a smaller scale.<sup>53</sup> A similar pattern emerged in Bethnal Green,

although there was a time lag of six years. Riots occurred in 1903 with again 'native' displacement being the immediate issue with the erection of the Teesdale Street Dwellings. The arrival of aliens into 'superior' new property created much jealousy, and the violence of the street riots suggests the high degree of hostility that must have existed amongst the Gentiles of Bethnal Green. <sup>54</sup>

It was the animosity created by the housing issue that enabled the first mass-based anti-alien organization to be formed - the British Brothers' League (B.B.L.). Formed in 1901, the League attracted its support from the East End, but significantly the grassroots of the movement never threw up any organizers, and as a whole the organization suffered from the incompetence of its middle-class leadership. <sup>55</sup> Estimates of its membership vary from 1500 (those who paid dues) to 45,000 (those who supported a B.B.L. petition). <sup>56</sup> The former figure is probably closer to the active membership, though the latter illustrates the wider degree of support that the B.B.L. enjoyed in the East End. The B.B.L., like the British Union of Fascists (B.U.F.) which followed it in the 1930's, achieved its highest degree of success in the areas around the Jewish area of settlement. Hence it was in districts where the threat, rather than the actuality, of Jewish settlement was seen, that the B.B.L. became popular. The Bethnal Green branch of the B.B.L. was the only one that kept any level of success throughout the movement's brief history, claiming 2000 members. <sup>57</sup> Other popular areas were Hackney,



Shoreditch, St George's and Poplar. The latter area, despite the virtual non-existence of a Jewish population, was characterised by extreme anti-alienism, where the threat of an alien invasion was seen in a conspiratorial form. <sup>58</sup>

Whether the League can be viewed as antisemitic is a difficult question, and one that has elements of similarity with that concerning the B.U.F. Both organizations denied any antisemitic sentiment, the former group arguing that it attacked alien Jews as aliens and not as Jews, <sup>59</sup> and the latter that they attacked Jews for what they did, and not for what they were. <sup>60</sup> Such denials are a constant feature of those who have attacked Jews, <sup>61</sup> and if they were accepted at face value, the history of British anti-semitism would be a very short story indeed. However the very repudiation of antisemitism by the B.B.L.'s leaders is of significance itself. Although forms of antisemitism have made an impact on British society, and although social antisemitism has, at times, been perfectly acceptable, <sup>62</sup> pure political attacks on Jews as Jews have not been tolerated and are seen as 'unBritish'. Groups which wish to attack the alleged Jewish power are thus forced to deny any antisemitic bias, and those, such as the Imperial Fascist League, who have refused to veil their attacks have been relegated beyond the pale of political respectability.

An interesting feature of modern Anglo-Jewish history is how groups antagonistic to the Jewish minority have used the state's fear of antisemitism to their own

advantage; claiming their interest in Jewish matters was not to create a Judenhetz but to prevent one.<sup>63</sup> This became one of the most popular arguments of the B.B.L. leaders, especially one of its parliamentary representatives, William Evans Gordon.<sup>64</sup> This B.B.L. argument is a good illustration of the dangers of limiting the definition of antisemitism to straight-forward attacks on Jews as Jews. Antisemitic arguments are often subtle and complex. They can thus achieve a greater impact than if they were presented in a politically unacceptable crude form. Evans Gordon's argument was that a restriction of aliens was necessary to avoid antisemitism; the unwritten corollary of which was that Jews themselves created the hostility.<sup>65</sup>

However the B.B.L.'s antisemitism was not always presented in such subtle terms. Like the B.U.F. 30 years later, the League had no qualms in attracting the support of virulent antisemites, both in its leadership and in its ranks. There is little doubt that antisemitism appealed to a significant section of the latter as the violence against Jews and Jewish property after the major Peoples Palace meeting amply demonstrated,<sup>66</sup> and whilst most of the B.B.L.'s leadership wished to avoid being labelled as racists, no one left the B.B.L. because of its antisemitic tendencies.<sup>67</sup> Indeed the first secretary of the B.B.L., William Shaw resigned not over the Jewish issue, but due to personality clashes with fellow leaders A.T. Williams and J.L. Silver.<sup>68</sup> It is significant that Shaw, Williams and Silver were all capable of making antisemitic statements concerning the aliens' question, though all denied any such prejudice.<sup>69</sup>



Not all of the E.B.L.'s spokesmen were willing to hide their attacks on the Jewish aspect of the problem, and Arnold White, prominent in earlier anti-alien societies, used the Peoples Palace meeting to denounce what he saw as the "Jewish financial domination of the government".<sup>70</sup> White's attack on Jewish power is not surprising in light of his opinions of the 1890's, where after his experiences in Russia, he had come to believe in a Jewish world conspiracy.<sup>71</sup> What is more interesting is the respect with which White's views on immigration were held, even by the government.<sup>72</sup> Despite the extreme nature of White's work, he has been described as "a popular pamphleteer",<sup>73</sup> whose opinions were influential amongst such prominent politicians as Lord Rosebury, regardless of White's "journalistic excesses".<sup>74</sup> Whereas the work of the antisemitic pamphleteer, Joseph Banister was "consigned to a feverish impotence",<sup>75</sup> White, who was equally concerned about the threat of a Jewish conspiracy, could be accepted into the mainstream of British political life. I would suggest that there are two major reasons for this apparent inconsistency. Firstly, anti-semites can operate at different levels in society, modifying, or disguising their views to suit the occasion. Those who see anti-semites as 'Authoritarian Personalities' incapable of flexibility fail to see the complexity of such individuals.<sup>76</sup> Characters such as Banister, whose anti-semitism knew no control, and tended to the hysterical are excessively rare; but those such as White, who could at times modify his anti-semitism, are not only more numerous,

but were more of a danger to the Jewish community.<sup>77</sup>

Secondly, White was fortunate that his work coincided with the anxiety over the 'national efficiency' problem. As a leading Social Darwinian, White's views came to the fore.

Concern about the condition of the recruits in the Boer War, coupled with the startling results of the Rowntree investigation into poverty in York, gave rise to the belief that Britain, as a nation, was 'physically deteriorating'.<sup>78</sup> This was in turn connected to the decline of Britain's industrial supremacy, and thus reformers began to search for answers to the problem of Britain's national efficiency.<sup>79</sup> Social imperialism (the theory of exploiting the British empire, so as to improve the living standards of the working classes), was one popular solution put forward in the early 1900's,<sup>80</sup> and Arnold White was to emerge as one of its leading propagandists.<sup>81</sup>

In a period where social Darwinism was rife, when the eugenics movement was enjoying its greatest influence, the atmosphere was favourable for the success of immigration restriction. From this, the importance of campaigners such as Arnold White, William Evans Gordon, Thomas Dewar and Howard Vincent was to push the aliens' question from a matter of interest only in the East End, to one of national importance. It is important therefore, not to view the British Brothers League in isolation, but to see the complex threads, which via organizations such as the Londoner's



League, the Immigration Reform Association and, at the top, the Parliamentary Committee on Alien Immigration (P.C.A.I), which linked the East End's populist anti-alienism to Westminster.<sup>82</sup> Close links between the leadership of these groups made sure that pressure from the East End was channelled into parliamentary pressure. The anti-alienists, with Sir Howard Vincent as Chairman of the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations, could fully exploit the favourable atmosphere. Although the aliens' question was "not in any way a central theme" of the first half of the 1900's, it did, via this anti-alien pressure, become one of the many issues of governmental reform.<sup>83</sup> In 1902 a Royal Commission on Alien Immigration was set up and its recommendations the following year became the basis of an Aliens Bill in 1904.<sup>84</sup> This was rejected, but a new Bill in 1905, after 149 amendments was eventually passed by the Liberals at the end of the year.<sup>85</sup>

The legislation was by no means antisemitic.<sup>86</sup> Indeed it included clauses protecting the right of entry to those persecuted "on religious or political grounds".<sup>87</sup> However, it must not be forgotten that those who had campaigned for it, from the B.B.L. to the P.C.A.I. were anxious to stop alien Jewish immigration, and that an element of anti-semitism was to be found in the restrictionists arguments, from street meetings through to the Royal Commission itself.<sup>88</sup>

The Act, under favourable Liberal administration, made little impact on the numbers of Jewish immigrants entering Britain. In the years 1906-14 an average of 4-5000 arrived

each year.<sup>89</sup> If a few were sent back because of the Act, their numbers were few and indeed insignificant compared to the 17,500 cases that the Jewish Board of Guardians rejected in the 1880-1914 period.<sup>90</sup> The importance of the Act was more symbolic, representing the end of the right of free entry into Britain. With the start of the war in 1914, immigration effectively ceased and the Aliens Restriction Act of 5 August 1914 put severe restrictions on alien activities.<sup>91</sup> The intense anti-alien feeling of the war paved the way for the more severe Aliens Act of 1919,<sup>92</sup> and thus by the time of the next Jewish exodus, from Nazi Germany in the 1930's, considerable barriers had been put in their way.

Attention has so far focused on attacks on the immigrant Jew - the supposed threat to society from below. However, one of the unique aspects of antisemitism is the way the Jew is attacked in a variety of ways, which, if taken together, can often lead to a totally contradictory pattern.<sup>93</sup> Thus whilst the Boer War acted as a turning point in the aliens' question, it also brought to a head another strand of antisemitic thought, involving the 'Jewish threat from above'. The assault came from left-wing and radical elements in British society, who attacked what they saw as the undue Jewish financial prominence in South Africa.<sup>94</sup> Antisemitism as a political weapon is often assumed to be a monopoly of the right, and there is a danger in under-estimating its importance and widespread nature by ignoring attacks on Jews from other sections of society. However, there is equally a danger of muckraking



- it is important to contextualise all forms of hostility to Jews, and this is vital in the issue of socialist anti-semitism, where we have wisely been counselled to "keep a sense of proportion".<sup>95</sup>

It is in this careful light that one must examine the notion of a 'tradition' of socialist antisemitism in Britain. From Cobbett in the first half of the nineteenth century through to the occasional Chartist attack in the 1840's (added to Marx's own views), one can trace a pattern of hostility to rich Jewish financier-capitalists,<sup>96</sup> but it is a limited and sporadic one. Within this pattern it is important to take account of the role of individuals, a reminder that personal prejudice against Jews, whether due to social or psychological reasons, knows no political boundaries. Thus the virulence of the Marxist Social Democratic Federation's journal Justice's attacks on Jewish finance in the 1880's and 90's owes much to the antipathy of its editor H. M. Hyndman, and other individuals such as John Burns.<sup>97</sup> Justice in fact was the only socialist organ to attack Jewish finance in the 1880's, although at the same time it defended the Jewish immigrant in Britain.<sup>98</sup> One interesting feature of Justice's anti-semitism was the way it chauvinistically questioned the national loyalty of the 'Jew capitalist', despite the paper's belief in internationalism.<sup>99</sup>

Any worthwhile discussion of 'rich Jew antisemitism' at the turn of the century has to take account of the significant role of Jewish financiers in Britain and specifically in South Africa at this time.<sup>100</sup> This was



indeed the 'Golden age' of the Jewish financier, a view internalised even by the Jewish Chronicle.<sup>101</sup> Yet what is of more importance is the manner in which the role of these Jews is distorted and manipulated into a conspiracy theory, which has no basis in reality. Thus although there were houses of Rothschild across Europe, it did not follow that they were in league acting as a super-national power, as some socialist organs were to claim.<sup>102</sup> Their power was limited on the whole to their own countries, where it has been suggested that, "The French Rothschilds were good Frenchmen, the German Rothschilds, good Germans; the English Rothschilds, like good Englishmen, worked for peace and the balance of power".<sup>103</sup> Equally in South Africa one cannot ignore the presence of financiers such as Barnato, Beit and Phillips,<sup>104</sup> yet there is an unjustifiable leap in imagination to suggest that these characters were acting as a Jewish cohort, rather than in individual bourgeois self-interest.

It is this 'leap' that characterizes the nature of Justice's views on the Boer War, and to a lesser extent, other socialist organs such as the Clarion and Labour Leader, as well as radical critiques in the journal Truth and in the work of John Hobson. To Hyndman the South African conflict was simply, "the Jews' War in the Transvaal",<sup>105</sup> and his conspiracy theory went further, alleging that the press, "the Jew Jingo Gang", were controlling British public opinion.<sup>106</sup> Robert Blatchford's Clarion and the I.L.P.'s Labour Leader also had outbursts of rich Jew antisemitism in the latter part of the 1890's.<sup>107</sup>

However, it was only in 1900, under the influence of the writings of John Hobson, that the latter paper started a consistent, if brief attack on 'Jewish imperialism'. 108

After 1900 this rich Jew socialist antisemitism subsided. The reasons for this are complex but there appear to have been three major factors. Firstly, the campaign (with the exception of Justice) had limited roots and was specifically linked to the South African campaign, which after 1900 ceased to occupy the centre of the political stage. Secondly, it has been suggested that after 1900, with the impact of the Dreyfus case and with the intensification of Russian antisemitism, the left began to realise that antisemitism was a tool of reaction. 109

It is perhaps possible to overstress this point - it did not stop the occasional attack of rich Jew antisemitism after 1900, and also ignores the reactionary violence on the Continent and in Russia during the 1880's and 90's, which, according to this theory, should have discredited socialist antisemitism well before the 1900's. The third factor was that Jewish socialists within groups such as the Social Democratic Federation and the Independent Labour Party acted as a check to antisemitism after the Boer War. 110

In short, the socialist and radical critique of the 'Jew financier' centred around the Boer War and after the turn of the century, lapsed back into a pattern of occasional attacks on the subject. Nevertheless it would be wrong to dismiss or ignore the idea of a tradition of socialist antisemitism in Britain, a tradition notable for its persistence rather than its incessantness. In the 1914-18



conflict both Justice and the I.L.P. sporadically attacked Jewish profiteers, and it would be revealing to know if the I.L.P.'s periodical antagonism to 'Jew financiers' manifested itself in the 1920's. It is interesting that Oswald Mosley's New Party and British Union of Fascists attracted support from former I.L.P. members such as Beckett and Forgan. Moreover, it has been posited that the fascist leader himself converted his earlier I.L.P. attacks on middlemen to his 1930's attack on Jewish financiers.<sup>111</sup> Whether Mosley actually learnt his anti-semitism from the I.L.P. in the 1920's is unknown, but the fact that the I.L.P. continued its occasional attacks on Jewish finance as late as 1939 and even during the Second World War,<sup>112</sup> would make it a distinct possibility that the same ideas were present during Mosley's period in the I.L.P.

If there is a danger in exaggerating the nature of socialist antisemitism and of failing to contextualise it, there is also a risk of ignoring another strand of hostility to the alleged 'Jewish power', that from the radical right.<sup>113</sup> The National Review set up by Admiral Maxse and his son Leopold, was firmly in the Tory social imperialist camp and the journal became renowned for its Germanophobia.<sup>114</sup> Yet within this hostility there was another element of enmity aimed at German Jews, whose activities were viewed by the National Review in a conspiratorial light.<sup>115</sup> Leo Maxse was convinced that there was a Germanic conspiracy, which aimed to see that nation controlling the whole of Europe. An international syndicate was at work in all



Europe's capitals, it was claimed and behind it all was, "that hateful figure the International Jew".<sup>116</sup> Maxse denied any antisemitic prejudice,<sup>117</sup> claiming he was only attacking a section of Jewry, but his attacks on German Jews before the First World War were representative of a growing antisemitic feeling in Britain.<sup>118</sup> Maxse was perhaps unique only in that he saw German Jewish activities in a conspiratorial light, a belief that was to flower more fully in the National Review during the war itself.

Other right wing papers such as Outlook, The Throne and Referee gave space to the conspiracy ideas of Joseph Banister and Arnold White,<sup>119</sup> but the only other major organ to consistently attack Jewish power was the 'Chesterbelloc's' Eye Witness. Founded in 1911 with Hilaire Belloc as editor, the paper reflected the latter's social prejudice against Jews, and also his fears of international Jewish influence.<sup>120</sup> Belloc's antisemitism had its origins in the Dreyfus case, and his French connections are another example of the foreign influence on British antisemitism.<sup>121</sup> Cecil Chesterton, the editor of Eye Witness from 1912 was even more extreme in his antisemitism than Belloc, and the following year Frank Hugh O'Donnell joined the paper.<sup>122</sup> The three formed a hierarchy of antisemitic thought, with O'Donnell, an uncontrollable polemicist, at the top.<sup>123</sup> Whilst there was disagreement about the 'Jewish question' in Eye Witness, particularly between Belloc and Chesterton,<sup>124</sup> there was a common fear about the Jewish influence in Britain.

There is no doubt that by 1911, when both Chesterton

and Belloc had rejected the British party system of the day, that the two were eagerly seeking a British Dreyfus case so as to expose the Jewish corruption of the country. Belloc had created a fictional case in 1904,<sup>125</sup> and Chesterton, "was looking greedily for a scandal to oppose".<sup>126</sup> It is with this background that the Eye Witness seized the opportunity, offered by some apparent financial misdeeds, and launched the Marconi Scandal.<sup>127</sup> It is not necessary to enter into the history of this case, which has been covered elsewhere,<sup>128</sup> but mention should be made of the fact that three of the principal characters involved - Rufus Isaacs, his brother Godfrey and the Postmaster-General Herbert Samuel were Jewish. The 'Jewish' aspect of the Scandal was of the utmost importance to the Eye Witness (which became New Witness in November 1912), and the paper quickly developed a conspiracy theory to explain the situation.<sup>129</sup> It has been suggested that the fact, "that Cecil Chesterton was poisonously and notoriously anti-semitic does not affect the issue at all",<sup>130</sup> yet it was to the Jewish origins of the characters involved in the case that the Witness constantly referred. In understanding what remains an unsolved and complex issue, what is irrelevant is the supposed 'Jewishness' of the Marconi Scandal. As in South Africa there were Jews involved, but as has been pointed out, "such details do not clinch the claim that these individual Jews were working in a Jewish interest".<sup>131</sup> Neither the financiers in the Boer War nor those involved in the Marconi Scandal acted in an intrinsically 'Jewish' manner.



From the New Witness came the National League for Clean Government, formed in 1913 a direct response to the Marconi Scandal.<sup>132</sup> The League continued the Chesterbelloc campaign against Jewish corruption, although avoiding the use of blatant antisemitism.<sup>133</sup> The League which in 1918 became the New Witness League<sup>134</sup> and afterwards the Distributist League (which continued till 1940),<sup>135</sup> has been seen as the 'missing link' in political antisemitism in Britain, covering the years from the demise of the British Brothers' League to the rise of British fascist groups in the 1920's.<sup>136</sup> Whilst this perhaps overplays the importance of the organizational links of the League to the early British fascist movement in Britain, there is no doubt that the antisemitism of the Chesterbelloc circle is a vital strand in the tradition of British antisemitism, and that its prewar output was influential in the post-1918 period. It has been pointed out that Belloc's The Jews,<sup>137</sup> once seen as a British contribution to a European wave of antisemitism in the 1920's,<sup>138</sup> was in fact based on Eye Witness articles written in 1911.<sup>139</sup> Thus the Witness / Chesterbelloc conspiracy ideas bridged the pre-war to post-war period.

If their campaign against 'Jewish power' was part of an antisemitic tradition linking one period to another, another of the Chesterbelloc's complaints against Jewry formed a connection between the two dominant pre-1914 strands of hostility - that against poor Jews and rich Jews. To the Witness, whether a British Jew was of the first or twenty-first generation was irrelevant, for he would always



remain an alien.<sup>140</sup> The solution to the Jewish problem was therefore to recognise the fact that there was a Jewish nation, and that a hyphenated Jew was a contradiction in terms. In practical terms Jews should have Jewish names, live in Jewish areas and remain outside the British political system; in other words a form of apartheid.<sup>141</sup> What this theory implicitly amounted to was a rejection of Jewish emancipation, of the freedom of British Jews to operate politically or economically in the wider society. Whether this aspect of the Witness campaign achieved much support outside their immediate circle is fairly doubtful, but it must be suggested that their conviction that Jews in Britain were somehow alien or foreign was one of widespread popular belief. This attitude continued to at least the Second World War, well illustrated by a Mass-Observation survey in 1943, where Jews were included in a list of 'foreigners'. Out of over a hundred replies, only one correspondent replied that he did not view Jews in that light.<sup>142</sup>

To summarise the 1881-1914 period. Jews were subject to many types of hostility in these years. Nevertheless there were common features in the various forms of British antisemitism. Whilst the East European immigrant and his habits were seen as essentially unBritish, even the long established Anglo-Jewish elite, the so-called Cousinhood,<sup>143</sup> could not escape the alien tag. Similarly although there was little to connect a Jewish property speculator in the East End to a member of one of the Jewish aristocracy's banking houses, both could be attacked in Shylockian terms and their activities seen in a conspiratorial light.<sup>144</sup>

In considering pre-war antisemitism it must not be forgotten that this was the age of mass immigration of East European Jews, and that this influx created real problems. Equally, it was a time when the Anglo-Jewish elite achieved a degree of prominence in certain sectors of the economy that was bound to give it national exposure from time to time. The Marconi Scandal, the Indian Silver Affair and the Petrol Price Crisis,<sup>145</sup> are all examples of cases of financial and/or political irregularities in which some of the principal characters happened to be Jewish. To suggest as Belloc and others did, that these scandals, "were connected with an atmosphere essentially Jewish in character",<sup>146</sup> was a distortion which was based on antisemitic bias rather than on any factual evidence.<sup>147</sup> Some charges made against Jews in the 1881-1914 period would appear to be based purely on imagination rather than reality. The common accusation that the immigrants were unhygienic can be better explained by the xenophobic English belief that "anything foreign" was "dirty",<sup>148</sup> rather than inferior Jewish cleanliness.<sup>149</sup> Others were based on a high degree of factual accuracy - the White Slave trade problem. Yet the way this last issue was twisted so that satanic images of Jewish sexuality could be connected to it, shows the importance and perseverance of Jewish stereotypes in British society.<sup>150</sup>

The study of antisemitism can reveal much about the nature of society and thus is a useful tool for the social scientist. Yet at the same time one must remember that the immediate impact of antisemitism is not felt by such



theoretical subjects as 'liberal democracy', 'progress' or the like, but by the Jewish community itself. How far then was the Anglo-Jewish population affected by pre-war antisemitism? In the higher echelons, it must be pointed out that although there was social antipathy against Jews, this did not stop the elite from advancing, either economically or in high society.<sup>151</sup> There was discrimination, whether in applying for fellowships at Oxford,<sup>152</sup> or in the City club or the country golf-course. There was bullying at Rugby or Eton, snobbery afterwards at University, but not all clubs discriminated against Jews and one could always choose another circle of friends. The impact of such prejudice can only have been psychological, pushing the Cousinhood outside the Jewish world, or alternatively deeper within it.<sup>153</sup> In the East End and other immigrant areas the impact of antisemitism was again more psychological than physical. True there was violence, whether in the form of the street riots of the 1897-1903 period, or in gang warfare, or at the schoolgate, but then East End life was rough in itself.<sup>154</sup> Antisemitism, or the well-justified fear of antisemitism, caused the Jewish East End to close in on itself. Job discrimination and the fear of conflict led Jewish workers to seek Jewish bosses and thus the potentially hostile world could be kept at a distance.

Antisemitism in Britain, with the rare exceptions of events such as the 1911 riots in South Wales, often developed in more sophisticated and subtle forms than other parts of Europe with their ritual murder accusations and bloody pogroms. The general subtlety of British



antisemitism should not however blind us to its potential impact on society. As has been illustrated with the Aliens Act of 1905, antisemitism could operate, if in a modified, indirect guise. Time and time again it will be necessary to repeat for the Second World War period, a factor that was to be common for the period up to 1939, that "anti-semitism can shelter behind a different facade".<sup>155</sup> However, it will be necessary now to examine what impact the earlier world conflict had on Jewish-Gentile relations.

The effect of war on a minority's position in society is often complex, making comparisons difficult if not impossible.<sup>156</sup> On the one hand external conflict can create internal solidarity as a society unites to confront a common enemy;<sup>157</sup> on the other wars create their own tensions out of the hardship that is often endured in them. The net impact of these two conflicting forces is further complicated by the fact that wars are often catalysts of economic and social change. A combination of these three elements can lead to a variety of results as far as the minority is concerned. A unification under patriotism could help a minority group adapt more successfully into the wider society unless the minority is seen as essentially outside the 'in-group'. In the latter case such patriotism could make the minority group even more vulnerable to attacks on nationalistic grounds. Internal tension is even more dangerous to a minority, for the demands of patriotism in a war often mean that there are limitations to the ways such tension can be expressed.

This in turn could make minorities more attractive as scapegoat figures. Finally although wars open up economic opportunities to wider groups in society (often those on the fringes of the economy - such as women, minorities, the disabled), and thus give chances for advancement to minorities that were withheld before, this very progress can lead to jealousy from those whose status is threatened by such developments.

If these simultaneous equations were not convoluted enough, another factor can also come into play - the relationship between the minority and the enemy. In both World Wars in twentieth century Britain, this factor was to be of much importance in determining the British reaction to sections of the Jewish community. The 1914-18 conflict was marked in Britain by a feeling against the enemy that transcended mere dislike of the military opposition and became a general hatred of all things German. This was to have an obvious effect on those members of the Jewish population whose birthplace or even family origin was German, yet it is difficult to define whether their Jewishness was relevant in the attacks that were made upon them. <sup>158</sup>

In the early stages of the war a shop of a Galician Jew was attacked in the East End, <sup>159</sup> and in Manchester similar assaults on Jewish, as well as German shops took place in 1916 after the Battle of the Somme. <sup>160</sup> In the latter cases it would appear that the violence was directed against these shops because of the foreign names of the Jewish owners, and in one example simply because the shop



owner was Jewish. This illustrates clearly how the Jewish community could be seen as essentially alien and 'unBritish'; a factor that was to become vital in the issue of the Jew's ultimate loyalty, in this most nationalistic of wars. As was to be expected the National Review intensified its attack on German Jews in the 1914-18 period, the war being seen by Maxse as an opportunity for Britain to throw off its 'German-Jewish yoke'.<sup>161</sup> The National Review with its extreme xenophobia probably reached its most popular level in World War I, but the impact of its theoretical antisemitism was insignificant compared to the violence that erupted in the centres of Jewish immigration in 1917.

As Jewish apologists have been quick to point out, the Anglo-Jewish contribution to Britain's war effort was well out of proportion to its numbers.<sup>162</sup> At the start of the war 10,000 Jews volunteered and by 1918, 40,000 others had been conscripted. Yet while the East End had by December 1914 sent 300 old boys from the Jews Free School and over a hundred from the Stepney Jewish Lads Club to the front,<sup>163</sup> the vast majority of the Jewish war effort came from the old established middle and upper classes, and comparatively little from the new Eastern European arrivals.<sup>164</sup> On the one hand these latter potential Jewish recruits faced the hostility typified by Hackney Recruiting Station, where officers used phrases such as 'Lord Kitchener does not want any more Jews in the Army'.<sup>165</sup> This was possibly as a result of the long held stereotype of the non-fighting Jewish coward, possibly because of the loyalty issue. On the other, the recent Jewish arrivals, already traumatised by their experiences

in the Russian Empire, and the shock of emigration, were unwilling to sacrifice the limited stability they had achieved in Britain by enlisting in the army; a factor strengthened by their reluctance to fight on the same side as the Tsar.

With the implementing of conscription in 1916 the issue of alien Jews enlisting came to the fore. A government offer of free naturalisation after three months service was largely rejected by the immigrants, only 700 out of 25,000 accepting the terms.<sup>166</sup> The immigrant Jews not only were indifferent to the war; they actively opposed involvement in it. By 1916, a Foreign Jews Protection Committee (F.J.P.C.) was formed, in response to the government's threat of deportation if voluntary recruiting failed.<sup>167</sup> Tension in the East End grew throughout 1917, and local recruiting tribunals resolutions reflected the great hostility of the Gentile population to their Jewish neighbours. Claims that Jews were taking all the jobs and businesses while "the boys" were away fighting, were added to the accusations that the aliens were shirking their duty.<sup>168</sup> By September 1917 this tension turned into violence significantly in the Teesdale Street area of Bethnal Green, the scene of ugly riots in the peak years of immigration.<sup>169</sup> A comparatively trivial issue triggered off an antisemitic stampede of up to 5000 people, and Jewish property as well as Jews (including three soldiers) were attacked.<sup>170</sup>

It has been suggested that no antisemitic riots or pogroms are spontaneous; that anti-Jewish violence has to



be deliberately organised, <sup>171</sup> yet there is no evidence of any systematic planning as far as the September 1917 East End disturbances are concerned. The very fact that a seemingly insignificant incident lead on to an explosion of public fury, suggests that it was the underlying tension between the Jewish and Gentile populations in the area that sparked off the riots, rather than the work of outside antisemitic agitators. The violence occurred when morale was at its lowest amongst the British people; victory seemed a long way off, shortages of everyday items were getting worse, domestic grief was growing as the horrendous losses at the Front continued and conscription was in operation. <sup>172</sup> It is also significant that the outbreak was located at the edge of the main Jewish East End community, where friction was greatest and mutual Jewish-Gentile understanding at a very low level. Given the area's deep and widespread antisemitic tradition, it is not too surprising that the complex problem of the conscription of local Russian alien Jews came to be interpreted in an antisemitic manner, and the level of the violence would seem to reflect the growing domestic tension of 1917.

It is important though not to see the East End disturbances in isolation, for the summer of 1917 also saw riots directed against the Jewish communities in Manchester and Leeds. Both these cities had a significant Jewish population by the First World War <sup>173</sup> but it was in Leeds, which had a higher concentration, but a lower absolute number of Jews, that the violence reached its most

alarming levels. For two nights at the start of June 1917, huge mobs entered Jewish areas of the city, attacking both people and property; violence that was undoubtedly antisemitic.<sup>174</sup> As in the East End the alien military service issue was at the fore of the complaints against Leeds's Jewish community - according to the Chief Constable only 26 out of 1400 alien Jews in the city had joined the forces.<sup>175</sup> Again the violence needs to be contextualised within the domestic tension of the period, and within the antisemitic atmosphere of a town that had recently received roughly 10,000 Jewish refugees.<sup>176</sup>

Yet within the broad pattern of similarity between the Leeds and East End riots, there are also significant differences. Whereas it would appear that the disturbances in London were spontaneous, there is evidence that those in Leeds were partially organized, or at least, attempts were made to orchestrate them. The Chief Constable of Leeds shortly after the worst of the riots was quoted as saying that the riots were organized,<sup>177</sup> and contemporary reference was also made to the role of working class gangs in the antisemitic violence.<sup>178</sup> Even more intriguing, is the possible importance of an antisemitic pamphlet circulating around the adjacent areas to the Jewish population of Leeds. Its title bears similarity to one of Joseph Banister's works and its contents included a provocative account of the low proportion of Jews recruited in Leeds.<sup>179</sup>

Whether or not gangs or antisemitic publicists managed to direct the riots remains a matter of conjecture, but it seems certain that the alien recruitment question



was the immediate reason for the violence. It is thus probable that the recently held Socialist Leeds Convention, which demanded a negotiated settlement and the setting up of Soviets, was the catalyst to the disturbances, bringing to a head a mixture of prejudice, frustration and misunderstanding towards the Jewish population.<sup>180</sup> On the surface the Leeds riots bear a superficial resemblance to the Tsarist pogroms of the turn of the century - the circulation of inflammatory antisemitica, the role of mobs and gangs in the violence. Yet one must also be aware of the differences - the police while not over-sympathetic to the Jewish community were anxious to contain the disturbances and equally the state was anxious that public order should be maintained.<sup>181</sup> If the police acted as an external form of restraint on the level of violence, there would also appear to have been an internal check; limiting attacks to property and to minor physical assaults. Whilst it is too easy to explain the lack of extreme brute force in British antisemitism to glib references to the British sense of fair play and decency,<sup>182</sup> it is vital to contrast the degree of violence in anti-semitic outbreaks in Britain compared to the huge bloodshed of the Russian pogrom. In explaining this difference, references to Britain's relatively stable liberal democracy, are far from irrelevant.<sup>183</sup>

Finally, with regard to the events of 1917, mention should be made of the riots in Manchester. Until recently the memories of these disturbances have remained undisturbed

by historians. However it now appears that they are well on their way to being elected, to what E.H. Carr described, as a member "of the select club of historical facts".<sup>184</sup> Oral history and autobiographical reminiscences have recalled the violence associated with the Napoo Gang (which originated in the Ancoats district of Manchester), some of which was directly aimed at the Jewish community.<sup>185</sup> Yet again the conscription issue seems to have been the underlying reason for the tension, yet it is interesting that this causal factor was distorted to the extent that Jewish girls were attacked by the Napoo. It would appear that the tension created by national conscription lead this gang to seek an outlet, and thus a scapegoat was found in (mainly Jewish) girls who were obviously not available for military service. Ironically, the attacks of the Napoo, which covered the 1916/7 period, were finally repelled by a group of local Jewish soldiers in a pitched battle.<sup>186</sup>

Despite their more limited nature, the skirmishes in Manchester are significant for it is only if they are considered that a total picture of the events of 1917 can be constructed. In each of the cases of East London, Leeds and Manchester there are common factors in the disturbances; all took place in areas of high Jewish population; hostility to Jews was ingrained in these parts before the riots; the violence occurred at roughly the same time in the war - when morale was at its lowest; and finally the issue of alien conscription played a major part in all three examples. However it was in Leeds, with the lowest number of Jews that the violence was at its



worst. Manchester with at least 10,000 more Jews than Leeds had only minor trouble, and the East End with over 100,000 Jews in its boundaries could not match the passion and tenacity of the Leeds riots. In other words, one needs to be aware of the great dangers of attempting to directly correlate the Jewish role to levels of antisemitism. In the case of the 1917 riots one cannot ignore the problem of Jewish conscription, but it was local tensions and peculiarities that explain the degree of violence that took place.

The Manchester riots are also important for the Jewish reaction to them, for they show rather than a timid acceptance, an organized and confident response to the antisemitic violence. This in turn reflects a greater integration of the immigrant Jewish population into British society in the 1914-18 period. It is significant that after the war in Manchester street gangs ceased to be dominated by racial or religious grounds and allegiances tended to be territorial as ethnic loyalties dissipated.<sup>187</sup> This would seem to be a generalised model for the whole of Jewish-Gentile relations in Britain in the Great War. War created tensions that led on to antisemitic conflict, yet it also pushed the people together and helped assimilate the Jewish population. It has been suggested that in the East End "war had emphasised the difference between the East London Jewish community and the surrounding population" but it also "contributed to the gradual process of integration of the foreign Jews into East London society".<sup>188</sup> Thus although one East Ender remembers how in Stepney in

the 1914-18 period, gentiles "didn't treat 'em (the Jews) very well",<sup>189</sup> another recalled that "I was glad of them when the war was on".<sup>190</sup>

However the war did not only bring positive results to the Anglo-Jewish community, it also brought its special tensions and general xenophobia which proved to be fertile ground for the development of conspiracy theories. Indeed it has been convincingly argued that the Balfour Declaration of 1917 was an attempt by the British government to appease what was seen as the great power of world Jewry, and to win it over to the British war effort.<sup>191</sup> It has already been commented on how the war acted as a stimulus to the National Review's concern about German-Jewish power; yet besides the internal growth of fear, it was the external event of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 that provided the nourishment that allowed the idea of a Jewish world conspiracy to reach its maturity in Britain. However, whilst it was the upheaval in Russia in 1917 that created an atmosphere that was conducive for the acceptance of conspiracy ideas in post-war Britain, it is not possible to explain how Jews were immediately identified with the Revolution and world plots, without reference to an earlier British tradition that viewed Jewish activities in a conspiratorial light.<sup>192</sup>

The stereotype of the Jew as an anarchist or Communist revolutionary was one that appeared sporadically in the pre-1914 period,<sup>193</sup> even if it was not as powerful an image as the Jew as alien or Shylock. It was the alleged Jewish involvement in the Russian Revolution that brought the Jew



as Communist caricature to the fore; an image that was to last till the post-1945 period. That many prominent Bolsheviks were of Jewish origin cannot be denied,<sup>194</sup> yet this involvement needs to be contextualised. These Jews had rejected their religious roots; most Bolsheviks were not Jews; and finally many Russian Jews were opposed to the Bolsheviks and suffered in the Revolution. Ultimately in no sense can the whole Revolution be regarded in any sense as 'Jewish' in its ideology or in the direction which it took.

In considering the alarming expansion of fears about Jewish conspiracy in post-1918 Britain it is vital to differentiate between the degrees of concern over Jewish power. Whilst the Morning Post, the respectable organ of High Toryism, under the influence of its Russian correspondent Victor Marsden linked Jews with Bolshevism and international finance, it was not willing to accept the idea of a planned total world conspiracy uncritically.<sup>195</sup> The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, the Russian forgery which outlined such a plan, was circulating in Britain by 1920 as The Jewish Peril,<sup>196</sup> but the Morning Post was not convinced that the book was genuine.<sup>197</sup> However, prominent members of this paper were willing to accept that certain Jews had acted through the centuries in a conspiratorial manner, making a large impact on international developments, even if a total plan did not exist. This modified version of a conspiracy theory was also published in 1920 as The Cause of World Unrest.<sup>198</sup> The authors of this work; Ian Colvin, H.A. Gwynne and Nesta Webster linked the all-

powerful 'International Jewry' to Germany, a position similar to that of Leo Maxse's National Review. To these Germanophobes, the International Jew wanted Bolshevism to survive in Russia so that Germany would be allowed a freer role in post-war developments.<sup>199</sup> Yet even Maxse stopped short of belief in The Protocols, stating that he regarded, "the Pan-German issue as greater than the Jewish issue, and the latter as agents of the Pan-German rather than the Pan-German as the agents of the Jews".<sup>200</sup>

Whilst those who adopted a total conspiracy theory - that all events in past and present history were controlled by Jews, were rare, this cannot be said for those harbouring deep fears about Jewish power in society in the immediate post-war years. Tory 'Die Hard' thinking to be found not only in the National Review but also in The Spectator, the Morning Post and The Times, reveals a super-patriotic anti-Bolshevism that easily encompassed fears about Jewish power. Characters such as Lord Croft, the Duke of Northumberland and Lord Sydenham all linked by the National party, along with Leo Maxse represented a strain of right-wing Conservative thought that although still impeccably respectable, was becoming increasingly anachronistic.<sup>201</sup> Fearful of the post-war world and its increasing radicalism at home and abroad, the 'International Jew', whether as Bolshevist, financier or Indian administrator, came to represent to this group all that was wrong with society. As has been pointed out, they may not have made much impact on Conservative policy, but their ideas, via the organs they controlled, reached a very large audience.<sup>202</sup>



The Protocols may have fuelled fears of Jewish power, just as belief in the latter gave credence to the former, yet one needs to keep a very strong sense of proportion in dealing with their post-war influence in Britain. Although the arrival of The Protocols in Britain created a significant stir in 1920, few accepted their genuineness uncritically. When a year later The Times exposed them as forgeries,<sup>203</sup> their direct use was to be found only on the outside of mainstream politics. After the heated debates of 1920, the 'Jewish Peril' ceased to be a matter of national interest throughout the rest of the decade. However, although the political atmosphere was not conducive to the success of Jewish conspiracy ideas, as the immediate post-war fear of revolution calmed down, The Protocols did not disappear from Britain.

The fact that this was not allowed to happen was due to the activities of several fringe groups and organs. They were self-conscious, of what they saw as the importance, of keeping Britain alive to the danger of the Jewish Conspiracy. It is for this reason that an organization such as The Britons, formed in 1919,<sup>204</sup> which might otherwise have been relegated to the dustbin of history, assumed some importance. The Britons were unique in the 1920's in that their organization was geared exclusively to an attack on the Jewish menace in society.<sup>205</sup> Apart from publishing leaflets with a circulation of 2000, and a variety of short-lived journals with a more limited appeal of 150,<sup>206</sup> The Britons main task was to publish The Protocols. Up to the

end of 1922 over 4000 copies had been sold, yet in the next 8 years and 4 editions later, only 490 more were purchased.<sup>207</sup> These figures give an indication of the limitations to the extreme antisemitic world in Britain. In comparison to other parts of Europe, or indeed in America, where Henry Ford was distributing the message of The Protocols in papers with a circulation in the 100,000's,<sup>208</sup> the British total pales into insignificance. Yet The Britons, with their crude racial antisemitism, were not alone in warning about The Protocols in the 1920's.

If one were to locate the antisemitism of The Britons, it would surely be found in the gutter, but this could certainly not be said of its fellow conspiracy hunter - The Patriot. Formed in 1922, a year after its sister organization, the Boswell Publishing Company, this journal (funded by the Duke of Northumberland), aimed at the drawing room and the gentleman's club.<sup>209</sup> After the death of the National Party, The Patriot remained one of the last bastions of Tory die hard thinking. Its patriotic defence of Empire and paranoia over Socialism invited a conspiratorial antisemitism to enter its columns, though this by no means totally dominated the paper, as was the case with The Britons. The Patriot shared The Briton's obsession with The Protocols, but the former's discussion of Jewish conspiracies was at a less hysterical, and more critical level.

The Patriot is significant for several reasons. Firstly, the literature of extreme antisemitism in Britain has tended to be of low physical quality, often being no



more than cyclostyled sheets, and therefore reinforcing its underground, deviant image. In contrast, The Patriot gave the surface appearance of being a mainstream weekly.<sup>210</sup> Not only was it well produced, but its lifespan, at 25 years, was much longer than similar antisemitica. Heavily subsidised by its founder in the 1920's, and Lady Houston in the 1930's, The Patriot found itself distributed (free of charge), into upper-middle class institutions,<sup>211</sup> and thus its message reached more of an audience than its undoubtedly limited circulation would suggest.<sup>212</sup> However, despite the organ's respectability, it would be unwise to overestimate The Patriot's influence, which must be seen in qualitative rather than quantitative terms. This brings us to the second point - the role of The Patriot as a clearing house for genteel antisemites. Apart from swapping ideas within the paper's columns, readers and contributors could meet at The Patriot's London offices, which functioned more or less as a club for an antisemitic coterie in British society.<sup>213</sup>

In this way The Patriot, which survived until after the Second World War helped to preserve and encourage Britain's antisemitic tradition. On an organisational level, the paper helped to launch the first Fascist organisation in Britain - the British Fascisti.<sup>214</sup> This was a group that, despite its radical title, shared a similar ideology to that contained in The Patriot - super-patriotism and anti-Bolshevism mixed with a healthy dose of conspiratorial antisemitism (and a distinct lack of fascist ideology).<sup>215</sup> Oscar Boulton and Nesta Webster were

just two of the individuals prominent in both The Patriot and the British Fascisti. However, The Patriot not only served to unite those already interested in 'the Jewish Question', it also acted as a springboard for future activists. As we shall see later, at least 2 prominent antisemites of the Second World War were weaned on The Patriot in the 1920's. <sup>216</sup>

Thus organizations such as The Britons, the British Fascisti and papers such as The Patriot kept alive anti-semitic ideas which might have faded into total obscurity had they not existed. While the tide was definitely against them in the 1920's, they were not totally isolated. The arguments of The Patriot could be found in a similar form in the journals of the British Empire Union and the National Citizens Union. All these groups were largely a response to post-war fear of Bolshevism, and with parallel roots, the Social Credit movement emerged in the early 1920's. <sup>217</sup> Attacking finance capitalism as well as Bolshevism, Major Douglas's organization, lacking a coherent theory, turned to The Protocols to fill its intellectual gap. <sup>218</sup> Likewise, the Catholic distributist movement identified the International Jew as responsible for the twin evils of capitalism and socialism. <sup>219</sup> Taken individually these groups amounted to little, together they at least ensured that those susceptible to conspiracy ideas could find an outlet.

It has been suggested that after the immediate post-war scares, the 1920's were not conducive to the success of antisemitism. Why was this the case? On the one hand I would argue that apart from the General Strike in 1926,



the decade was relatively stable at an economic, social and political level.<sup>220</sup> On the other, Jews, after the flurry of excitement concerning The Protocols ceased to be a matter of national interest. The mass immigration from Eastern Europe had effectively ended, the 1919 Aliens Act ensuring that the pre-war flood became a post-war trickle.<sup>221</sup> Moreover, those who had arrived before 1914 had become much more integrated into the wider community. As has been suggested, the dilemma for the Jewish community after 1918 was no longer to instil Anglicization but to promote and preserve its Jewishness.<sup>222</sup>

The war ultimately acted as a force that pushed the immigrant Jewish population to interact with the wider society. By 1918, in the East End, Jewish workers had generally become integrated into local labour matters,<sup>223</sup> and this was also the case in municipal politics.<sup>224</sup> The 1920's certainly saw improved Jewish-Gentile relations in areas of high Jewish settlement, though perhaps autobiographical reminiscences paint too rosy a picture of the period.<sup>225</sup> There has been a tendency to suggest that only the outside influence of the British Union of Fascists spoilt the Jewish-Gentile harmony of the post-war period;<sup>226</sup> obscuring the fact that tensions still existed between the two communities before Mosley's incursions into the East End. On a political level, the actual integration of Stepney Jews into municipal affairs created its own problems, as their largely left-wing stance clashed with Irish Catholic 'Labourism'. This inter-ethnic conflict was to last well into the 1930's.<sup>227</sup> Discrimination against

employing Jewish workers did not disappear either. <sup>228</sup>

These significant reservations apart, allowance must still be made for a better understanding between Jews and non-Jews in areas where contact was frequent. Perhaps the situation is best illustrated by the late East End communist, Joe Jacobs. After having described the Jewish East End in the 1920's as a ghetto with "frontiers", <sup>229</sup> Jacobs qualified himself: "the 'frontiers' which I have described could not have been so sharply defined. These 'frontiers' got very blurred and in some instances did not exist. Jews and 'Yoks' mixed quite freely in several kind of activities." <sup>230</sup> Jews if still to some extent different, were most definitely equal.

Was this increased toleration true of British society as a whole? It has been suggested that this was not the case, and that in fact the publication of Hilaire Belloc's The Jews, and the arrival on stage of John Galsworthy's Loyalties, marked in Britain part of a wave of Continental antisemitism. <sup>231</sup> A close examination of both the arguments and the receptions of these works will allow a critical appraisal of this latter claim, and will also provide some information on the general state of Jewish-Gentile relations in the 1920's.

The ultimate message of both Belloc and Galsworthy was that the Jew will always remain an outsider in British society - the 'Anglo-Jew' was an impossibility. However, whilst Galsworthy simply stated this perceived dilemma, Belloc was prepared to go further. Following his pre-war Witness articles, Belloc was to suggest that as Jews would



always be aliens, that this should be recognised in a system of apartheid. To Belloc the situation was urgent and there were two answers to the 'Jewish problem': elimination or segregation: "There is no other way." <sup>232</sup>

Belloc introduced a new element in The Jews to his pre-war writings, that of the Jew as Bolshevik. Although Belloc firmly rejected The Protocols, to him the Russian Revolution, like the Panama and Marconi Scandals, was "essentially Jewish in character". <sup>233</sup> Unless the world came to recognise the Jewish problem - the power of the essentially alien Jew in society, and tried to deal with it in a legalistic fashion, then violence would take over.

How far were Belloc's ideas accepted in British society? Unfortunately the historian of the 1920's is not blessed with the public opinion surveys that were soon to arrive in Britain from America. Nevertheless some tentative conclusions can be made. First of all, as Belloc pointed out, the British public were "reluctant to consider" the Jewish question. <sup>234</sup> Jewish matters were not seen as a vital issue, and The Jews did little to change this state of affairs. The book did receive some favourable reviews, but these came from predictable sources, such as The Spectator. <sup>235</sup> Belloc, himself, was disappointed at the lack of attention and the general unfavourable reception the book received. <sup>236</sup> Whilst many may have shared Belloc's belief that Jews were aliens or foreigners, or that Jews were powerful in international finance or socialism, few were interested enough in the subject to contemplate the use of legislation to control Jews in British society.

Social prejudice against Jews, as outlined in Loyalties was fairly widespread in post-1918 Britain; <sup>237</sup> objections to nouveau-riche Jews to be found in the works of both T.S. Eliot and D.H. Lawrence, counting for a large part of this snobbery. <sup>238</sup> However, this feeling was not translated into political terms, and it certainly did not reach the proportions, in either literary or social terms, that it did in America. <sup>239</sup> Another author whose prejudice against Jews has been a source of embarrassment to his later admirers is John Buchan. One commentator in excusing Buchan has suggested that before Hitler "(British) Men were normally anti-semitic, unless by some quirk of temperament or ideology they happened to be philo-semitic". <sup>240</sup> This sweeping statement makes no allowance for the ambivalence of attitudes that most people hold on Jewish matters, <sup>241</sup> Buchan being no exception in this matter. <sup>242</sup> Negative attitudes may have been common, such as Virginia Woolf's comments on "(Jewish) nasal voices, and their oriental jewellery", but they were often mixed with admiration such as the same author's love of their "immense vitality". <sup>243</sup>

Stereotypes may have persisted throughout the 1920's, but for the most part, the British public was not too concerned about Jewish matters. The Board of Deputies reported a decline in antisemitic references from 1925 till the end of the decade. <sup>244</sup> Even the domestic crisis of the 1926 General Strike does not appear to have triggered off any latent antisemitism, despite the efforts of The Britons to inject such a flavour. <sup>245</sup> Indeed perhaps the favourable atmosphere of the middle years of the 1920's is best



illustrated by the formation in 1927 of the Society of Jews and Christians.<sup>246</sup> This movement was not aimed at proselytization, indeed quite the reverse, its goal was a mutual understanding of the two faiths based on a respect for a shared heritage. However, it would be dangerous to leave the 1920's purely on a note of 'light and rejoicing'.<sup>247</sup> The lack of prominence of antisemitism in British society did not mean its absence, as the question of deportation of aliens illustrates.

Anglo-Jewish immigration matters are assumed to disappear from importance in 1914, not to revitalise till 1933. However, in between these dates as one Jewish official put it "the fear of deportation hangs over the whole alien community".<sup>248</sup> Allegations were made that antisemitic bias affected Home Office decisions on deportations. Given the fact that W. Joynson-Hicks, the Home Secretary, and his assistants were not known for their love of the Jewish people, such accusations were by no means far-fetched.<sup>249</sup> Also if 1927 saw the founding of the Society of Jews and Christians, it is ironic that just a year later as the Imperial Fascist League was created.<sup>250</sup> The League's swastika emblem was a foretaste of what was to be a less secure decade for Britain's Jewish community.

In purely political terms 1933 was not a year of great significance in Britain as it was in Germany or America. Yet for Britain's Jewish population it became an important turning point both at home, with the creation of the British Union of Fascists, and abroad with the Nazi seizure of power. At the start of 1933 unemployment had risen to

well over 3 million, just less than one quarter of the British workforce.<sup>251</sup> Although a 'National' government was in power, the apparent consensus needs to be qualified by the growth of extremism on both sides of the political spectrum.

Before examining the relationship between the B.U.F. and antisemitism, it needs to be pointed out that prior to the major launching of its attack on Jewry, that the "Jews" were already "in the news".<sup>252</sup> To a lesser extent, events in Palestine, but more importantly the wave of anti-semitism, headed by Hitler, that had spread across Europe made Britain "Jew conscious".<sup>253</sup> By the end of the decade this 'consciousness' had reached an even higher level of intensity, a situation for which Sir Oswald Mosley's organization can take some of the credit.

In his 18 B Advisory Committee interview in July 1940 Mosley claimed that he used to think that "anti-semitism was for half-wits", and that the social discrimination against Jews that was practised in his childhood home was "stupid".<sup>254</sup> Indeed there is no evidence that antisemitism played any role whatsoever in Mosley's early career.<sup>255</sup> However, as has already been suggested, Mosley and several of his followers could well have adopted an antipathy to International Jewish Finance from his I.L.P. days.<sup>256</sup> It is perhaps partly this influence that explains the anti-semitism that existed even in the New Party,<sup>257</sup> and also Mosley's intention to attack "international Jewish bankers" in his first B.U.F. publication.<sup>258</sup> In other words, we need to recognise that antisemitism was not something that



was later attached to the B.U.F., it was present from the start. <sup>259</sup>

Having said that, it is also important to realize that antisemitism varied in significance on the B.U.F.'s programme from 1933-1940. After the restraint that the Rothermere alliance imposed on the movement's antisemitism disappeared in mid 1934, an increase in hostility can be perceived. At an Albert Hall meeting in October 1934, Mosley launched his attack on "the power of organized Jewry", seen by one commentator as a decision "to become an anti-semitic movement". <sup>260</sup> Such an analysis simplifies the complex reality of the internal dynamics of B.U.F. politics, and perhaps more significantly suggests a unity of purpose that never existed in the movement.

It has been claimed that before the B.U.F. was launched Mosley stated that the movement needed a scapegoat and that scapegoat was to be the Jews. <sup>261</sup> Whilst the claim might be true, the possible implications of it, that Mosley's antisemitism was "100% insincere", <sup>262</sup> must be totally rejected. Rather than a cynical manipulator of antisemitic prejudices, Mosley was liable to let his emotions get the better of him on Jewish matters. As he himself admitted "one did sometimes get carried away in the heat of speeches". <sup>263</sup> Gutter antisemitism can be found in the B.U.F. leader's meetings well before October 1934. <sup>264</sup> Yet despite these qualifications it is evident that the B.U.F. did concentrate to an increasing extent on Jewish matters after late 1934.

This has been seen as a scapegoat function - the B.U.F. leadership realizing it had failed, and therefore turning on the Jews as "a tangible object for projection and an outlet for frustration".<sup>265</sup> There is an element of truth in this explanation; for the public ending of the Rothermere connection doomed the B.U.F. as a national force in British politics,<sup>266</sup> to a group engaged in only a sectional dispute. However, rather than seeing this move to attacking Jews in purely scapegoat terms, it is more revealing to realize that the strong influence of Social Darwinism in B.U.F. ideology, necessitated conflict.<sup>267</sup> As this could not be found at a national level, an opposition was required, which, it must be stated certain Jewish and left-wing organizations were willing to provide. Yet within this explanation several important qualifications need to be made. Firstly, the concentration on Jewish matters was not necessarily a rational decision by Mosley. As the decade progressed he became more conspiratorally minded. He accepted uncritically A.K. Chesterton's report on Anglo-Jewry, that suggested that Jews controlled British finance, politics and press.<sup>268</sup> As will be shown later, by the time of the Second World War, Mosley had convinced himself that his political failure had been caused by Jewish opposition, and by the time of his internment he was seeing plots around every corner.<sup>269</sup> The net result of the B.U.F.'s obsession over Jewish matters was, in Robert Skidelsky's words, that "British fascism became of interest only to Jews and anti-semites".<sup>270</sup> Skidelsky misses out one other element in this equation - the government, but this will be dealt with later.



The second point to note is that there were forces within the B.U.F. that wished the movement to adopt a clearer platform on the Jewish Question. These were to be found not only in the leadership of the movement, with characters such as A.K. Chesterton and William Joyce,<sup>271</sup> but also in the grass-roots. From 1934 onwards, the B.U.F. made inroads into the East End, a development that owed more to the demands of the locality rather than a positive plan by the B.U.F.'s bourgeois leadership.<sup>272</sup> The B.U.F.'s East End campaign was largely tied up to local issues, which in turn were specifically linked to the Jewish community. Again this reinforced the limitations of B.U.F. development to a Fascist - Jewish/Communist conflict, perhaps most commonly remembered in the Battle of Cable Street.

The third qualification concerning the scapegoat model, that of Mosley turning to antisemitism to prop up a fading movement, is perhaps the most controversial; the part of Jewish opposition provoking B.U.F. hostility to Jews. This was Mosley's own explanation for his 'quarrel with the Jews', claiming in true primary playground fashion that the "Jews began it in Britain".<sup>273</sup> This account ignores the detail that a degree of antisemitism was present in the movement from the start, and that Mosley had no qualms in attracting antisemites (and in fact actively recruited in the existing fascist movements, which he knew himself to be antisemitic).<sup>274</sup> This is not to deny the powerful grassroots Jewish/Left-wing reaction to the B.U.F., but it must be questioned how this opposition

increased the B.U.F.'s antisemitism. It was the movement's weakness that allowed the Jewish question to become so prominent in its ideology. After the violence at Olympia in June 1934, the B.U.F. had lost its public respectability and the loss of Rothermere, shortly after, ensured that this could not be gained back. Thereafter the B.U.F. was doomed; the Jewish/Left opposition merely gave it a reason to continue its feeble existence.

What then is the significance of the B.U.F.? It must be suggested that only 4 elements in British society took this group seriously. Firstly, members of the B.U.F. themselves. Perhaps like all fringe groups the B.U.F. suffered from self-aggrandizement, encouraged by their leader's constant belief, that the crisis that would bring his movement to power was always just around the corner.<sup>275</sup> Secondly, the Jewish community which with the rise to power of the German National Socialists, feared a similar development in Britain. Thirdly, the extreme left which again saw the B.U.F.'s threat in European terms and thus saw fascism as a weapon of the ruling classes.<sup>276</sup> Finally, the state itself. If nothing else, the recently released Home Office papers show the deep concern the British government had over the success of domestic fascism.<sup>277</sup> The fascists, if less so than the radical left, were seen as a threat to the security of the state, and were therefore carefully monitored. As antisemitism was perceived as an integral part of fascism this was to have a negative and a positive result for the Anglo-Jewish community. On the one hand, the state would not condone the use of political antisemitism,<sup>278</sup> on the other it could adopt a position



of near-paranoia concerning the possible increase in domestic antisemitism. This, as will be shown was to make a great impact on Britain's refugee policy.

Apart from alarming the state, the B.U.F.'s greatest impact was on the East End, and particularly on Jewish-Gentile relations in this area.<sup>279</sup> In accounting for the success of the B.U.F. in the East End,<sup>280</sup> one needs to take account of several vital factors. Firstly, the East End in the 1930's was suffering from the depression that, in varying degrees of intensity, had hit the whole of Britain. Although unemployment was not as high as in the notorious black spots such as Jarrow, it had made an impact on a local society that had long been suffering from bad housing and general poverty. The East End, as it had been before the crisis of the 1880's, was again the forgotten land of London. There thus existed a political vacuum which both the Communists and the Fascists tried to fill. Secondly, the area had by the 1930's a tradition of Jewish-Gentile conflict stretching back to the period of mass immigration.

However, as has been pointed out, the nature of East End inter-ethnic relations had changed drastically since the turn of the century, especially in the most heavily Jewish area, Stepney. Close proximity in this latter borough had brought a degree of harmony, and it is significant that in only one area, around Duckett Street, was the B.U.F. successful in Stepney.<sup>281</sup> Mirroring the borough as a whole, the Jewish population had declined in 1930 to roughly 95,000 out of 225,000 or 43% of the total

(of which over 70% were born in Britain).<sup>282</sup> This dispersion from the original settlement continued throughout the 1930's and by the start of the war it is doubtful whether there were 80,000 Jews in Stepney.<sup>283</sup> Institutionally and economically, the East End still held an important role in the lives of London Jewry, but the suggestion that it remained an unassimilated Yiddish world is well wide of the mark.<sup>284</sup> Amongst the older generation, the use of Yiddish could still be found, but like the Yiddish theatre and newspapers, it was in decline. The six Yiddish newspapers at the start of the decade had whittled down to 2 by the start of war;<sup>285</sup> and a self-conscious attempt was being made to stop the inevitable death of the Yiddish theatre.<sup>286</sup> Before the start of war, the Jewish Board of Guardians suggested that as the number of East End Jews who could not read English was so small, it was unnecessary to provide a Yiddish supplement to national registration forms.<sup>287</sup>

However Anglicization and general integration does not imply total assimilation. Even as late as the 1930's, Jews and non-Jews tended to work apart, and on a more trivial basis, differences could be observed in dress-sense and in night life.<sup>288</sup> This separatism could create conflict, whether in local politics where the largely left-wing Jews were in the minority to the Right-wing Labour Catholic majority,<sup>289</sup> or in petty personal jealousies. A report into Stepney Jewish-Gentile relations before the war showed the limitations of such conflict, including: "anti-semitism has not emerged strongly ... but rather what we may term UNSEMITISM, ie. Cockney and Jew living together



in the same street and often in the same house, but living in different social worlds." <sup>290</sup> A similar survey remarked that relations between Jews and non-Jews were best in areas of the highest Jewish proportion, such as Whitechapel, and areas of Leeds, and that they deteriorated when this concentration diluted. <sup>291</sup> This observation fits well with the rest of East London. Hackney, Shore-ditch, Bethnal Green and Stoke Newington, had a Jewish population of between 6 and 16%; <sup>292</sup> yet antisemitism was rife, and the B.U.F. at their strongest.

It was these areas, particularly Bethnal Green, where conflict had been greatest between the Jewish immigrants and the native residents. It seems more than possible that the Gentile sense of grievance carried on to the 1930's, perhaps intensified by an increased Jewish influx into areas, especially in Hackney and Stoke Newington. <sup>293</sup> A direct correlation between B.U.F. success in these areas, and antisemitism would be misleading, however. The B.U.F. gained its success because it fought on local issues - jobs and housing, <sup>294</sup> and unlike the British Brothers' League, it threw up its own local working class leaders. <sup>295</sup> The link to antisemitism was more indirect, for both the employment and housing questions were closely identified as Jewish problems. <sup>296</sup> Harking back to the age of mass immigration, the B.U.F.'s East End branches revived the image of the Jew as the sweating employer and as the rack-renting landlord.

Not only did the B.U.F. make its appeal to real local grievances, but it also filled a gap in areas like Bethnal Green, which were a cultural wasteland. <sup>297</sup> Lacking clubs,

settlements and even public houses, the B.U.F. added a sense of excitement to a dreary landscape.<sup>298</sup> However although some Jewish youngsters and Communists also enjoyed the vitality of the constant street battles with the fascists, to others the violence was nothing short of terrifying.<sup>299</sup> In any assessment of the B.U.F.'s influence, the reality and fear of fascist antisemitic hooliganism must not be forgotten.

Ultimately the B.U.F. failed to set Gentile against Jew in the East End. Its campaign left ill-feeling in many areas, especially in the edges of Jewish districts; but it also helped to unite the East End. Whether in the Battle of Cable Street or in the Tenants Defence Leagues, Jew and non-Jew co-operated; in the one case to fight the fascist menace, and in the other, to eradicate the problems that provided the B.U.F. with its ammunition.<sup>300</sup>

If the B.U.F. heightened peoples awareness of Jews in domestic matters, it also succeeded in doing the same over issues abroad. As early as November 1933 Blackshirt had declared "that Jews are striving to involve Britain in war".<sup>301</sup> However, as the decade progressed and the B.U.F. became more aligned to the National Socialist movement, more attention was placed on foreign policy. From 1938 Mosley's peace campaign was launched, and with it, his attack on international Jewish finance. To Mosley, these Shylocks were attempting to mobilize the world, to create a war of racial revenge against Germany.<sup>302</sup> Whilst this peace campaign may have revived the B.U.F.'s membership figures (though nowhere near their 'Rothermere' peak of up to 40,000 in 1934),<sup>303</sup> it ultimately persuaded only a tiny



proportion of the British population to oppose the war. Yet again though, it did have the malicious impact of linking Jews to the Second World War in the public's mind. In turn, the government's fear of the British people believing it was a 'Jews' War', hung over the whole 1939-45 period; a legacy to which the B.U.F. had contributed greatly.

However, the B.U.F. was not alone in opposing the threatened 'Jews' War'. One of the features of the extreme Right in Britain has been its tendency to split in amoeba-like fashion, into ever smaller factions. In the 1920's, from the original British Fascisti, came the Imperial Fascist League, and later the slightly less extremist National Fascisti.<sup>304</sup> The B.U.F. attempted to swallow these fringe groups in 1932/3 but although some, like William Joyce, did leave the British Fascists, the tiny fascist organisations survived. Indeed, the I.F.L. became one of Mosley's greatest enemies, its leader Arnold Leese, carrying on a constant campaign against what it saw as "kosher fascism".<sup>305</sup>

It has been suggested "that few minor figures in modern British politics can have been subjected to quite such a degree of scholarly overkill as ... Leese".<sup>306</sup> Whilst it is true that there are now almost as many academic articles on Leese and his organisation as there were I.F.L. members,<sup>307</sup> there are still important reasons for taking this small group seriously. At a theoretical level, Leese is one of the few identifiable individuals who has put forward racial antisemitic arguments in British society. Leese's organisations, journals and finance have

been vital in maintaining a subterranean theme of Nazi-styled antisemitism and has thus helped the preservation of an extreme antisemitic coterie in Britain. <sup>308</sup> His journals and publications stressed the importance of The Protocols and perhaps more originally in terms of anti-semitic circles, accusations of Jewish ritual murder. <sup>309</sup>

On a more physical level, the I.F.L. achieved an importance out of proportion to its numbers due to the extremism of its supporters. Its street meetings in the East End were notorious for the degree of violence, both verbal and actual, helping to reinforce the insecurity of the local Jewish population. <sup>310</sup>

Finally, Leese and his supporters constituted one of the few groups to support Hitler and Nazi antisemitism unashamedly right from its inception. The German Nazi Party and the I.F.L. maintained close links through the 1930's, and although the war altered this relationship, up to September 1939 the I.F.L. remained a staunch supporter of Hitler's Germany. <sup>311</sup> To Leese fascism was simply a method to overcome the power of the Jew, rather than a coherent political ideology, <sup>312</sup> and thus he supported the Nazis whom he felt were genuinely opposed to the Jewish world stranglehold. It is thus not surprising that he opposed any attempt to "fight for the House of Rothschild" in a war against Germany. <sup>313</sup>

However, Leese and the I.F.L. were not alone in what has been called "the most lunatic of lunatic fringes". <sup>314</sup> A similar society 'The Nordics', aimed at preserving Aryan racial supremacy was amalgamated into the I.F.L. in



1934 and by 1936 other equally obscure organisations had come into existence, all of which were based on Nazi ideology.<sup>315</sup> By the latter date a new group had been formed, the Militant Christian Patriots, whose aim was to coordinate the activities of all the antisemitic groups in British society.<sup>316</sup>

This latter group, however, could not stop the trend of the radical right to split, and in 1937 two leading B.U.F. officials broke away to form the National Socialist League. Personality conflicts rather than pure policy disagreements would seem to explain this development,<sup>317</sup> yet the fragmentation continued. In 1939 out of the latter League emerged the British Peoples Party. To add confusion to this mess, a new coordinating group, the Nordic League had been formed by 1938; the same date as Captain Ramsay's secret Right Club came into being.<sup>318</sup>

All these groups, with their limited membership and petty inter-organisational clashes could well be regarded as no more than obscure footnotes in the history of British fascism and antisemitism; yet in their context they also had a more sinister implication. In the last two years before the war, two other organisations, the Anglo-German Fellowship and The Link were formed, both aimed at avoiding war and promoting German friendship, (though the latter was explicitly pro-Nazi and antisemitic). By June 1939 The Link had over 4000 members<sup>319</sup> and was part of a chain of groups who were united, if on nothing else, on the need to avoid war, communism and the Jewish peril. To many of them, Hitler seemed to represent a bulwark against such influences.

Thus they cooperated in such groups as the Nordic League, which had members from practically all the groups outlined in the last paragraph.<sup>320</sup> How these groups were to react to the 'Jews' War', when it finally arrived, will be dealt with in the next chapter. It is sufficient to point out at this stage that several observers have suggested that Hitler's interest was in the fringe groups,<sup>321</sup> rather than directly in the B.U.F., and thus had Britain been invaded, they could well have become much more significant.

The fear that somehow Jews were dragging Britain into war was not limited to extremists. Lord Beaverbrook expressed these exact sentiments in December 1938, adding, "They do not mean to do it. But unconsciously they are drawing us into war. Their political influence is moving us in that direction".<sup>322</sup> This was from a man who "had no sympathy with anti-semitism";<sup>323</sup> an indication perhaps of the level of concern of what was seen by many in Britain, as the dangerously high degree of Jewish influence in the world.<sup>324</sup> It is ironic that when the Jewish community was facing its blackest period, attention was turned not to the feebleness of Jewish resistance, but to the community's alleged power.

One symptom of the general Jewish malaise of the time was the arrival from 1933 onwards, of a fresh influx of refugees into Britain. Whilst the reaction to these central European Jews was not wholly negative, their presence was another factor that was making Britain increasingly 'Jew conscious'. Between 1933 and 1939, some



56,000 German and Austrian refugees entered Britain, of whom 90 percent were Jewish. Of these, the vast majority came in the last two years before war; the immigration in the earlier years having been limited to a few thousand per annum.<sup>325</sup> Despite the limited nature of this movement, the reaction from the British people was strong. As one would expect, at the forefront of the opposition were the various fascist groups.<sup>326</sup> However, as with the concept of Jews pushing Britain to war, the antipathy was more widespread: The Beaverbrook, Rothermere and Kemsley press empires were all firmly against allowing refugees asylum in Britain.

At the root of all the opposition to the refugees was the economic issue; the fear that foreigners would take the Englishmen's jobs. Yet beneath this rationalization there lurked a set of assumptions, whose origins were to be found in the antisemitic atmosphere of the 1930's. The whole debate was to suffer from alarmist fears of a huge Jewish influx, which would, in the words of the Sunday Express "overrun the country".<sup>327</sup> If restriction was not operated, its sister paper warned, it would lead to an "anti-Jewish uproar".<sup>328</sup> This fear of domestic anti-semitism was based on a presumption that it was the refugee Jews themselves that created the hostility. This corresponded with the ideas of many Hitler apologists who operated within the same yellow press circles. Ward-Price, Wyndham Lewis and Rothermere, journalists and commentators at the forefront of the appeasement campaign, argued that Nazi antisemitism was only a reaction to German Jewish

malpractice and power, and that the refugees here would only try to take advantage of the British people. <sup>329</sup>

The fear of an antisemitic backlash if refugee numbers were not carefully watched, was also felt strongly in the sphere of British politics. Sir Samuel Hoare, the Home Secretary, took seriously an M.I.5. report in 1938 which suggested "that the Germans were anxious to inundate this country with Jews, with a view to creating a Jewish problem in the U.K.". <sup>330</sup> Much of the political debate on refugees, whether at parliamentary, Cabinet, Foreign or Home Office level automatically mentioned the danger of possible "anti-Jew agitation in this country". <sup>331</sup> The concern was also shared by Jewish and refugee bodies afraid of the consequences of a mass influx. <sup>332</sup> Notwithstanding this paranoia, Britain's refugee policy has been described as "comparatively compassionate, even generous". <sup>333</sup> The meanness of Britain's response was not particularly in refusing entry - especially in comparison to other countries, but in limiting the activities of the refugees once they had settled. In this, the Government was simply responding to public pressure.

It has been written that "Every refugee was walking propaganda against the Nazis" and that these refugees "received a warm welcome in Britain". <sup>334</sup> Neither of these statements can be accepted without reservations, but as generalities they contain much truth. A public opinion survey in late July 1939 would appear to confirm them: 70% believing that free entry should be allowed for the refugees into Britain. This represented the triumph of



humanitarian sympathy, best illustrated with the public response to the Baldwin appeal for refugee children. Over £500,000 and many offers of homes were given by the British people in the first half of 1939. By the charity of Jewish, but mainly non-Jewish Britons, nearly 10,000 children were brought to this country. <sup>335</sup>

However, it is harder to perceive children as an economic threat than it is adults, and the other side of the July 1939 survey makes less happy reading. Only 15% of those who would allow free entry wanted no restrictions "to safeguard British workers and taxpayers", making just 10% of the sample. <sup>336</sup> With hindsight such attitudes seem mean, given that the refugees eventually created 250,000 jobs in Britain, or roughly 5 per refugee. <sup>337</sup> Yet in its context the fears of certain groups in British society are understandable - unemployment remained high throughout the 1930's, and fear of unemployment was always present. Insecure middle class groups such as doctors, dentists, lawyers and academics saw the refugees as a direct threat, and reacted with varying degrees of hostility.

If a league table were to be drawn up, the academic/scientific world would probably come top in terms of its humanitarian response, and the medical world would be firmly at the bottom. The Academic Assistance Council, formed in 1933 was a sign of the former group's more hospitable approach. <sup>338</sup> However, its careful choice of refugees for specific posts (so as not to create any conflict within the Universities) also shows the limitations of such tolerance. <sup>339</sup> In medicine and dentistry, there was not

even an attempt at such a gesture of goodwill towards the newcomers. The medical profession (with the minor exception of the Socialist Medical Association), made sure that the amount of doctors and surgeons allowed into Britain was small, and that these few would have strong restrictions put on them.<sup>340</sup> Although the motive was basically economic, elements of antisemitism crept into the argument. Dr M. Bayly, a major force in the Medical Practitioners Union (a group with nearly 6000 members in 1938), injected his antisemitic/anti-vivisectionist ideas into the organisation.<sup>341</sup> Medical World, its organ, attacked the methods of Jewish doctors, and went as far as praising Hitler's eugenic laws.<sup>342</sup> In 1936 the Beaverbrook press also went beyond pure economic arguments about Jewish refugee doctors; portraying the refugee psycho-analyst as a "Svengali-like figure", controlling the innocent patient.<sup>343</sup>

In late 1938, as the refugee influx reached its height, the Board of Deputies produced a pamphlet, While You are in England, which attempted to advise the refugees how to behave. Nearly half a century later, it makes painful reading, with its 'Uncle-Tommish' tone telling the refugees to be "more English than the English".<sup>344</sup> Once again though, it is vital to contextualise such a document, and the timid approach of the established Jewish community. It is not surprising that the representative bodies of Anglo-Jewry resented the new arrivals, for the refugees merely emphasised a factor that the Jewish community, in



the antisemitic atmosphere of the 1930's wanted to reverse; the foreignness of Britain's Jewish minority.

The image of the Jew as an alien was not the only one that survived and was reinforced in the 1930's. Although the B.U.F. did not make explicit use of The Protocols, other groups such as the Social Credit movement kept their message well alive.<sup>345</sup> Mosley was not alone in stressing the image of the Jew as an international socialist or international financier, and fear of Jewish power - whether it be over press, cinema, industry was widespread.<sup>346</sup> Also, although some were starting to examine their own prejudices in light of Nazi persecution, social antisemitism at all levels of British society remained rife.<sup>347</sup>

A memorandum from G. Liverman, a member of the Board of Deputies Defence Committee, warned in 1938 that "within three years we may be faced with anti-Jewish legislation in this country".<sup>348</sup> Can such a statement be regarded as nothing more than the hysterical outburst of an over-sensitive Jewish communal worker? At one level Liverman was wrong; British antisemitism could not be compared directly to that in Germany or the rest of Europe.<sup>349</sup> British Liberal democracy remained largely unshaken by the crisis of the 1930's, and on a political level, antisemitism was seen as a threat to the state.

At another level Liverman's emotions can be understood. Malcolm Muggeridge was right to point out that in the 1930's "anti-semitism was in the air, an unmistakable tang".<sup>350</sup> Hitler, Mosley and the refugees had made the Jews a major

topic of conversation and interest in British society, one that became near obsessional as the war approached. An indication is perhaps provided by the sudden growth of mainstream books on the 'Jewish problem' which appeared in 1938 and 39; Jews and the Jews in Britain; The Jews of Britain; The Jewish Problem; The Folly of Anti-Semitism; The Jew and His Neighbour; The Shortest Way With the Jews; Jewish Rights and Wrongs; The Jews. Are They Human? and Britain's Jewish Problem. <sup>351</sup>

Whilst only the first and the last can be termed as definitely antisemitic, the others to a lesser or greater extent blamed the Jews for creating antisemitism. Their solution to the problem ranged from advising the Jews to take a wider occupational structure, <sup>352</sup> to the giving up of their religion <sup>353</sup> - or in the words of the popular social commentator, Douglas Reed, "No Jews is Good Jews". <sup>354</sup> The realization that the Jewish problem was in essence a Gentile problem, was slow in coming in Britain, and it was to take the horror of the Second World War to force the idea home. By 1939 in Britain, although there were positive reactions to the Jewish community, as exemplified by the kindness shown to the refugee children, there were also many strains of hostility to the Anglo-Jewish minority. The following chapters will examine what impact the 1939-45 war had on these earlier tensions, as well as analysing the fresh conflicts that the war would bring to Jewish-Gentile relations in British society.



FOOTNOTES : Chapter 1

1. C. Holmes, Anti-Semitism in British Society, 1876-1939 (London, 1979), 141.
2. A good example of this is to be found at the start of the Second World War, when fascists in the East End were spreading rumours about the Jewish White Slave traffic, although this had disappeared by the end of World War I. See Board of Deputies C6/5/1/1 for the fascist accusations and E.J. Bristow, Prostitution and Prejudice: The Jewish Fight Against White Slavery 1870-1939 (Oxford, 1982) for a detailed account of the trade.
3. J. Higham, 'Anti-Semitism in the Gilded Age: A Reinterpretation', Mississippi Valley Historical Review vol. 43 (March, 1957), 578 examines long-term trends in antisemitism.
4. For the German antisemitic groups see P. Massing, Rehearsal for Destruction (New York, 1949) and P. Pulzer, The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria (New York, 1964) and for the Dreyfus case see M. Marrus, Politics of Assimilation (Oxford, 1971) and S. Wilson, Ideology and Experience: Antisemitism in France at the Time of the Dreyfus Affair (Brunswick, New Jersey, 1982).
5. Harold Laski in a perceptive article suggested that Jews since the French Revolution had become "a symbol of emancipation" and those who opposed them were "anti-enlightenment". See 'A Note on Anti-Semitism' New Statesman vol. 25 (13 February 1943)

6. See C. Holmes, 'Golwin Smith: A 'Liberal' Anti-semite', Patterns of Prejudice vol. 6 (September-October 1972), 30.
7. G.F. Abbott's Israel in Europe was originally produced in 1907 and devotes some time to 'modern' antisemitism in Britain. See the reprint (London, 1912), 406-443. C. Holmes, Anti-Semitism in British Society, 11-12 also starts with Smith and the Eastern Crisis.
8. K. Lunn, 'The Marconi Scandal and Related Aspects of British Anti-Semitism 1911-1914' (PhD Thesis, University of Sheffield, 1978) deals thoroughly with this issue.
9. Truth's hostility to Jews continued until 1954. For a good illustration of its opposition to Jewish emancipation see Collin Brook's 'Anti-semitism and Treachery', Truth no. 3430 (5 June 1942).
10. S. W. Baron, The Russian Jew Under Tsars and Soviets (New York, 1976), 73-4 has details and breaks down this figure as far as immigration to various countries. A.R. Rollin, 'Russo-Jewish immigrants in England before 1881', T.J.H.S.E., XXI (1968), 202-13 comments on the immigration before this influx.
11. B. Gainer, The Alien Invasion: The Origins of the Aliens Act of 1905 (London, 1972), 3 gives an overview. Lloyd P. Gartner 'Notes on the Statistics of Jewish Immigration to England 1870-1914', Jewish Social Studies vol. 22 no. 2 (April, 1960), 97-102 comments on the problems of finding reliable statistics.
12. Banister, op.cit.; iii.



13. Holmes, Anti-Semitism in British Society, 39-42 deals with Banister's career. There is evidence that despite the obscurity of his works, a Banister pamphlet was circulating at the time of the Leeds riots in 1917. This fact itself shows the importance of taking British antisemitism, even at its most extremist level, seriously. See the Jewish Chronicle, 8-22 June 1917.
14. Banister's Our Judaeo-Irish Labour Party (London, 1923) was published by The Britons.
15. See Free Press no. 38 (June, 1939).
16. Antisemitic Book clubs and services thus carry much old and reprinted antisemitica. For an example of this, see the lists of Bloomfield Books (Sudbury, Suffolk), still in operation in 1985.
17. See the meeting of the Advisory Committee, July 22, 1940 in HO/283/16/25.
18. J.A. Garrard, The English and Immigration (London, 1971), 5 particularly.
19. *ibid.* 57. Lloyd Gartner, The Jewish Immigrant in England 1870-1914 (London, 1960), 278 argues likewise.
20. For an evaluation of the importance of antisemitism in the careers of such anti-alienists as Arnold White, W.H. Wilkins, J.L. Silver, W.S. Shaw, W. Evans-Gordon and Sir H. Vincent see C. Holmes, Anti-semitism in British Society, 43-4, 64-6 and 92; B. Gainer, *op.cit.* 118-21; J.J. Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion and Jewish Immigration 1885-1905' (M.Phil. Sheffield University, 1979), 60-4, 102, 247.

21. For White's views see The Modern Jew (London, 1899) and for the S.S.I.D.A. Gainer, op.cit., 60-1.
22. White and W.H. Wilkins in the A.P.I.D.A. and White, Silver and Shaw in the B.B.L. See Gainer op.cit., 30-1 and Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion', 25-6, 56-60.
23. Gartner, The Jewish Immigrant in England, 150.
24. Calculated from C. Russell and H.S. Lewis, The Jew in London (London, 1901), 151-3.
25. This is excellently dealt with by G. Stedman Jones, Outcast London (Oxford, 1971).
26. *ibid.*, 290-1.
27. H. Pollins, Economic History of the Jews in England (London, 1982), 140 also makes this point.
28. Figures from C. Booth (ed.) Life and Labour of the People of London vol. 3 (London, 1892-7), 102.
29. Jones, op.cit. 125.
30. See Garrard, op.cit., 157-182 for the Trade Union response.
31. For example see J. Buckman, Immigrants and the Class Struggle: The Jewish Immigrant in Leeds 1880-1914 (Manchester, 1983), 70; P. Colbenson, 'British Socialism and Anti-Semitism: 1884-1914' (PhD Georgia State University, U.S.A., 1977), 31.
32. See House of Commons Select Committee on Immigration and Emigration (Foreigners), Report and Minutes of Evidence (P.P. IX-X, 1888-9) and House of Lords Select Committee on the Sweating System, Reports and Minutes of Evidence (P.P. XX-XXIV, 1888-9).



33. Jones, op.cit., 318.
34. 1891 was a peak year for Russian immigration to Britain with over 7000 settling. See Garrard, op.cit.3.
35. C. Bermant, Point of Arrival: A Study of London's East End (London, 1975), 5.
36. Robert Roberts, The Classic Slum: Salford Life in the First Quarter of the Century (Manchester, 1971), 136-8.
37. James Robb, Working Class Anti-Semite (London, 1954), 4 stresses Bethnal Green's reputation for antisemitism.
38. Arthur Harding born in the 'Jago' in South West Bethnal Green, an antisemitic area within an anti-semitic district, nevertheless recalls his own relations with Jews as "very friendly". See Raphael Samuel, East End Underworld: Chapters in the Life of Arthur Harding (London, 1981), 51-61.
39. L. Gartner refers to a "mutual avoidance", see The Jewish Immigrant in England, 166.
40. Russell and Lewis, op.cit. xxxiii-xiv.
41. H. Fagan, 'An Autobiography' (unpublished ms, 197?), 7 comments that his mother felt "more enmity towards them (Polish Jews) than she did to the non-Jews".
42. J. White, Rothschilds Buildings: Life in An East End Tenement Block 1887-1920 (London, 1980), 68-79 comments on the different social and economic layers in Jewish East End society and also the variety of backgrounds of the immigrants.
43. Buckman, op.cit. 11 makes this point.
44. Russell and Lewis, op.cit., xxxix.
45. Bethnal Green had the highest proportion of native born residents of all London's boroughs at 84%. See Stedman Jones, op.cit., 132.

46. Bud Flanagan, My Crazy Life (London, 1961), 22
47. Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion', 34.
48. Garrard, op.cit., 157.
49. Minutes of London Trades Council, October 4 1894 quoted by P. Colbenson, op.cit., 31.
50. The Oldham Amalgamated Society of Tailors refused to mix with Jewish branches as late as 1906. See Colbenson, 32-4. Pollins, op.cit., 141-6 analyses what effect such discrimination had on Jewish occupational structure. W. Fishman, East End Jewish Radicals 1875-1914 (London, 1975); 188 comments on tailors and boot workers refusing to work with Jewish workers in an 1890 strike.
51. See Stedman Jones, op.cit., 325 and Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion', 40 for a fuller explanation of why this crisis occurred.
52. See Eastern Post, 26 June 1897 quoted by Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion', 41.
53. Eastern Post, 20 May 1899.
54. See Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion', 43 and Holmes, op.cit., 16. Millicent Rose, The East End of London (Bath, 1973 (originally 1951)), 266 suggests that this replacement created a bitterness that lasted till the 1950's.
55. Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion', 75.
56. Gainer, op.cit., accepts the 45,000 figure.
57. Eastern Post, 3 October 1903 quoted by Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion', 303 note 169.



58. East End News, 7 September 1895 illustrates this well with talk of the possible invasion of Mile End.
59. Thus Major Evans Gordon of the B.B.L. told parliament that the aliens "are objected to not because they are Jews or Gentiles, but purely on social and economic grounds", Hansard H.C. vol. 101 col. 1279, (29 January 1902).
60. E.G. Clarke, The British Union and the Jews (London, 1937), 7 is the 'classic' B.U.F. defence against the antisemitism charge.
61. See note 7 above.
62. For example in Oxford in the 1900's social anti-semitism was the norm, see A.N. Wilson, Hilaire Belloc (London, 1984), 82.
63. This was true of the alien's question in the 1900's and as will emerge, the government fear of domestic antisemitism affected many policies in the 1930's and 40's.
64. Evans Gordon stressed this bogey at the huge People's Palace meeting of the B.B.L. in January 1902. See Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion', 61.
65. This argument will be encountered later, especially in relation to Oswald Mosley, and even Home Secretary Herbert Morrison.
66. Holmes, op.cit., 89 and Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion', 61.
67. Holmes, op.cit., 95.
68. Shaw's explanation for resignation was printed in the East London Advertiser, 5 July 1902. Shaw did

not disclaim antisemitism but claimed that the B.B.L. policy "was that the word 'Jew' should never be mentioned and that, as far as possible, the agitation should be kept clear of racial or religious animosity".

69. For Shaw's and Silver's antisemitism see Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion', 63, 104. For Williams, see Holmes, op.cit., 27, 91.
70. Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion', 65.
71. See White, op.cit., 86 and for the Russian influence Gainer, op.cit., 125-6.
72. HO 45/10063/B2840/A 35-6 "indicate how closely the government could consider his views", Holmes, op.cit., 242 note 116.
73. Stedman Jones, op.cit., 287.
74. G.R. Searle, The Quest for National Efficiency: A Study in British Politics and Political Thought, 1899-1914 (Oxford, 1971), 54.
75. Holmes, op.cit., 42.
76. See T.W. Adorno et al, The Authoritarian Personality (New York, 1950).
77. See accounts of the careers of John H. Harvey and Douglas Reed below for similar 'flexibility' as regards antisemitism, chapters 2: p.179 and 4 p.337-40.
78. See B.S. Rowntree, Poverty, a Study of Town Life (London, 1901), and the Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Deterioration Report and Appendix (pp xxxii, 1904).
79. B.B. Gilbert, The Evolution of National Insurance in Great Britain (London, 1966), 58-83.



80. Bernard Semmel, Imperialism and Social Reform (London, 1960) deals well with the various aspects of this movement.
81. See particularly his Efficiency and Empire (London, 1901).
82. Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion', 56-7 and 67-71 and Holmes, op.cit., 91-2 powerfully argue the case for seeing anti-alien groups as an "inter-locking ladder" rather than as separate organisations.
83. Pollins, op.cit., 140.
84. Royal Commission on Alien Immigration Report (Cd 1742, 1903), for the introduction of the Bill see Hansard H.C. vol. 129 col. 4 (2 February 1904).
85. Garrard, op.cit., 23-47 deals with the passing of the Act.
86. Holmes, op.cit., 101 makes it clear that "the legislation was aimed at aliens rather than specifically at Jews as Jews".
87. Quoted by Garrard, op.cit., 45n
88. Holmes, op.cit., 18 discusses antisemitic evidence in the Royal Commission.
89. Figures from V.D. Lipman, Social History of the Jews in England: 1850-1950 (London, 1954), 143.
90. V.D. Lipman, A Century of Social Service 1859-1959. A History of the Jewish Board of Guardians (London, 1959), 94 estimates that these 17,500 cases represented some 50,000 individuals. See also Russell and Lewis, op.cit., 6.

91. J.C. Bird, 'Control of Enemy Alien Civilians in Great Britain 1914-18' (PhD University of London, 1981) deals thoroughly with the use of this act.
92. See Holmes, op.cit., 219 for a brief discussion of the Act.
93. Hence the Jew is seen as the epitomy of capitalism as well as the inspiration of communism. As jingoist and internationalist; as vermin yet world manipulator.
94. For a general discussion of socialist antisemitism at the time of the Boer War see C. Hirshfield, 'The British Left and the 'Jewish Conspiracy': A Case Study of Modern Antisemitism', Jewish Social Studies XLIII no. 2 (Spring, 1981), 95-110.
95. Holmes, op.cit., 24.
96. See E. Silberner, 'British Socialism and the Jew', Historia Judaica XIV no. 1 (April, 1952), 26-52.
97. Colbenson, 'British Socialism', 68-71 deals with the antisemitism of both of these prominent British socialists.
98. *ibid.*, 82.
99. 'Tattler' argued in the paper that "The Jew capitalist is of no nationality", see Justice, 14 October 1899.
100. W.D. Rubinstein, 'Jews Among the Top British Wealth Holders, 1857-1969: Decline of the Golden Age', Jewish Social Studies vol. 24 (January, 1972), 77-8 particularly.
101. A point made by Bryan Cheyette in an unpublished paper, 'The Jewish Stereotype and Anglo-Jewish Fiction 1880-1900' given to the Jewish Historical Society of England, 17 January 1985.



102. The Independent Labour Party's Labour Leader, 20 December 1897 described the Rothschilds as "King of Kings over the financial destinies of European nations".
103. Richard Davis, The English Rothschilds (London, 1983), 149-50.
104. See Hirshfield, op.cit., 96-7 and Holmes, Anti-Semitism, 81 for accounts of the Jewish financiers in South Africa.
105. Justice, 7 October 1899.
106. *ibid.*, 23 September 1899.
107. See Colbenson, 'British Socialism', 281.
108. See Labour Leader, 24 February 1900. For Hobson's views see C. Holmes 'J.A. Hobson and the Jews' in his own Immigrants and Minorities in British Society (London, 1978), 125-157.
109. Colbenson, 'British Socialism', 6, 81, 345, 418.
110. *ibid.*, 338-45.
111. See S.J. Rawsley, 'Fascism and Fascists in Britain in the 1930's' (PhD University of Bradford, 1981), 52.
112. See Forward, 3 June 1939, 5 August 1939 and 27 January 1945.
113. C. Holmes review of H. Pollins, op.cit., in Economic History Review vol. 37 no. 2 (July, 1984), 279 warns of the danger of imbalance in examining the left-wing response.
114. See Semmel, op.cit., 78.
115. Holmes, Anti-Semitism, 71-2 deals with the National Review and Leo Maxse.

116. National Review, December 1911.
117. *ibid.*, December 1912.
118. Bird, 'Control of Enemy Alien Civilians', 36 makes this point.
119. K. Lunn, 'Political Anti-Semitism Before 1914: Fascism's Heritage?' in K. Lunn and R. Thurlow (ed.) British Fascism: Essays on the Radical Right in Inter-War Britain (London, 1980), 26 deals with other 'right wing' forms of conspiratorial antisemitism in Britain.
120. For Belloc's antisemitism see Robert Speaight, The Life of Hilaire Belloc (London, 1957), 40-1, 97-8; Wilson, *op.cit.*, 43-4, 82-3, 90, 188-195, 257-261.
121. See Speaight, *op.cit.*, 401 and Wilson, *op.cit.*, 43.
122. Lunn, *op.cit.*, 27.
123. For an evaluation of O'Donnell as a pathological antisemite see Lunn, *op.cit.*, 27-31.
124. Belloc wrote to his friend Maurice Baring on 21 February 1913 that he had criticised Cecil Chesterton for allowing O'Donnell to print "mere anti-semitism" and that the latter used the term 'Jew' as a term of abuse, quoted by Speaight, *op.cit.*, 311. It is interesting, however, that in his private conversation, Belloc himself indulged in the same language that he had criticised O'Donnell for publicly printing - see Wilson, *op.cit.*, 258, 373.
125. Hilaire Belloc, Emmanuel Burden (London, 1904) is the first of a series with a Jewish scandal theme.



126. D. Barker, G.K. Chesterton (London, 1973), 213.
127. Eye Witness coined the phrase in its issue of 8 August 1912. See K. Lunn, 'The Marconi Scandal and Related Aspects of British Anti-Semitism', 1911-1914' (PhD Sheffield, 1978).
128. *ibid.*, 1-26 and F. Donaldson, The Marconi Scandal (London, 1962) give the details. Chaim Bermant, The Cousinhood: The Anglo-Jewish Gentry (London, 1971), 334-5 gives a picture sympathetic to the Jewish interests involved.
129. See Lunn, 'The Marconi Scandal', 176-200.
130. Wilson, *op.cit.*, 195.
131. Holmes, *op.cit.*, 81.
132. Lunn, 'The Marconi Scandal', 233-260 deals with the history of this organisation.
133. David Low remembered a meeting in Chelsea and its "vague antisemitism". See his Autobiography (London, 1956), 135.
134. Lunn, 'Political Anti-Semitism', 33.
135. J.P. Corrin, 'Chesterbelloc and the Distributist Circle', (PhD Boston University, 1976), 352.
136. Lunn, 'The Marconi Scandal', 260.
137. Hilaire Belloc, The Jews (London, 1922).
138. See C. Klein, 'English Anti-Semitism in the 1920's', Patterns of Prejudice vol. 6 no. 2 (March-April, 1972), 23-8.
139. Lunn, 'The Marconi Scandal', 185 and 'Political Anti-Semitism', 28.
140. See Belloc, The Jews, 3 for a general exposition of the Witness view.

141. See Vivian Carter in New Witness, 25 September 1913 or Belloc, The Jews, 273-4, 296-7 for examples of how recognition of the 'Jewish nation' would work in practice.
142. M-O A: DR3257, March 1943.
143. See Bermant, op.cit.
144. I have commented on how the Marconi Scandal gave rise to a conspiracy theory, based on the supposed collusion of rich Jews, but similar accusations were made in the immigration debate, where claims were made that Jewish syndicates were buying up large tracts of housing and land. See Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion', 40.
145. For the Indian Silver Affair see H.D. Avignor-Goldsmid, 'The Little Marconi Case', History Today vol. 14 no. 4 (April 1964), 283-6; for the Petrol Crisis involving Marcus Samuel of Shell Oil, see Bermant, op.cit., 287.
146. Belloc, The Jews, 51.
147. Hence in the Marconi Scandal Herbert Samuel was assumed guilty by the Chesterbelloc because he was Jewish.
148. Quoted by Canon Barnett in Russell and Lewis, op.cit., xxv.
149. The falsity of the 'dirty' tag is supported by the lower death rate figures for Jews from a Manchester survey. See Gartner, op.cit., 159.
150. See E.J. Bristow, op.cit., 46 for the distortion and the links between the ritual murder and white slavery accusations.



151. See Bermant, op.cit., passim for their progress in the Edwardian age.
152. See J. Namier, Lewis Namier: A Biography (London, 1971), 101 for All Soul's rejection of Namier on racial grounds and the Jewish Chronicle, 25 July 1913 for similar discrimination.
153. Bermant, op.cit., 284 and 401.
154. Hymie Fagan recalls that he accepted the antisemitism in Bethnal Green because it was a part of life and because he was "cushioned by the large Jewish community", and that it was only when he moved to Romford that antisemitism made an impact on him. See his unpublished 'Autobiography', 29.
155. Holmes, op.cit., 16-17.
156. Anthony Smith, 'War and ethnicity: the role of warfare in the formation, self-images and cohesion of ethnic communities', Ethnic and Racial Studies vol. 4 no. 4 (October, 1981), 375-97 is a stimulating attempt at a general theory, but deals with the effect of war on ethnic groups rather than minorities as such.
157. See G. Simmel, Conflict, and the Web of Group-Affiliations (New York, 1955), 91 for a discussion of this.
158. Holmes, op.cit., 121-3 discusses this difficulty. See also C.C. Aronsfeld, 'Jewish Enemy Aliens in England During the First World War' Jewish Social Studies vol. XVIII no. 4 (October, 1956), 275-83.
159. See Elkan Levy, 'Antisemitism in England at war, 1914-16', Patterns of Prejudice vol. 14 no. 5 (September-October, 1970), 27-30.

160. Stephen Humphries, Hooligans or Rebels? An Oral History of Working-Class Childhood and Youth 1889-1939 (Oxford, 1981), 199-200.
161. National Review, October 1914 quoted by Holmes, op. cit., 125.
162. See particularly Michael Adler, British Jewry: Book of Honour (London, 1922).
163. Julia Bush, 'East London Jews and the First World War', London Journal vol. 6 no. 2 (Winter, 1980), 148.
164. Pollins, op.cit., 165-6.
165. Quoted by E. Levy, op.cit., 29.
166. S. Cohen, English Zionists and British Jews: The Communal Politics of Anglo-Jewry (Princeton, New Jersey, 1982), 252-3.
167. Bush, op.cit., 152.
168. See for example the East London Observer, 3 July 1915 quoted by Bush, 150.
169. See above p. .
170. Holmes, op.cit., 136.
171. N. Cohn, Warrant for Genocide: The myth of the Jewish world-conspiracy and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion (London, 1967), 266.
172. See A. Marwick, War and Social Change in the Twentieth Century (London, 1974), 56 for an assessment of morale in Britain at this stage of the war.
173. See E. Krausz, Leeds Jewry (Cambridge, 1964), 6-8, Lipman, Social History of the Jews in England, 102 for details of the Jewish populations of these towns.
174. Holmes, op.cit., 128-34 is the fullest account of the Leeds riots and he is in no doubt that the disturbances were specifically aimed at the Jewish population



- of the city.
175. HO 45/10810/311932/43 has his letter to the Home Office of 18 June 1917. Quoted by Holmes, op.cit., 131.
  176. Estimated from Krausz, op.cit., 5-7 and Lipman, Social History of the Jews in England, 102. In 1888 the Leeds Jewish population was 5000 by 1911 roughly 20,000.
  177. Quoted in the Yorkshire Evening Post, 5 June 1917.
  178. The Yorkshire Evening Post, 2-7 June 1917 comments on the role of those gangs in the riots. Quoted by Humphries, op.cit., 264. Selig Brodetsky, later to be President of the Board of Deputies recalled the part of "A mob of over a thousand" in the Leeds disturbances. See his Memoirs: From Ghetto to Israel (London, 1960), 88.
  179. Jewish Chronicle, 8 and 15 June 1917 comments on the pamphlet found all over Leeds 'Our Hyphenated Citizens'. Banister had a work entitled 'Our Hyphenated Masters'.
  180. Brodetsky, op.cit., 58 and C.C. Aronsfeld, 'Anti-Jewish Outbreaks in Modern Britain', Gates of Zion July 1952, 18-19 argue that the Leeds convention acted as the immediate cause of the riots, the Jews acting as scapegoats to a feeling against socialist pacifists. I am grateful to David Rowbotham for his initial conclusions on the Leeds disturbances which form part of his research on 'Leeds antisemitism 1917-1940'.
  181. For the role of the police see Yorkshire Evening Post, 5 June 1917 and for the concern of the Home Office HO 45/10810/311932.
  182. Holmes, op.cit., 234, makes this point.

183. Thus in Britain the state has always avoided direct antisemitism fearing its revolutionary potential. On a popular level, the political system in Britain has been flexible enough to incorporate groups whose grievances might otherwise have found an extra-parliamentary outlet, which potentially could have been antisemitic as in Tsarist Russia.
184. E.H. Carr, What is History? (Harmondsworth, 1980), 12.
185. See Humphries, op.cit., 190-2 for oral testimony relating to the Napoo and also Maurice Levine's Cheetham to Cordova: A Manchester Man of the Thirties (Manchester, 1984), 6 for a detailed account.
186. For an account of the Napoo gang and their attacks on Jewish girls see the third 'Bill Williams Lecture' reported in Shofar vol. 13 no. 6 (January, 1985), 5.
187. See Humphries, op.cit., 197.
188. Bush, op.cit., 159.
189. Humphries, op.cit., 198-9.
190. M - O A: TC Anti-Semitism Box 1 File A quote from a woman in Barnes Street.
191. By Leonard Stein in his classic The Balfour Declaration (London, 1961), 216-7, 226-7, 275-6, 338-49, 544-52.
192. Holmes, op.cit., 68, and Lunn, 'The Marconi Scandal', 382 stress the linkages between pre-war and post-war conspiracy ideas on Britain.
193. See Fishman, op.cit., 272, Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion', 15. Arnold White, The Modern Jew (London, 1899), 184 refers to alien Jews as anarchists.
194. See for example C. Abramsky, War Revolution and the Jewish Dilemma (London, 1975) or Zosa Szajkowski,



- Jews, Wars and Communism (vol. 2), (New York, 1974) for the role of Jews in the 1917 Revolution.
195. Holmes, op.cit., 140-1, 147-150 deals with the Morning Post's attitude.
196. See Cohn, op.cit., 152 and Holmes, op.cit., 149 for details concerning The Jewish Peril. As in Europe and America, Russian emigres were responsible for the exporting of The Protocols to Britain.
197. Morning Post, 11 February 1920.
198. See Holmes, op.cit., 159 and Cohn, 154 for a discussion of this publication. Cohn fails to differentiate The Cause of World Unrest from The Protocols.
199. For the National Review see the issue of November 1919. Maurice Cowling, The Impact of Labour 1920-24: The Beginnings of Modern British Politics (Cambridge, 1971), 81-2 deals with Maxse's post-war ideas.
200. This was in correspondence with the leader of The Britons, H.H. Beamish in 1923. This letter and its reply were printed by The Britons as 'Britons Jew or German? Who is Responsible for the World Anarchy Prevailing To-Day'. Available in the Wiener Library: 251/048 b.
201. W.D. Rubinstein, 'Henry Page Croft and the National Party 1917-22' Journal of Contemporary History IX (January, 1974), 144-5 deals with this group's attitude to Jews as does Cowling, op.cit., 75-87.
202. Cowling, op.cit., 86.
203. The Times, 16, 17, 18 August 1921. Holmes, op.cit., 151-5 deals thoroughly with the background to the exposure.

204. Holmes, op.cit., 148 and G. Lebzelter, Political Anti-Semitism in England 1918-39 (London, 1978), 49 state its formation date as 1919. However as Lebzelter, 186 points out the original meeting as noted down in The Briton's minutes were changed to read 1918, and a Home Office file on The Britons gave some support to this earlier date. See HO 144/21377/3 minutes of Sir C.E. Troup, 15 June 1918 referring to J.H. Clarke's The Conquering Jew.
205. For an overview of The Briton's history see C.C. Aronsfeld, 'The Britons Publishing Society'. The Wiener Library Bulletin vol. xx no. 3 (Summer, 1966), 31-35; Holmes, op.cit., 148-50, 157-9; Lebzelter, op.cit., 49-67; or The Britons by The Britons, (London, 1952).
206. Figures from a Special Branch report, 22 November (1920) in HO 144/21377/27-8. The Britons journals include Jewry über Alles (later published as The Hidden Hand) and the British Guardian which ran between 1920 and 1925.
207. Figures from G. Lebzelter, 'The Protocols in England', Wiener Library Bulletin vol. 31 no. 47-8 (1978), 114.
208. For America see Robert Singerman, 'The American Career of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion', American Jewish History 71 (September, 1981), 49.
209. Holmes, op.cit., 207 has details of its formation.
210. C.C. Aronsfeld, 'Organized Antisemitism in Great Britain, 1942-6' (Unpublished MS. London, 1946), 20 commented how it was "remarkably well printed".



211. E. Allen, It Shall Not Happen Here: Anti-Semitism, Fascists and Civil Liberty (London, 1943), 25 comments on The Patriot being supplied free of charge to certain officers' clubs.
212. There are no exact figures available concerning its circulation, but the response to its appeal for funds would suggest that it numbered in the 100's, rather than the 1000's. See The Patriot, 7 September, 1944.
213. Richard Gillman, Behind World Revolution: The Strange Career of Nesta H. Webster (Ann Arbor, 1982), 46 comments on the wider function of The Patriot's offices in the 1920's. For the war years see chapter 2, p.166, 183.
214. Gillman, op.cit., 44 refers to Miss Orman's (the original leader of the British Fascisti) advert in The Patriot appealing for members in 1923.
215. For the history of the British Fascisti see Colin Cross, The Fascists in Britain (London, 1961), 57-60 and Robert Benewick, The Fascist Movement in Britain (London, 1972), 28-31, and file HO 144/19069.
216. See Chapter 2, p.172.
217. J. Finlay, The English Origins of Social Credit (London, 1972) is the best secondary source though he fails to deal adequately with the movement's antisemitism. An earlier attempt, E.E. McCarthy, 'A History of the Social Credit Movement' (MA, Leeds University, March 1947) benefits from being closer to the movement in terms of time and personalities.

218. C.H. Douglas, Social Credit (Edinburgh, 1924) is the movement's bible. See page 166 for the use of The Protocols.
219. See Holmes, op.cit., 211-12 for Distributist ideas. Catholic antisemitism will be dealt with fully in Chapter 5. At this stage all that needs to be pointed out is the use of The Protocols by several Catholic papers in the 1920's and 30's, most notably the Catholic Herald.
220. As does Noreen Branson, Britain in the Nineteen Twenties (London, 1970), 249.
221. For the 1919 Act see T.W.E. Roche, The Key in the Lock (London, 1969), 91. Roche also comments on a group of 1000 Russian Jews who entered Britain in 1924, although not all of them were allowed to stay. See page 105. One infamous arrival in the 1920's from Rumania was Gerson Berger. See the Jewish Chronicle, 27 January 1984. H.L. Smith, The New Survey of London Life and Labour vol. 6 (London, 1934), 270 has other details.
222. Gartner, op.cit., 235 makes this point. As a generalization it would appear to be correct, though it must be said that many of the older generation had their feet more firmly in the 'Yiddish' world than in the 'British'.
223. J.F. Bush, 'Labour, politics and society in East London during the First World War' (PhD Queen Mary's College, London, 1978) stresses this point. Now published as Behind the Lines: East London Labour 1914-19 (London, 1984).



224. Kenneth Harris, Attlee (London, 1982), 46 comments on the active involvement of Jews in the Stepney Borough Council in the post-1918 period.
225. See for example Ralph L. Finn's No Tears in Aldgate (London, 1963), 76 and his comments on Whitechapel in the 1920's: "We mixed as though there were no barriers" or Alexander Hartog, Born to Sing (London, 1978), 18 for identical comments.
226. See Hartog, op.cit., 19; Louis Heron, Growing up Poor in London (London, 1973), 195.
227. H.F. Srebrnik, 'The Jewish Communist Movement in Stepney: Ideological Mobilization and Political Victories in an East London Borough, 1935-45' (PhD, University of Birmingham, 1983) deals thoroughly with these issues. See particularly p. 10, 47-51. Also see Harris, op.cit., 46.
228. Hartog, op.cit., 39 states "Christian firms did not employ Jews". This goes too far but for more precise complaints about discrimination, in Manchester's Cheetham Hill see Levine, op.cit., 13.
229. Joe Jacobs, Out of the Ghetto: My Youth in East End: Communism and Fascism 1913-1939 (London, 1978), 25.
230. *ibid.*, 58-9.
231. Charlotte Klein, 'English Antisemitism in the 1920's', Patterns of Prejudice vol. 6 no. 2 (March/April, 1972), 28.
232. Hilaire Belloc, The Jews (London, 1922), 4. Belloc outlines the alternatives on pps. 3-14.

233. For Belloc's rejection of a Jewish plot: "The thing is nonsense", see The Jews, 168. However, pp. 169-183 make it clear that he accepted the idea that the Russian Revolution was 'Jewish'. A.N. Wilson, *op. cit.*, 234-5 comments on Belloc investing all his savings in Russian bonds before the Revolution, because his money would be safe as "It will be a Jewish revolution". (letter to Maurice Baring). Belloc subsequently lost all his savings, showing perhaps the 'sincerity' of his beliefs about Jewish power.
234. The Jews, viii/ix.
235. The Spectator, 29 April 1922.
236. Belloc to Mrs Reginald Balfour, 7 January 1922 in Robert Speaight ed., Letters from Hilaire Belloc (London, 1958), 116.
237. Geoffrey Field, 'Anti-Semitism with the Boots Off: Recent Research on England', Wiener Library Bulletin, Special Issue (1982), 32 provides some examples of middle-class disdain for Jews.
238. J.A. Morris, 'T.S. Eliot and Anti-Semitism', Journal of European Studies II (1972), 172-82 and for D.H. Lawrence see J. Harrison, The Reactionaries (London, 1966), 183.
239. M.N. Dobkowski, The Tarnished Dream: The Basis of American Anti-Semitism (Westport, Connecticut, 1979), 56, 125-33 deals with patrician antisemitism aimed at nouveau-riche New York Jews in the 1920's.
240. Gertrude Himmelfarb, 'John Buchan: An Untimely Appreciation', Encounter vol.xv no.3 (September, 1960), 50.



241. The importance of which has been stressed in the introduction, p.6-7.
242. Bryan Cheyette in his PhD thesis 'An Overwhelming Question: Jewish Stereotyping in English Fiction and Society 1875-1914' submitted at Sheffield University, 1986 stresses this point.
243. N. Nicolson and J. Trautman, eds., The Letters of Virginia Woolf (vol. 4) 1929-1931 (New York, 1978), 195-6.
244. Board of Deputies, Annual Reports 1925-30 quoted by Lebzelter, op.cit., 138-9.
245. The Jewish Chronicle, 14 May 1926 reported on "unsavoury persons spreading leaflets" saying that Jews were the cause of the General Strike, the literature being that of The Britons. James McGee, 'Social and Political Life of the Jews in the East End of London 1926-39' (Thesis for Teachers Certificate of Education, 1977) (available at Tower Hamlets Local History Library TH 430 430), 33 suggests that the Jewish people kept a very low profile during the strike. However whilst this might have been true of the communal organisations, it would be interesting to know how far the rank and file of Jewish workers were involved in the strike. Also given the prominence of many Jews in Communist and other left-wing groups, did this not create any tension which could have led onto antisemitic feeling? M. Levine, op.cit., 14 comments on his activities in the General Strike. More work needs to be done on this area.

246. For an account of its formation see W.W. Simpson's 'Autobiography' (Unpublished, 1981), 1-3.
247. The phrase in this context is Simpson's. See his Light and Rejoicing (Belfast, 1976).
248. See the comment by Henriques, 19 June 1923 in HO 45/24765/432156/5.
249. A Home Office official wrote to Hicks complaining about one case: "He is a typical Jew of the most persistent type", 5 January 1926 in HO 45/24765/432156/38.
250. For accounts of the League's history see Lebzelter, Political Anti-Semitism; 68-85, Holmes, op.cit., 161-70; and a recently released M15 report in HO 45/24967/63740.
251. Figures from S. Pollard, The Development of the British Economy: 1914-1980 (London, 1983), 155. For a critical approach to inter-war unemployment figures see A. Booth and S. Glynn, 'Unemployment in the inter-war period' Journal of Contemporary History 10 (1975), 611-36.
252. H. Ashton, The Jew at Bay (London, 1933), 9 used this phrase.
253. James Parkes, An Enemy of the People: Antisemitism (London, 1945), 82 comments how in the '1930's "the whole world became Jew conscious".
254. In the 22 July 1940 meeting. See HO/283/16/25.
255. Robert Skidelsky, Oswald Mosley (London, 1975), 11-245 deals thoroughly with his career up to the formation of the New Party.



256. See this chapter p.37 .
257. S.J. Rawnsley, 'Fascism and Fascists', 74 gives several examples of New Party antisemitism.
258. In the end such references in The Greater Britain (London, 1932) were removed due to the advice of Harold Nicolson. See the Nicolson papers H.N. to O.M., 29 June 1932 quoted by Lebzelter, Political Anti-Semitism, 91.
259. Holmes, op.cit., 187 also makes this point. C. Cross, The Fascists in Britain (London, 1961), 102 downplays early B.U.F. antisemitism.
260. W.F. Mandle, Anti-Semitism and the British Union of Fascists (London, 1968), 13.. R. Benewick, The Fascist Movement in Britain (London, 1972), 152 sees the Albert Hall meeting as a launching of an antisemitic campaign.
261. Firstly by Mosley's sister-in-law Baroness Ravensdale in her In Many Rhythms (London, 1953), 144 and then by Israel Sieff, Memoirs (London, 1970), 170-1. At a dinner where Mosley was attempting to gain the support of the Political and Economic Planning Group (P.E.P.), Sieff claims Mosley stated the new organisation would need, "something to hate". Sieff's son, present at this dinner verifies the story. See The Times 15 December 1983.
262. John Strachey quoted by Benewick, op.cit., 151.
263. Quoted by Nicholas Mosley, Beyond the Pale: Sir Oswald Mosley 1933-1980 (London, 1983), 109.

264. For example his speeches in Manchester October 1933, where he claimed Jews were debasing British life, see Manchester Guardian 16 October 1933 and in the same town in September 1934 where he attacked "the yelping of a Yiddish mob" and "alien Yiddish finance". See The Times, 1 October 1934.
265. Benewick, op.cit., 151.
266. Although Rothermere attacked the B.U.F. in the Daily Mail 19 July 1934, writing publicly to Mosley "that I never could support any movement with an anti-semitic bias", he never disowned the group. As Stephen Koss has written, "Taking care to mute his Mosleyite sentiments, Rothermere by no means recanted them" and employed Collin Brooks who reported favourably on Blackshirt meetings as late as 1936. See Stephen Koss, The Rise and Fall of the Political Press in Britain (vol. 2): The Twentieth Century (London, 1984), 556-7.
267. Skidelsky, op.cit., 358-60 comments on the need for struggle: "the simple truth that both sides needed each other to create a situation from which each might hope to benefit." However, it needs to be remembered that the 'Left' did have the option of the Popular Front. See James Jupp, The Radical Left in Britain 1931-1941 (London, 1982), 76-84.
268. Chesterton had undertaken this research supposedly to find out the depth of Jewish opposition to the B.U.F. See J. Leftwich and A.K. Chesterton, The Tragedy of Anti-Semitism (London, 1948), 65. Nicholas Mosley, op.cit., 83 comments on Mosley's acceptance of this report.



269. See for example HO 283/14/91 or HO 283/16/59 and chapter 2 p.134-5 for a fuller treatment of Mosley's increasing paranoia.
270. R. Skidelsky, 'Reflections on Mosley and British Fascism', in K. Lunn and R. Thurlow (eds.) British Fascism: Essays on the Radical Right in Inter-War Britain (London, 1980), 86.
271. See Holmes, op.cit., 180-3 for an analysis of Chesterton and Joyce and also his article on Beckett in J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville (eds.), Dictionary of Labour Biography vol. VI (London, 1982), 24-9.
272. Skidelsky, op.cit., 393 comments on the "Gentile East Londoners sought(ing) out the B.U.F." and Holmes, op.cit., 187 largely agrees suggesting "a symbiotic relationship" between Mosley and the East End.
273. O. Mosley, My Life (London, 1968), 337. Perhaps the most worrying feature of recent fascist historiography is the way that this contention is being repeated, with some success.
274. *ibid.*, 337.
275. However as Nicholas Mosley has perceptively shown, Mosley did not necessarily believe "the reality of what (he) said", Beyond the Pale, 73. Nicholas Mosley hints that there was a large immature element to Mosley's character and that he really did not want the responsibility of real power.
276. Shown well in Cable Street with the Left's Spanish influenced banners "They Shall Not Pass".

277. Most of the Mosley material is to be found in series in HO 144 and HO 45. The first attempt to make use of this vast amount of material is G.C. Webber's 'Patterns of Membership and Support for the British Union of Fascists', Journal of Contemporary History vol. 19 (1984), 575-606. Webber comments that Special Branch reports on the B.U.F. could be unreliable due to their officers' "professional paranoia". See *ibid.*, 596.
278. A fact not to be minimised given the trend across Europe at this time.
279. The events in the East End were mirrored in Manchester, and to a lesser extent Leeds. For an excellent account of the former, see S.J. Rawnsley, 'Fascism and Fascists'. For Leeds and Yorkshire, The Trevelyan Scholarship Project, 'The British Union of Fascists in Yorkshire 1934-40' (Unpublished, Leeds, 1960). Elsewhere the B.U.F. was pitifully weak - for Birmingham see John D. Brewer, Mosley's Men: The B.U.F. in the West Midlands (Aldershot, 1984). Aberdeen was probably not untypical of a smaller branch, it consisting of 6 regular members and its survival depending on one enthusiastic leader. See L. Kibblewhite and A. Rigby, Fascism in Aberdeen: Street Politics in the 1930's (Aberdeen, 1978). Perhaps only one area could possibly justify more research - East Anglia where some success was met.
280. Perhaps best illustrated by the 1937 L.C.C. elections where the B.U.F. averaged 20% including 23% in Bethnal Green. See C. Cross, *op.cit.*, 167-70 or W. Mandle, *op.cit.*, 56.



281. For the B.U.F.'s Duckett Street headquarters see Joe Jacobs, *op.cit.*, 151.
282. These figures are estimated from statistics in H. Llewellyn Smith, *op.cit.*, vol. 6, 269 and 293.
283. Given that Jewish population of Stepney was just over 40% and probably declining slightly faster than the general population, the population of Stepney had 200,500 in 1938, which suggests a Jewish population of around 80,000. The year before the war probably brought this figure below 80,000. See H.M. Brotz, 'The Outlines of Jewish Society in London', in M. Freedman (ed.), A Minority in Britain (London, 1955), 141.
284. Made by Skidelsky, *op.cit.*, 393. This is perhaps the weakest part of this revisionists account of the fascist leader. Skidelsky shows a painful ignorance of Anglo-Jewish history which limits the validity of his arguments on East End fascism.
285. See H. Llewellyn Smith, *op.cit.*, 291-2. Only Di Tsayt which had an English section, and the Jewish Weekly survived till 1939.
286. H.F. Srebrnik's 'The Jewish Communist Movement', is an excellent account of East End Jewish life, stressing the ethnic separation of the area. However, even Srebrnik has to admit that many were decrying the death of Yiddish in the 1930's - see pp.43-4.  
A.B. Levy, 'The Jewish Theatre', East London Papers vol. 6 no. 1 (July, 1963), 23-31 comments on how after the immigration years the success of Yiddish

theatre was "spasmodic". By 1935 one of the liveliest theatres, The Pavilion was unused, although The People's Theatre did enjoy some success before 1939.

287. Letter from Maurice Benjamin of the Jewish Board of Guardians to Brotman, 17 January 1939. In Board of Deputies, E 2/64.
288. Mass-Observation carried out a survey on the East End in 1939 producing results that only this organisation could be proud of. Thus Jews were half as likely to wear flashy ties as their "Cockney" neighbours, twice as likely to wear patent leather shoes and were rarely to be seen in public bars compared to non-Jews. According to the report, Jews wore Trilbys at an angle "one of the ways in which Jews make themselves most conspicuous in the East End". See M-O A: TC Antisemitism, Box 1, File F.
289. See Srebrnik, 'The Jewish Communist Movement', 10-11, 47-51 for an account of this conflict. Srebrnik downplays collaboration between right-wing Catholics and Jews on the Council. Phil Piratin, Communist Councillor in Stepney at the time suggested that the Council was in fact dominated by a clique of such Jews and Catholics, although he admits some conflict did exist even between these elements. Information supplied in an interview with author, 18 July 1984.
290. See note 288 for details.
291. M-O.A.: FR A12.



292. H. Llewellyn Smith, op.cit., 293.
293. Millicent Rose, op.cit., 266, commented that the bitterness in Bethnal Green which had been created by the Jewish displacement of Gentile families, was still to be found in the 1950's. Rose suggested that the descendants of the original displaced non-Jews were responsible for the organised antisemitism of Dalston and Bethnal Green after 1945. It would be interesting to know whether any British Brother's League members, or more likely, their descendants were active in the B.U.F.
294. The L.C.C. fascist campaign concentrated on these issues. See MEPO 2/3043.
295. Mainly 'Mick' Clarke and 'Jock' Houston. For Clarke, see Holmes, op.cit., 183 or his own The British Union and The Jews (London, 1937). For the neglected Houston see the Special Branch report of October 1935, where he is credited with the increase in membership and sympathy in the East End, in HO 144/20145/14-7. However Houston was too uncontrollable, even for the East End and he was soon to be sent to the provinces. See HO/144/21062/283 (Special Branch report of 2 November 1936). Houston's later, non-B.U.F. career will be analysed in the next chapter.
296. Holmes, op.cit., 194 makes this point. Jewish sweating and rack-renting had not disappeared by the 1930's, but its concentration had dissipated. For its continuation see the Daily Herald, 14 and 23 December 1938, especially in the furniture trade which had replaced clothing as the greatest abuse.

297. H. Llewellyn Smith, op.cit., vol. 5 Life and Leisure (London, 1935), 175 comment on the "sad change" in passing from Stepney into Bethnal Green or Shoreditch. R. Glass and M. Frenkel, "The Way They Live at Bethnal Green", in A.G. Weidenfeld and H. Hastings (ed.), Britain Between West and East (London, 1946), 39 suggest that the progress in the area had been slight since the 19th Century.
298. Skidelsky, op.cit., 404 comments that the East End campaign "must have brightened the pattern of a dreary existence".
299. One Jewish teenage girl whose father owned a shop in Green Street, a fascist stronghold remembers that, "although the B.U.F. caused worry, it was also very exciting". Interview with the author and Mrs J. Wolkind, 2 August 1984. Perhaps more typical was a Deputy Area Commissioners report in 1937: "some of them are more or less terror-stricken, for to the Jewish resident of the East End, the Fascist is a source of grave apprehension". In MEPO 2/3110.
300. Phil Piratin, Our Flag Stays Red (London, 1948), 26-48 deals with both issues. For another Communist account, but hostile to Piratin, see Joe Jacobs, op.cit., 139-40.
301. Blackshirt, 4 November 1933 quoted by Benewick, op.cit., 154.
302. See for example Mosley's Tomorrow We Live (London, 1938), 67. Mosley as will be shown, continued this argument throughout the war, although he later denied it.



In My Life, op.cit., 341-7 he argues that the Jews wanted war because they were generally hostile to Germany, due to its persecution of their co-religioners, not because of the machinations of international Jewish finance.

303. The controversy over B.U.F. membership levels has still not disappeared despite the recent release of the Home Office Mosley papers. G. Webber, op.cit., 595 is probably the most detailed estimate so far, suggesting a figure for September 1939 of 22,500. This is well below Skidelsky's figure of 40,000. See his Oswald Mosley, 332 which relies on the Trevelyan Report which seriously overestimates the Yorkshire membership. Even Webber's figure is dubious. On page 587 he suggests for 1939 5,000 for Lancashire and Yorkshire which is far too high. Even his London figure of 11,000 is subject to doubt due to the tendency (that Webber admits himself) for the Special Branch to exaggerate numbers. It could be that the ex B.U.F. official John Beckett's guesstimate of 10,000 at the outbreak of war is the closest estimate. See his letter in Time and Tide vol. 20 no. 44 (16 December 1939). This is backed up by the Home Secretary's statement of 9000 having paid the last B.U.F. annual subscription. See Hansard HC vol. 363, col. 466-7 (25 July 1940).

304. This latter organisation was more explicitly anti-semitic. Meanwhile the British Fascists continued into the 1930's, having according to Benewick, 300

- members in 1934. See Benewick, *op.cit.*, 30-7. The Mosley papers have shown the dangers of giving any substance to the claims of the extreme fringe, to any substantial membership claims and this figure of 300 is probably well over three times the real figure.
305. R. Thurlow, 'Authoritarians and Populists on the English Far Right', Patterns of Prejudice vol. x no. 2 (1976), 17 deals with Leese's opposition to Mosley. For Leese's version of a pitched battle between the I.F.L. and B.U.F. in central London in November 1933 see the Ivan Greenberg papers 110/5 (Mocatta Library), Leese to Central Press Agency, 28 November 1933.
306. By M.D. Biddiss in a review article: "Migrants, minorities and Mosleyites", Ethnic and Racial Studies vol. 4 no. 1 (January, 1981), 112.
307. A Home Office report in February 1934 put the figure at 150. See the Ramsay MacDonald papers 30-69/1/400 quoted by Lebzelter, *op.cit.*, 83.
308. Michael Billig, Fascists: A Social Psychological View of the National Front (London, 1978), 2 suggests that, "Leese, who confined himself during his life to the most lunatic of lunatic fringes, has had an enduring influence on the course of British fascism". That is, on the National Front. Billig perhaps overstresses this influence but he is correct to point it out.
309. For the 1930's, the main I.F.L. organ was The Fascist. For Leese's involvement in the blood libel accusation see C. Holmes, 'The Ritual murder accusation in Britain' Ethnic and Racial Studies vol. 4 no. 3 (July, 1981),



- 272-3 and C. Holmes and T. Kushner, 'The Charge is Ritual Murder' Jewish Chronicle, 29 March 1985.
310. G. Lebzelter, op.cit., 85 makes this point. A Board of Deputies Defence Committee file, 'The Imperial Fascist League' has notes on a meeting of the I.F.L. in 1937?, and the operations of a 'tough squad' whose aim was to terrorise Jewish East Enders on 'dark and foggy nights'.
311. A recently released MI5 report on the I.F.L. dated 8 March 1942 commented that "from 1932 onwards, the I.F.L., under the leadership of LEESE, sought to maintain the closest relationship with Germany". See HO/45/24967/63740.
312. J.E. Morell, 'Arnold Leese - Fascist and Antisemite', Wiener Library Bulletin vol. 23 no. 4 (1969), 34 makes this point.
313. The quote is from The Fascist no. 63 (August, 1934). Leese and the I.F.L. concentrated more and more of their energies against 'the Jews' War' as the decade continued.
314. Billig, op.cit., 2.
315. For the Nordics, The White Knights of Britain and the National Socialist Workers Party see an intelligence report by Neville Laski of 23 May 1939 in HO 144/22454/24-7.
316. See their organ Free Press. C. Holmes, Anti-Semitism, 170-4 is the fullest account of the M.C.P.
317. Nicholas Mosley, op.cit., 117 suggests that both Joyce and Beckett left the B.U.F. for financial reasons.

318. HO 144/22454 has details on all these groups.
319. Richard Griffiths, Fellow Travellers of the Right: Nazi Germany 1933-9 (London, 1980), 277 and 307-9 has details on The Link.
320. A list of such groups involved in the Nordic League reads like a dictionary of the 'alphabet soup' of British fascism - the B.U.F., The Britons, The I.F.L., The M.C.P., the N.S.L., the N.S.W.P., The White Knights of Britain. See HO 144/22454/67135.
321. By C. Cross, op.cit., 183 and Z. Zeman, Nazi Propaganda (London, 1973), 143.
322. Beaverbrook to Frank Gannett, 9 December, 1938 quoted by A.J.P. Taylor, Beaverbrook (London, 1972), 387.
323. *ibid*; The assessment is Taylor's. Whether it is true is debatable. Beaverbrook disliked antisemitism, but that does not necessarily excuse him from the title.
324. Similar comments as Beaverbrook's can be found by Lord Astor in a letter to Thomas Jones March 1938. See Thomas Jones, A Diary with Letters: 1931-50 (London, 1954), 389-90 or by Sir Henry Channon - diary entries of 9 September and 15 September 1938 in R.R. James (ed.) Chips: The Diary of Sir Henry Channon (London, 1967), 164 and 166.
325. A.J. Sherman, Britain and the Refugees from the Third Reich: 1933-39 (London, 1973), 48 has figures.
326. Holmes, op.cit., 184 comments on the ethnocentrism of the B.U.F. - its 'Britain for the British' line and its corresponding anti-alien refugee stance.



327. Sunday Express, 19 June 1938.
328. Daily Express, 24 March 1938.
329. For Rothermere, see Benewick, *op.cit.*, 100. For Lewis, Ward-Price and similar examples see Griffiths, *op.cit.*, 164-78. Lewis, Ward-Price, Rothermere, Yeats-Brown, Arnold Wilson, Collin Brooks and others who apologised for Nazi antisemitism tended to be on the edge of British fascism.
330. At a Cabinet meeting of 16 March 1938. See CAB 23/93 quoted by Sherman, *op.cit.*, 88.
331. The quote is from another Cabinet meeting of 16 November 1938, CAB 23/96. For similar sentiments in parliament see Hoare's comments in Hansard HC vol. 341 col. 1428-83 (21 November, 1938).
332. See Sherman's comments pp. 88, 175-6 on Jewish fears. J.A. Cross, Sir Samuel Hoare: A Political Biography (London, 1977), 284 states that Hoare was "urged by British Jewry as strongly as any other group that mass immigration would lead to an unacceptable growth in domestic anti-semitism".
333. Sherman, *op.cit.*, 267.
334. These quotes are from A.J.P. Taylor's classic work, English History 1914-45 (Harmondsworth, 1975), 514.
335. For the refugee children see Mary Ford, 'The Arrival of Jewish Refugee Children in England, 1938-9', Immigrants and Minorities vol. 2 no. 2 (July, 1983), 135-151; E.J. Baumel, 'The Jewish Refugee Children in Great Britain 1938-1945' (MA, Bar Ilan University, Israel, 1981); or the moving We Came as Children: A Collective Autobiography of Refugees (London, 1966),

edited by Karen Gershon.

336. See H. Cantril (ed.), Public Opinion 1935-1946 (Princeton, New Jersey, 1951), 1150. B.I.P.O. survey of 31 July, 1939.
337. Figures from H. Loebel quoted by Marion Berghahn, German-Jewish Refugees in England: The Ambiguities of Assimilation (London, 1984), 108.
338. For the origins of this group see the memoirs of its founders, Lord Beveridge, Power and Influence (London, 1953), 236-7. The Imperial War Museum - Refugee Tapes give an indication of both the refugees gratitude to the A.A.C. and to the British universities in which they worked. See for example H.K.F. Blaschko, no. 4497 a refugee biochemist; W. Feldberg, no. 4584; H. Kuhn, no. 4531 a physicist; M.F. Perutz, no. 4645 a chemist.
339. Paul Hoch, 'The Reception of Central European Refugee Physicists of the 1930's: USSR, UK, USA', Annals of Science, 40 (1983), 225 points out these limitations though he paints a slightly too pessimistic picture as the I.W.M. tapes prove.
340. The autobiography of the Home Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, Nine Troubled Years (London, 1954), 240 refers to the "obstinate resistance of the medical profession". See also Sherman, op.cit., 48.
341. For Bayly and the M.P.U. see F. Honigsbaum, The Division in British Medicine: A history of the separation of general practice from hospital care 1911-68 (London, 1978), 169.



342. Medical World, 28 February 1936 quoted by Honigsbaum, op.cit., 275.
343. The Sunday Express, 19 June 1938 commented on Jewish psycho-analysts: "he often obtains an ascendancy over the patient of which he makes base use if he is a bad man." The Svengali comparison is A. Sharf's. See his The British Press and Jews Under Nazi Rule (London, 1964), 169.
344. Board of Deputies, While You Are in England (London, 1938) reprinted in 1940. For a critique see Lebzelter, Political anti-semitism, 149.
345. For an analysis of the B.U.F.'s use of The Protocols see Holmes, op.cit., 156. I have commented on the use of The Protocols by such groups as the I.F.L. and the M.C.P. It is important to note at this stage that The Patriot continued its exposure of the document in the 1930's and that other far right, non-fascist groups such as the National Citizens Union briefly flirted with The Protocols as did the British Empire Union. The forgery even reached the Isle of Orkney. See Eric Linklater, 'Notes on the Way', Time and Tide vol. 20 no. 25 (24 June, 1939).
346. Strong enough to merit a Board of Deputies reply to these allegations. See S. Salomon, Jews of Britain (London, 1938), 53-4 for the press, 56-8 for chain stores, 71-2 for cinema.
347. A Mass-Observation report on Jews in 1939 commented on 'the remarkable - truly remarkable - tone of those reports' as far as the prejudice it revealed.

- Physical repulsion was so common within the report that M-0 described it as "very ordinary". See M-0 A: FR: A12. Upper middle-class antipathy in the Bloomsbury set was still alive and kicking in the 1930's. See comments of Vita Sackville-West on Leonard Woolf in 1938 in V. Glendenning's Vita: The Life of V. Sackville-West (London, 1983), 294.
348. Board of Deputies Coordinating Committee Minutes (October, 1938) quoted by Lebzelter, Political Anti-semitism, 35.
349. Robert Kee, The World We Left Behind: A Portrait of the Year 1939 (London, 1983), 248-80 suggests that British people could not understand German anti-semitism because it was so far removed from British antisemitism. He is right to differentiate the two but fails to realise that many people did link the two - therefore there was such fear of domestic antisemitism.
350. Malcolm Muggeridge, The Thirties: 1930-40 in Great Britain (London, 1940), 242-3.
351. The authors and dates in order are 'Cobbett', 1938; S. Salomon, 1938; L. Golding, 1938; S. Dark and H. Sidebotham, 1939; J. Parkes, 1939; P. Harlow, 1939; N. Laski, 1939; W. Lewis, 1939 and M.G. Murchin (pseud.), 1939.
352. The suggestion was N. Laski's in his Jewish Rights and Wrongs (London, 1939), 141.
353. W. Lewis, The Jews: Are They Human? (London, 1939), 107 suggested that if there were no Jews there would



be no Jewish problem and saw orthodoxy as a barrier to solving the issue. Lewis also accepted without question that Jews had power in society, both political and financial, pp. 52-3.

354. This was the title of an antisemitic chapter in his Insanity Fair (London, 1938). Reed, extremely popular, was a mixture of anti-Nazi and antisemitic, who suggested that the Jews had created the moral decline of Germany and would do the same to Britain. See his Disgrace Abounding (London, 1939), 229-261. For a further account of Reed's career see chapter 4, p.337-40, and R. Thurlow, 'Anti-Nazi Antisemite: the Case of Douglas Reed', Patterns of Prejudice vol. 18 no. 1 (1984), 23-34.

Chapter 2: Organized British Antisemitism and Fascism in the Second World War.

The Encyclopedia Judaica has discriminated between groups that have temporarily adopted antisemitism and those that are founded with the sole purpose of fighting Jewish influences.<sup>1</sup> However, in the case of the former this wise differentiation could be extended further to include those organizations which have an element of antisemitism in their ideology, but to whom it is not all-embracing. Such antisemitism can be as persistent as the 'total' form. In Britain before the end of 1945, only the I.F.L. and the Britons (as well as a few other minor organizations) can be said to have been totally devoted to the 'Jewish Question'. To devote this section on extremist organizations to these groups would be highly limiting. Instead it will concentrate on those organizations which can be said to operate outside the mainstream of Britain's political and social life. Fascist and quasi-fascist groups will be included,<sup>2</sup> as will social credit and distributist circles. Such a classification will not necessarily indicate the intensity of antisemitism. For example, the Weekly Review, The Patriot and Truth all had common contributors<sup>3</sup> and were capable of profound attacks on Jews, yet the latter, given its respectability and popularity, will be studied in the section on British society and antisemitism.<sup>4</sup> Equally, few matched the level of antisemitism in Douglas Reed's war novels, but again Reed's work was mainstream and not limited (at least up to 1945) to the lunatic fringe.

It has been suggested that war can have two (often simultaneous) effects on ethnic or racial minorities - it



can push them together under a common unity, or apart due to the tensions of the conflict. Much the same can be said of fascist and radical right wing groups in Britain in the Second World War. At one level these extremist organizations entered the war in a highly fragmented state;<sup>5</sup> at another, their common vulnerability (given their previous support of Nazi Germany) was a stimulus towards co-operation. Those on the radical right, who had made so much play of their patriotism, were now faced with a most serious crisis. They saw their country plunged into war against a country whose ideology had been their source of inspiration. The immediate impact of the war on these groups will now be examined.

Throughout the 1930s the B.U.F., the I.F.L. and the whole host of other fringe groups had been united on one issue - the importance of avoiding what they saw as a 'Jews' War' of vengeance against Nazi Germany. As war approached, increasing attention was placed on this issue. The B.U.F.'s peace campaign culminated at Earl's Court in July 1939 where up to 20,000 people heard Mosley fulminating against the threat of war, where he stated: "We fight for Britain, yes, but a million Britons shall never die in your Jews' quarrel."<sup>6</sup> The imminence of war certainly helped to stop the decline of the B.U.F., but claims that it had recovered by the start of the conflict to its peak level of support of 1934, are much exaggerated.<sup>7</sup> Other claims that peace meetings in east and north London were "larger and more enthusiastic than any in the British Union's history"<sup>8</sup> do not seem to be borne out by the facts. Indeed, Special Branch reports in November 1938 and September 1939 indicate that

East End support for Mosley had declined considerably in the year before war.<sup>9</sup>

Elsewhere in London, recruiting was brisk for the B.U.F. immediately after Earl's Court, but August was quiet again.<sup>10</sup> Some increase in membership occurred in Manchester and East Lancashire,<sup>11</sup> and in Yorkshire a recovery was made, but this was from a miniscule base,<sup>12</sup> the same being true in Birmingham.<sup>13</sup> Altogether, the figure of 9,000, quoted by Home Secretary Sir John Anderson, which represented those B.U.F. members who had paid their last subscription, would represent fairly the total B.U.F. support in the country.<sup>14</sup> This low figure and the fact that the B.U.F. was the only mass fascist organization in Britain in the 1930s puts the importance of its rival extremists in perspective.

The most notorious, the Imperial Fascist League, had an active membership of 50 in 1936<sup>15</sup> and there is little evidence of a growth in support in the last years before the war, as has been claimed.<sup>16</sup> Other splinter groups from the B.U.F. such as the British People's Party and the National Socialist League had equally limited support. By 1939 secret, or semi-secret groups such as the Nordic League and the Right Club had come into existence, propounding extreme antisemitism and demanding an agreement with Hitler. Linkages were made between these groups, the New Pioneer being one forum through which communication was made.<sup>17</sup> Yet even taken together this group of fascist appeasers appears unimpressive, their general impotence strengthened by their political isolation.<sup>18</sup> Only 'The Link', Admiral Barry Domvile's pro-Nazi German friendship



group could claim a mass membership. From March 1938 to June 1939 The Link's support grew from 1,800 to 4,300.<sup>19</sup> Unlike other pacifist groups, The Link did not so much avoid the subject of Nazi antisemitism as support it.<sup>20</sup> However, it is probably the case that most of the extremists were at the top of The Link, and that most of the rank and file were well-meaning pacifists.<sup>21</sup> One suburban member was genuinely shocked when she heard of The Link's Nazi sentiments,<sup>22</sup> a reaction which shows a peculiar naivety, given the nature of the organization's propaganda.

How then were these various organizations and individuals to react when war was declared? Predicting a pattern on past behaviour proves difficult. The head of M.I.5., Sir Vernon Kell, commenting at the end of 1936 on William Joyce, stated that nothing would "shake his basic patriotism".<sup>23</sup> A few days before the outbreak, he was to slip out of Britain to become, as Lord Haw-Haw, the most famous German broadcaster to Britain.<sup>24</sup> Before then the Nazis had approached A.K. Chesterton to be such a propagandist.<sup>25</sup> However, their assumptions were proved to be wrong, as Chesterton refused and volunteered in the British army immediately at the declaration of war. Others were more torn in their loyalty. Unity Mitford, member of the B.U.F. and a devotee of Hitler, could not bear the thought of an Anglo-German conflict, and made an unsuccessful suicide attempt.<sup>26</sup>

The official B.U.F. instructions to its members were not so severe. Mosley in a message of 1 September 1939 claimed, as neither Britain nor her Empire were threatened, that the British Union would have nothing to do with "an

alien quarrel" brought about by "the dope machine of Jewish finance". Even so, Mosley added "I ask you to do nothing to injure our country, or to help any other Power".<sup>27</sup> Unofficially, members were urged to join the various civil defence units and carry on the peace message there.<sup>28</sup> The impact of the war on B.U.F. membership is difficult to assess. John Beckett claimed that in the first couple of months, numbers doubled from 5,000 to 10,000.<sup>29</sup> Such an estimate is difficult to sustain, for although as a Special Branch report suggested, there was "a steady stream of new recruits", there were also many resignations, and perhaps more importantly "many more just ceased".<sup>30</sup> Special Branch in the second week of the war estimated sales of Action (the B.U.F.'s populist paper) to be 14,000, the same as that in February 1938 when the movement was in a general trough.<sup>31</sup>

Perhaps a better indication of the negative effect of the declaration of war on B.U.F. fortunes is supplied by their activities on a street level. In September 1939 only 21 B.U.F. meetings took place in the capital compared to 313 the month before.<sup>32</sup> The leadership was clearly aware of the danger of total disintegration of the B.U.F., sending out orders to tighten discipline and to ensure that no propaganda be used without the organisers' consent.<sup>33</sup> Meetings in Ridley Road, the B.U.F. stronghold in North East London, attracted "fair crowds", in one case 300, but these were fewer than was usual, and in any case, the meetings were attended only by "stalwarts".<sup>34</sup>

According to a Special Branch report Mosley's war line was to abandon pro-Naziism and to concentrate on op-



position to the war waged "on behalf of Jewish financiers".<sup>35</sup> However, as this explicit attack on Jewish power had fallen foul of the censors for the first war issue of Action,<sup>36</sup> the B.U.F. also avoided attacking Jews by name in its meetings in September 1939.<sup>37</sup> This did not stop veiled attacks exemplified by 'Mick' Clarke, the B.U.F.'s East End leader who warned that the last war did not benefit workers, who again would "be sacrificed in the interest of profiteers".<sup>38</sup> The B.U.F. did turn the problems created by war to one beneficial end - exploiting the black-out to create a rash of slogans and stickers in public places, including the antisemitic disfigurement of government propaganda posters.<sup>39</sup> Little imagination was required to produce the net result of 'Your Courage; Your Cheerfulness; Your Resolution; Will Bring JEW Victory'.<sup>40</sup>

The B.U.F. had not been the only fascist organization to have street meetings. The war was, however, to have a dramatic impact on its extremist rivals. The National Socialist League, which although small had had violently antisemitic meetings, closed down immediately with its leader Joyce having left the country.<sup>41</sup> The Imperial Fascist League closed down its headquarters in the West End as well as its branch in Dalston.<sup>42</sup> The view of Special Branch that the League had "ceased to exist"<sup>43</sup> proved to be premature but certainly no public meetings took place for the first few months of the war. Instead activities were centred on distributing antisemitica and spreading anti-Jewish rumours.<sup>44</sup> Its main publication The Fascist ceased production but its in-house organ, Weekly Angles continued, helping to keep the I.F.L. alive, if not kick-

ing.<sup>45</sup> Similarly the Nordic League transformed from a public antisemitic front to a secret coterie whose activities will be examined later.<sup>46</sup>

The only organization of an extreme antisemitic type to expand in the first weeks of the war was the Nationalist Association.<sup>47</sup> Its leader was 'Jock' Houston, who had been a leading speaker for the B.U.F. in the East End and had indeed been credited with the initial success of Mosley's group in Bethnal Green and Shoreditch.<sup>48</sup> However, the inability to control his antisemitism, and his subsequent frequent arrests led him to be demoted to the provinces and eventually out of the B.U.F.<sup>49</sup> By the summer of 1939 the Nationalist Association was formed and Houston once again had a platform for his violent antisemitism.<sup>50</sup> Active in Finsbury Square in North East London, Houston had attracted by the outbreak of war "a good number" of 'tough' followers.<sup>51</sup> For the first months of the war Houston managed to control his antisemitism like his B.U.F. rivals - not referring to Jews but to 'Eskimos' or 'Mongolians'.<sup>52</sup> By December 1939 the strain of this was too much for Houston who once again reverted to inciting language, suggesting that as far as Jews were concerned: "pogroms do not go far enough".<sup>53</sup> Houston also translated his words into action and was arrested for violence against an old Jewish couple.<sup>54</sup>

This lapse back to open antisemitism was a pattern that the B.U.F. was also to follow as 1939 came to a close. Sir Philip Game, head of New Scotland Yard, suggested as late as 20 October 1939 that the B.U.F. was "not now concentrating on antisemitism"<sup>55</sup> but by then Game's case was



becoming increasingly dubious. In October both the size and frequency of B.U.F. meetings increased. Explicit attacks were made on the International Jewish Financiers' responsibility for the war by both Mosley and Raven Thomson in North East London.<sup>56</sup> At the Stoll Theatre on 15 October 1939 up to 2,700 people heard Mosley repeat the theme and demand a referendum on the war.<sup>57</sup>

In November this pattern generally continued, with more meetings, more antisemitism (one local speaker even managing to bring in the Protocols to his anti-war arguments),<sup>58</sup> but apart from Mosley's own meetings, there was a general decline in attendance.<sup>59</sup> At Bethnal Green Mosley proved his own personal popularity, bringing in 2,000 supporters, though as one report suggested, all but a few hundred were B.U.F. diehards.<sup>60</sup> Mosley claimed that war had not been declared on Russia because "Russian communism had long been controlled by the same force that controlled British capitalism - namely International Jewish Finance".<sup>61</sup> This language is not far removed from that of a total conspiracy theory, a development in Mosley's character further emphasised by a new element in B.U.F. propaganda - attacks on Federal Union. Mosley was to launch this campaign at Bethnal Green<sup>62</sup> and elaborate it shortly after in his only war publication - The British Peace - How to Get It, first issued in January 1940.<sup>63</sup> In it he claimed that 'Federal Union' was "the biggest racket which Jewish Finance has yet attempted". He continued that Federal Union attacked the organised nation, "the last remaining in their path to world dominion".<sup>64</sup> Mosley, who according to his son "often had a conspiracy theory of history"<sup>65</sup> was thus close at the

start of the war to accepting the message of The Protocols.

The war antisemitism of the B.U.F. was not limited to international matters. For the nine months that it operated in the war, much attention was spent on attacking the "refujews". Action in November 1939 revived an accusation of the First World War, claiming that Britain would "shortly have British Tommies at the front while alien Jews take their jobs at home".<sup>66</sup> Later the domestic issue of jobs and international matters were combined, as Action urged the conscription of "refujews to fight in their own war".<sup>67</sup> The B.U.F. was also quick to accuse the Jews of profiteering,<sup>68</sup> claiming that "in this war as in every other war the Jews are playing their old game of cornering commodities and profiteering at the National Expense".<sup>69</sup>

According to one B.U.F. member this antisemitic campaign was successful<sup>70</sup> and there appears to be some truth in this belief, despite the general unpopularity of the fascists in Britain at this stage. A government Home Intelligence memo of March 1940 commented that fascist propaganda was generally unsuccessful, even less so than the Communist Party, but that "Their only popular appeal is... antisemitism".<sup>71</sup> As late as May 1940 when the public had largely turned against the fascist movement, a B.U.F. meeting in Brighton managed to change the initial hostile feelings of the audience to ones of warmth via the use of antisemitism.<sup>72</sup>

However, despite this populist appeal, the winter months were lean ones for the B.U.F. as far as public support was concerned. In December 1939 attendances were "very meagre" and in January 1940 only 29 public meetings



took place.<sup>73</sup> A minor revival took place in February, but generally the cold weather and Mosley's absence from the public stage, left the B.U.F. with fewer than a hundred regulars at their meetings.<sup>74</sup> Mosley did appear at a private B.U.F. conference at the end of January, where future policy was worked out. One official, Donovan, summarised this in the two short phrases: "Mosley and peace" and "Jewry and War". The aim was to connect in the public's mind the former with peace, and the latter with "war and suffering".<sup>75</sup> It is doubtful whether the first aim was achieved, though the B.U.F. undoubtedly had some success with the second. A Mass-Observation poll in November 1939 found that 17% of the population gave a cynical reason for Britain's war aims, including many statements that it was "for the Jews".<sup>76</sup>

In the first few months of 1940, the Nationalist Association appeared to enjoy more street success than the B.U.F. Its leader, 'Jock' Houston's message is interesting for the deep-rooted antisemitic tradition that he played upon. In January 1940 he suggested that the war was prophesied in the Protocols and that the Jews who had planned it would not fight in it.<sup>77</sup> The next month he praised Edward I's treatment of the Jews, and his associate, John Webster, revived accusations of Jewish White Slave trafficking.<sup>78</sup> The alarming feature about these meetings is the degree of success they achieved, with crowds of up to 900 at Finsbury Square.<sup>79</sup> Moreover, Houston's antisemitic jibes were not only popular with the audience, but with the supervising police.<sup>80</sup> Some co-operation seems to have been achieved at this extreme level of or-

ganised street antisemitism. Both Houston and P.J. Ridout, the principal public speaker for the I.F.L., swapped platforms, and indeed the former recommended and sold the latter's organ Angles.<sup>81</sup> Apart from Ridout's speeches, the I.F.L.'s public activities in the early part of 1940 were confined to circulating Angles, which was transformed from a 'house organ' to one sold at a variety of peace meetings.<sup>82</sup>

The flagging fortunes of the B.U.F. seem to have been recognised by the leadership and three remedies were put forward to attempt to revive the movement. Firstly, it was decided to contest several by-elections, not because a heavy poll was expected, but because of the publicity that this would receive.<sup>83</sup> Secondly, an attempt was made to involve women in the B.U.F.'s peace campaign.<sup>84</sup> Finally, the B.U.F. was to concentrate its efforts in the area where it had received its only mass support - the East End of London.<sup>85</sup>

The first by-election the B.U.F. was to contest was at Silvertown, a Labour stronghold in the docks of the East End. Although the B.U.F. had 7 branches in the dockland, there was no local organization in Silvertown.<sup>86</sup> Tommy Moran, the B.U.F. South Wales organiser, was brought in as the candidate and faced a hostile electorate with no local support whatsoever.<sup>87</sup> The B.U.F.'s strategy was on the one hand to stress the socialist element of the organization's ideology; rather than attack socialism completely. Action pointed out the need to preserve its radical British past, or "real socialism".<sup>88</sup> On the other, it stated that both the Communist and Labour candidates were controlled by the world power of international Jewry.<sup>89</sup>

The whole of the B.U.F. campaign was brought together with a strong antisemitic basis. 40,000 copies of Moran's



election address were circulated,<sup>90</sup> including a B.U.F. sheet called "The Silvertown Dawn". In it, the B.U.F. warned of the war bringing destruction to the West with the "barbaric hordes of Judaic Communism" overthrowing civilization. On a less fanciful level, it cautioned against foreign refugees stealing local jobs.<sup>91</sup> The impact of Moran's campaign was negligible; he received 151 votes, or just 1% of the total.<sup>92</sup> A Mass-Observation poll found that no-one could remember anything of Moran's 200,000 leaflets, whereas 4% recalled the Communist Party's literature.<sup>93</sup> Despite the emphasis on 'British peace' and British 'socialism', 18% of the electorate believed the fascists had links to Germany, and anti-German feelings thus contributed to Moran's unpopularity.<sup>94</sup> The B.U.F. failed to exploit any antisemitism in the area, and it would seem that those wanting to register an anti-war protest vote looked to Pollitt (the Communist candidate) rather than Moran.<sup>95</sup>

The B.U.F. had to admit it was "a very poor vote",<sup>96</sup> yet compared it favourably with the electoral fights of the early Labour leaders.<sup>97</sup> Two weeks later, the B.U.F. achieved its most successful result at Leeds North-East, where 722, or just less than 3% of the vote was gained by Sydney Allen.<sup>98</sup> Allen made his appeal specifically to ex-servicemen, and indeed received support from the "League of Ex-Servicemen".<sup>99</sup> Again stress was put on antisemitism, in literature and wall-writings.<sup>100</sup> Whether antisemitism explained the higher B.U.F. vote is debatable. The local Labour Party agent clearly believed that this was the case, claiming that "The Fascist...

got most of his votes on anti-semitic lines".<sup>101</sup> In support of this analysis, surveys at both Leeds and Silvertown found antisemitism generally higher at the latter, although more intense antipathy was stronger in the former.<sup>102</sup>

Those strongly prejudiced could well have voted for the B.U.F.. Other factors need to be taken into account as well though; there was no other anti-war rival; the B.U.F. had better roots than in Silvertown; and linked to this, a fuller campaign was launched with a well-attended speech by Mosley.<sup>103</sup>

The second aspect of the attempt to resuscitate the B.U.F. was the campaign to introduce women into the fascist peace movement. The new policy was not without impact, especially due to the activities of Commander Mary Allen, a formidable woman who had joined the B.U.F. in December 1939.<sup>104</sup> Allen combined her moralistic campaign to the negotiated peace movement and helped to attract some female support to the B.U.F.<sup>105</sup> This new addition did little to moderate the B.U.F. Indeed in March 1940 it was female fascists who helped disrupt a peace meeting in Caxton Hall, and at a B.U.F. meeting in Holborn Hall in the same month a Jewish Chronicle reporter was struck by the fact that the women "adopted a more hysterical anti-Jewish attitude than did their men-folk".<sup>106</sup>

The third prong of the B.U.F. revival plan, to strengthen the East End support, is harder to assess. The war brought a decline to B.U.F. activities in the area, and meetings, as has been pointed out, tended to be supported by only the loyal diehards.<sup>107</sup> In March 1940, with the



improved weather, more meetings took place in the metropolis and Action claimed that 1,000 were present at a meeting in Bethnal Green.<sup>108</sup> The press generally ignored such activities,<sup>109</sup> and despite a continued recovery in April, the New Statesman's comments at the end of that month, that "we hear little to-day of British fascism" reflected the general obscurity of the B.U.F. in British society.<sup>110</sup>

In the East End meetings, there was an increased tendency towards antisemitism. The editor of Action, Ravon Thomson, was arrested at a Finsbury Square meeting for attacking "the filthy and corrupt practices of the alien Jew" and another B.U.F. speaker at Bethnal Green for collecting money for a Jewish pogrom.<sup>111</sup> Mosley also showed such tendencies in London and Leeds,<sup>112</sup> but this desperate attempt at popularity could not match the increasing hostility towards the movement as a whole, as Germany progressed across Europe. However, there were signs of advance for the B.U.F. - their British Traders' Bureau was attracting lower middle class support, especially from North East London,<sup>113</sup> and in early May 1940 Special Branch reported that the B.U.F. activities had "increased considerably."<sup>114</sup>

The climax of this intensely antisemitic campaign came at the May Day meeting of the B.U.F. at Victoria Park. Much preparation went into the event and "an anti-Jewish demonstration" was expected by members.<sup>115</sup> Morning and afternoon rallies culminated in a speech by Mosley attended by up to 4,000 followers.<sup>116</sup> The audience responded warmly to Mosley's antisemitic outburst, including

a statement that the purpose of the war was to create "a land fit for Hebrews to live in", but any antisemitic disturbances failed to materialise.<sup>117</sup> Mosley's claim that it was "the greatest day that British Union has yet witnessed",<sup>118</sup> was an exaggeration, but the turnout clearly indicated a revival for the movement. Other large meetings in North-East London took place in the first weeks of May,<sup>119</sup> but as events in Europe reached a crisis point with the fall of the Low Countries, the B.U.F. faced a totally hostile public.<sup>120</sup> In the last few weeks of May, the police were required to close four B.U.F. meetings, owing to anti-fascist disturbances,<sup>121</sup> and at Dalston, usually the stronghold of the B.U.F., a meeting was cancelled owing to the extreme anger of the crowd.<sup>122</sup>

This antipathy was clearly shown in the last by-election the B.U.F. was to contest at Middleton, North Manchester, on 22 May 1940. F. Haslam, the B.U.F. candidate, fought a campaign nearly identical to that in Leeds,<sup>123</sup> but whereas in the latter city there was some active support for the Mosleyites, the Middleton by-election was totally dominated by anti-fascism.<sup>124</sup> Mosley was physically attacked and in these circumstances the B.U.F. did well to poll 418 votes.<sup>125</sup> On the day of the election, the Cabinet decided to amend the Defence Regulation 18B and Mosley and other leading B.U.F. members were detained - much to the public delight.<sup>126</sup> With further arrests of up to roughly 750 B.U.F. members, the organization was effectively crippled and on 20 June 1940 via Regulation 18AA the B.U.F. was made illegal.<sup>127</sup> No other far right group received such a ban, but the internment of prominent members



of such groups as the Imperial Fascist League, the Nationalist Association, the British People's Party, the Nordic League and the Right Club, destroyed any chance of them continuing.<sup>128</sup>

The issue of fascist internment, and the controversial questions it raises, such as the ultimate loyalty of Mosley and his followers, is still an emotional subject.<sup>129</sup> To understand why the government acted as it did, and to evaluate the evidence on the loyalty question, it is necessary to turn to another side of B.U.F. and fringe group activity, from the outbreak of war to May 1940. The radical right in this phoney war period cannot be judged on its public meetings and proclamations alone; for it also operated on another, secret level and it is to this that attention must now be turned.

The day after war was declared Admiral Domvile's Nazi friendship group, 'The Link' was officially closed down.<sup>130</sup> However, as the security forces were soon to find out, fascist appeasement groups were soon to re-appear, both publicly and privately. Two main groups were to develop - those centred around The Link and the British People's Party (whose main forces were Domvile and the Duke of Bedford), and the Nordic League/Right Club coterie centering around Captain Ramsay. Both had common supporters and both were eager to enlist the co-operation of Mosley.

Out of the first group emerged a semi-public organization, the British Council for Christian Settlement in Europe (B.C.C.S.E.)<sup>131</sup> Its leading members had some fascist connections, although some naive pacifists were also drawn into the group. Certainly its leaders aimed at a mass peace

group, although John Beckett's (the secretary's) claim that it had 14 - 18,000 members would seem to be a two figure exaggeration.<sup>132</sup> The B.C.C.S.E's line that there was no reason for fighting a war that was "not due to one country, or one man", did not convince the public which quickly identified the movement with the discredited Link.<sup>133</sup> However, by mid-October contact had been established between this group and the B.U.F's leader.<sup>134</sup>

The Nordic League was numerically smaller than the latter group, but was still, according to MI5 "deserving of close attention". Some of its leaders would "go to almost any lengths to further their subversive and revolutionary aims".<sup>135</sup> With the war, two of its prominent organizers were interned and some confusion emerged as to whether the League would continue. Members were instructed to spread antisemitic rumours and defeatism and urged to join the B.U.F. and the Peace Pledge Union.<sup>136</sup> Similar instructions were given to Right Club Members. However, the latter were not so keen to co-operate with Mosley.<sup>137</sup> Despite this reluctance amongst the rank and file, according to Special Branch their leader, Captain Ramsey M.P., had agreed to co-operate with the B.U.F. as early as 16 September 1939.<sup>138</sup>

By late October 1939, in what Domvile called "a historic event", the major personalities in the fascist pacifist movement met. The group, organised by Domvile, included Mosley, Tavistock, Ramsay, Laurie, Lymington and Lawton and Hay.<sup>139</sup> What was discussed is not clear, Domvile loosely commenting that "We talked all round", and regular meetings of the group were arranged.<sup>140</sup> Throughout November and December 1939 the meetings continued with the added presence



of extremists such as H.T. Mills and A.T.O. Lees of the Nordic League.<sup>141</sup> The gatherings would appear to have been informal social gatherings where issues such as "the menace to freedom" and "the struggle for Peace" were discussed.<sup>142</sup>

In January and February 1940 these meetings continued, with a tendency amongst the whole of the British fascist movement to assume a private, or at least a semi-private character.<sup>143</sup> The most important development of these gatherings occurred in early February, when Tavistock announced his intention to travel to Ireland to discuss peace terms with the German legation in Dublin.<sup>144</sup> Permission was received from Lord Halifax, the Foreign Secretary, and a wide range of individuals from Mosley to John McGovern of the I.L.P., and Lord Beaverbrook, took a great interest in the success of the mission, which turned out to be fruitless.<sup>145</sup>

In March, April and May 1940, while Tavistock and the B.C.C.S.E. were having public peace meetings, (several times sharing a platform with the I.L.P.),<sup>146</sup> the secret sessions continued. The content of these meetings could well explain some of the reasons why Mosley and other leading fascists were interned in May 1940. In his last meeting with the 18B Advisory Committee on 22 July 1940, Mosley was told by the Chairman, Norman Birkett, that there was no evidence that he was a traitor or had been contemplating any act of treachery.<sup>147</sup> Mosley was relieved by this statement and it was used in his defence by Richard Stokes in Parliament in December 1940.<sup>148</sup> However, doubt still remained in the Advisory Committee's

mind, some of it stirred up by Mosley's relationship with Captain Ramsay.

In an earlier interview Mosley had claimed that before internment he only knew Ramsay "slightly" and had met him just three or four times. There was, according to Mosley, no thought of joint action and that in fact they only "loosely discussed questions of common interest", such as their "mutual dislike of certain aspects of Jewish activities".<sup>149</sup> The Committee were unimpressed. They were unable "to accept at face value many of Mosley's professions" and believed his answers over Ramsay were "lacking in frankness and candour". The basis of the Committee's complaint was the statement that Ramsay had made in his 18B interview - that he had been "invited by Mosley to take over Scotland in certain circumstances".<sup>150</sup>

Mosley's connections with Ramsay were indeed stronger, as has been shown, and the two knew each other as early as July 1939.<sup>151</sup> When A.T.O. Lees, ex-civil servant and prominent member of the Nordic League and British People's Party was arrested,<sup>152</sup> he had in his possession letters relating to secret meetings that took place in London in March, April and May 1940. These letters indicated that Mosley and Ramsay had convened the meetings which pro-Nazis and antisemites attended. The object of these meetings, according to the Special Branch report, "was to secure the greatest possible collaboration and make preparation for a fascist coup d'état".<sup>153</sup>

There is little doubt that there were extremists within the Right Club, the Nordic League, the Imperial Fascist League and possibly even the B.U.F. who would have



welcomed a Nazi invasion and who contemplated actions which might have helped to bring this about.<sup>154</sup> It is not too difficult to label such individuals as potential traitors.<sup>155</sup> However, there is another category which is harder to define. Some members of these organizations were not willing to actively assist the enemy, but were prepared to consider an overthrow of the British government and to immediately arrange peace terms with the Nazis. Groups or individuals proposing such actions cannot be regarded as treacherous, but their activities would have justified strong government intervention. It will be suggested here that Captain Ramsay of the Right Club falls into this category and that a similar case can be made against Sir Oswald Mosley.

In the last month before internment, the B.U.F. did its utmost to prove its loyalty. In Action for 9 May 1940, Mosley called upon his members to resist the foreign invader if he came, however rotten the British government. The British Union was "at the nation's disposal".<sup>156</sup> A day later instructions were issued to all districts repeating Mosley's message of 1 September 1939: "I ask you to do nothing to injure our country, or to help any other power".<sup>157</sup> With the fall of Belgium and Holland the B.U.F. message was "peace but Britain undefeated".<sup>158</sup> To emphasise their own loyalty, B.U.F. policy in late April 1940 was to attack the extremists of the Nordic League as Nazi traitors.<sup>159</sup>

As late as the 18 May the Cabinet were impressed with these declarations, the Home Secretary, John Anderson,

pointing out that no action should be taken against the B.U.F. as there was no evidence "that the organization as such was engaged in disloyal activities".<sup>160</sup> Four days later Anderson reversed this decision and Mosley and other leading fascists were arrested.<sup>161</sup> Why did this turn about happen? The most obvious development between the two Cabinet meetings that could explain the change in policy was the arrests of two associates of Captain Ramsay - Tyler Kent and Anna Wolkoff. Several recent commentators have gone as far as to suggest that these arrests were actually part of a plot so that Mosley could be interned.<sup>162</sup> Such an analysis simplifies what was a multi-causal complex event, but first of all it is necessary to outline briefly the Kent-Wolkoff-Ramsay affair.

The Right Club, which according to Ramsay had met only once or twice, was officially closed at the start of the war.<sup>163</sup> However, the organization did not totally disappear; members met informally to discuss the war and to distribute leaflets such as 'Land of Dope and Jewry' and 'Do you know the real causes of this war?'<sup>164</sup> In this way the coterie survived enabling some of its members to involve themselves in more substantial activities. One of these was Anna Wolkoff, the daughter of an aristocratic Russian emigré. Coming from an intensely antisemitic background, she acted as Ramsay's political secretary on matters relating to the Right Club.<sup>165</sup> In the war in connection with her antisemitic whispering and leaflet campaigns she met up with Tyler Kent, an American cypher clerk in the U.S. Embassy, who had transferred from Russia in October 1939.<sup>166</sup>



Through his employment Kent had access to secret documents, and he abused his position to photocopy up to 1,500 items. Some of these were of a highly sensitive nature, involving correspondence between Roosevelt and Churchill.<sup>167</sup> By March 1940 Kent had been in touch with Ramsay via Wolkoff, and the M.P. had seen some of the illicit files.<sup>168</sup> However, at this stage a new MI5 infiltrator, Joan Miller, had discovered Kent's activities and the security forces were biding their time before acting to bring in the conspirators.<sup>169</sup> There seems little doubt that Kent desired to bring down both the British and American governments and, hopefully, to replace them with administrations sympathetic to a negotiated peace with the Nazis. The Churchill-Roosevelt correspondence certainly gave him the opportunity to create a major political scandal, some of it relating to U.S. aid for the Allied cause. On the surface, Ramsay with access to the House of Commons, was the ideal man to communicate it.

Ramsay was definitely interested in the correspondence, but there is no evidence of what he intended doing with it.<sup>170</sup> In early May, rather than break the scandal to the House, Ramsay preferred to ask the Home Secretary whether the government distinguished between antisemitism and pro-Nazism in its defence regulations, indicating his concern about his own personal liberty.<sup>171</sup> Ramsay aimed to re-examine Kent's files after a break in Scotland, but in fact he never had the opportunity to do so as he was arrested on his return to London on 23 May 1940.<sup>172</sup> By then Kent and Wolkoff (who had attempted to communicate with William Joyce) had been hauled in by MI5.<sup>173</sup> In a Confidential

Annex, the Lord President of the Council presented a report on the Right Club to the Cabinet suggesting that Ramsay had been "engaged in treasonable practices in conjunction with (Kent)". The Home Secretary continued that Ramsay had been in relations with Mosley, but not over the Kent-Wolkoff affair.<sup>174</sup> The same day, 22 May 1940, the Cabinet agreed to intern Mosley and other B.U.F. leaders.<sup>175</sup>

Was the timing of the Kent/Wolkoff arrests simply an MI5 plot to find an excuse to intern Mosley? Anthony Masters, the biographer of Maxwell Knight (who masterminded the MI5 Right Club campaign), believes that this was the case.<sup>176</sup> What is more Masters believes that "Knight stated quite erroneously, that Ramsay was an associate of Mosley's...(and) that Mosley was 'in relations with Captain Ramsay', and without any concrete evidence, poured in the right ingredients to believe that a major right-wing coup was at a far more developed and coherent stage than it could ever have been with such different...personalities".<sup>177</sup> However, as we have seen, Mosley was an associate of Ramsay throughout the war, and there is evidence that Mosley and Ramsay were co-operating and planning a fascist coup d'état. Ramsay and the Right Club had been considering such an action since the start of the war, when members had been contacting sympathisers in the Armed Forces.<sup>178</sup> The Home Office also felt that at a meeting of B.U.F. London Officials on 30 January 1940 speeches by Mosley and Donovan suggested that the organization "may abandon constitutional methods and try to gain power by force".<sup>179</sup> Given the statement by Ramsay that he had been



appointed by Mosley to take over Scotland, and the material in the possession of Aubrey Lees that the March - May 1940 meetings of Ramsay and Mosley were to secure collaboration and prepare for a fascist coup d'état, it is more than possible that Knight was in fact correct.

Where Knight was probably wrong, was in his belief that the coup was in a developed stage. Whilst Mosley and Ramsay may have talked about the need for a replacement of the government, there is no evidence that they received any support for it outside their own coteries.

Ultimately Ramsay and Mosley were interned because of the military crisis in Europe. With the invasion of the Low Countries on 10 May 1940 and the disintegration of France, fascist liberty was a luxury the British government could no longer afford. Churchill, who claimed he was responsible for Mosley's internment,<sup>180</sup> believed there was a danger that if the Germans broke through, and Mosley had become Prime Minister, such a pro-German government might obtain easier terms from Germany by surrendering the fleet.<sup>181</sup> It was thus the threat of an alternative Mosley government, combined with the dire crisis in Europe that explains why the fascist internments took place. There was no evidence that Mosley, or indeed Ramsay intended any treacherous activities (that is actively helping a German invasion). There was evidence, however, that the two intended to reach a negotiated settlement by means that were unacceptable to a country on the verge of being invaded.

The final, more hypothetical question remains. Would Mosley, Ramsay and other fascists and pro-Nazis have collaborated with the Nazis had they invaded Britain? Mosley

claimed to the 18B Advisory Committee that if the Germans invaded "then I am finished". In such circumstances, Mosley believed that the Nazis would rule through a military dictatorship, or failing that a weak local leader like Petain in France. They would not want "a movement of renaissance".<sup>182</sup> There is some strength in Mosley's argument and it could be backed up by the fact that the Nazis had spent more attention on groups like The Link than the B.U.F.<sup>183</sup> A puppet leader like Ramsay or Domvile would have seemed a more manageable proposition to the Nazis rather than the more formidable Mosley.<sup>184</sup> Indeed whereas Ramsay was on the German 'White List' of possible collaborators, Mosley was not.<sup>185</sup> However, the case against Mosley being part of a Nazi-ruled Europe is not totally secure. In a war-time prison meeting with his solicitor, according to an officer present, "Mosley admitted that Hitler had, in fact, appointed him to be a sort of co-leader in England".<sup>186</sup>

Ramsay also denied that he would help the Germans after an invasion. He claimed that he was not prepared to sit under the Nazis at any price and that like the Jews, the Nazis were Britain's enemies.<sup>187</sup> He also violently attacked the idea suggested by Lord Marley that Ramsay had been nominated 'Gauleiter of Scotland'.<sup>188</sup> Ramsay in his perverse way was a patriot, and how he would have behaved under a German government is open to doubt.<sup>189</sup> Of Ramsay's Right Club associates a similar ambivalent pattern can be found. Anna Wolkoff was no foreign agent, despite her attempt to contact Joyce. Her extreme antisemitism and desire for peace may have led her into the Nazi camp, however, and one of the MI5 Right Club infiltrators claimed



that Wolkoff boasted that she would be Britain's Julius Streicher when the Germans occupied the country.<sup>190</sup> Kent again was, in his own mind, an American patriot, although he had requested a transfer to Germany in February 1940.<sup>191</sup> Whether he would have helped the Nazi cause directly is again open to debate.

For such extremists the war forced a balancing act between their patriotism and their virulent antisemitism. An element within the extreme were, in Arnold Leese's words, "more German than the German".<sup>192</sup> Two friends of Wolkoff were distraught when the German ship, Graf von Spee, was sunk, calling it a "day of black despair".<sup>193</sup> In the I.F.L., whereas Leese disapproved of the German invasion of Scandinavia, others such as Elizabeth Berger and H.T. Mills were in full support of it.<sup>194</sup> Many more were torn in between the two camps, typified by John Hooper Harvey. Harvey wrote to Leese in April 1940: "I would not give away secret information to the Germans unless affairs reached the stage they did in Spain, where foreign assistance was our only hope of cleaning out the pig-sty, but only in (the) very last resort". He added: "I don't want to be ruled by Germany or any other foreigner, but at a pinch even that is preferable to being ground to pulp under the heel of the Jew financier, and his pimps and proselytes".<sup>195</sup>

Of the B.U.F. membership, Mosley claimed that fewer than 5% would welcome a Nazi victory, and that in Liverpool only 3 out of 600 supporters were in that category.<sup>196</sup> MI5 were less generous, suggesting that 25 - 30% "would be willing, if ordered, to go to any lengths".<sup>197</sup>

Throughout the war some individuals belonging to the B.U.F. were arrested for passing information to the Germans, but these seem to be exceptional cases.<sup>198</sup> More common according to Herbert Morrison, reviewing the situation in 1943, were those 18B internees who said they would join up if released, and then did not.<sup>199</sup> Again 'patriotism' did not imply a desire to help the British war effort.

#### Organized Fascism and Antisemitism After 18B.

Two years after the major implementation of Regulation 18B, which saw a maximum of 1,428 people interned at the end of August 1940,<sup>200</sup> a Jewish observer could write that "antisemitism in Britain to-day is dead".<sup>201</sup> As far as the organized variety is concerned, the statement is accurate enough, but it must not be assumed that the Regulation totally destroyed British fascism.<sup>202</sup> Lacking a deep-rooted historical tradition in Britain, the British fascists were acutely aware of the need to preserve their continuity. The story of their activities from June 1940 until the end of the war is not one of a robust rebirth but of a fragile shadowy existence, with the stress on keeping alive their movement.

As if to emphasise the need for continuity, Action at the end of May 1940 carried the headline "We carry on".<sup>203</sup> An appeal fund for internees' dependents was launched and the B.U.F. in early June even managed a few street meetings.<sup>204</sup> However, at this point the majority of the arrests were made and the B.U.F. was reduced to chaos. Replacements for those who wrote for Action and were subsequently detained, found themselves in turn, arrested.<sup>205</sup>



The last issue came out on 6 June 1940 with the defiant message "We can take it".<sup>206</sup> Outside London the confusion was greater, with no central instructions and the continuous arrest of leaders.<sup>207</sup> The movement was reduced to a voluntary organization, depending on local initiatives to survive.

The B.U.F. headquarters was moved and manned by volunteers ostensibly for administrative purposes, although some propaganda was still circulating.<sup>208</sup> After the 25 June 1940 such activities had been made illegal and the production of leaflets from the Bethnal Green branch in early July was soon stopped by the police.<sup>209</sup> Thereafter activities were confined to the odd wall chalking and the sending of anonymous cyclostyled letters.<sup>210</sup> In the blitz in September 1940 most non-interned B.U.F. sympathisers kept a low profile, especially in areas of the East End where the fascists had made the least impact. Elsewhere, B.U.F. supporters were more daring, trying to create anti-semitism in certain North and North West London tube shelters. Such activities were not tolerated for long by the authorities.<sup>211</sup>

As late as November 1940, when Mosley was using his cell in Brixton for meetings of the "Fascist Grand Council", the Daily Telegraph was reporting on secret meetings of B.U.F. members aimed at forming the nucleus of an organization to keep the party going.<sup>212</sup> As will be shown, this was one of the main reasons for the existence of the 18B groups which emerged in 1942, but until then no national B.U.F. supporting group was created. In October 1941 a small clique calling itself the British Union of Freemen

was caught by Scotland Yard after a long investigation. Its members had been producing antisemitic leaflets advertising the New British Broadcasting Station, a Nazi propaganda network.<sup>213</sup> In the Christmas of the following year a publication called The Flame appeared. Of its 4 pages, the first was a reprint of Action of 20 May 1940, the second was in support of Mosley and an attack on Jews and the war. According to the Daily Worker, it was being distributed freely.<sup>214</sup> In 1943 Herbert Morrison reported that there had been several attempts to revive the B.U.F., chiefly in London, but apart from local and isolated groups they were unsuccessful.<sup>215</sup>

In the other antisemitic and fascist worlds, the impact of 18B was more devastating. Of the Nazi appeasement groups, the British Council for Christian Settlement in Europe, Information Policy and the Right Club, the internment of such prominent leaders as John Beckett, Ben Greene, Norman Hey and Captain Ramsay assured their destruction.<sup>216</sup> The eventual arrest of Arnold Leese had the same effect on the I.F.L. Despite the closure of these organizations, the extreme antisemite still had many outlets to satisfy his hatred. Antisemitic publications such as The Patriot, The Vanguard, The Social Crediter and others, as well as the Britons Publishing Company, were still allowed to continue by the authorities. However, by 1942 to some ex-internees and other fascists, this was not enough, and new organizations were demanded.

The first to fill the vacuum was Edward Godfrey, who set up his British National Party (B.N.P.) in August 1942. Godfrey, who claimed earlier naval connections to Domvile,



was an ex-B.U.F. member who refused to recognise Mosley as his leader.<sup>217</sup> A man of little talent, he collected a group of malcontents to his party, which numbered about 100 members according to the Home Secretary,<sup>218</sup> or between 20 - 30 to the less generous Jewish Defence committee.<sup>219</sup> Despite these feeble statistics, the B.N.P. created an enormous reaction, with protest marches and petitions for its banning involving thousands of people.<sup>220</sup>

The degree of animosity that the B.N.P. produced cannot be totally explained by the nature of its programme. Although Godfrey denied being a fascist, preferring the title 'English nationalist', his organization's policies were reminiscent of the B.U.F.'s.<sup>221</sup> It was for 'the national traditions of the British people against alien influence and infiltration', against the parliamentary system, international finance and planning and for the small trader and the revival of the guilds and apprenticeship system.<sup>222</sup> Godfrey regarded the Jews as unassimilated foreigners and praised Edward I's expulsion policy, and claimed that he would pursue a similar policy if given the chance.<sup>223</sup> Finally, like the B.U.F., the B.N.P. demanded a negotiated settlement with Hitler.<sup>224</sup>

The B.N.P. became useful for both ex-18B internees and for the extreme left. For the former it gave the chance to be politically active again, and for the latter it was a convenient group to attack as fascists.<sup>225</sup> When the emotional reaction to the B.N.P. is taken into account, it is surprising how little the group actually achieved. Activities were confined to distributing a mere handful of their own publications, as well as perhaps more importantly,

that of other antisemites such as Count Potocki and Alexander Ratcliffe.<sup>226</sup> As for public meetings, the popular outcry stopped any of these taking place.<sup>227</sup> This antagonism forced the organization to close down; although it reappeared in April 1943 in the guise of the English National Association (E.N.A.).<sup>228</sup> Apart from Herbert Morrison's refusal to ban the organization, its only other major publicity came in December 1943 when Godfrey fought the Acton by-election.<sup>229</sup>

Standing as an English nationalist, Godfrey's election address was an attack on "the enemy within".<sup>230</sup> It was not explicitly antisemitic, unlike the rest of his campaign, though Godfrey did attack "the hidden forces" which were attempting to destroy the English heritage.<sup>231</sup> Godfrey managed to poll 258 votes, despite having been "roundly abused as a Fascist".<sup>232</sup> Generally he does not seem to have been taken seriously, according to Mass-Observation "he provided most of the comic relief of the election". However, as a News Chronicle reporter suggested, there was reason to examine Godfrey with "a straight face".<sup>233</sup> The B.N.P./E.N.A. acted as "a clearing house" for those interested in continuing the fascist movement.<sup>234</sup> In his election campaign Godfrey received the support of Captain Bernard Acworth of Truth and The Patriot, and of the League of Ex-Servicemen, a group that had supported the B.U.F. candidate at Leeds in 1940 and was shortly to be at the forefront of the attempted fascist revival.<sup>235</sup> Finally, Godfrey had close links with the Duke of Bedford, who had continued a one man campaign against Regulation 18B since the demise of the British People's Party.<sup>236</sup>

After Acton, Godfrey disappeared into relative ob-



security, forming a more explicitly antisemitic group, the English Legion. It and the E.N.A. were involved in the immediate post-war fascist resurrection, though Godfrey was never to achieve such notoriety again.<sup>237</sup> Godfrey may have been the first to attempt a fascist or quasi-fascist revival, but by 1943 he was not alone in the field. In the middle of that year there were only 429 detainees left under 18B,<sup>238</sup> and many of those freed were anxious for political activity. In this type of atmosphere an obscure group, the People's Common Law Parliament (P.C.L.P.) came into prominence as "a stalking horse for fascists".<sup>239</sup>

Formed in 1940 by R.J. Scrutton the P.C.L.P.'s outlook was an amalgam of its leader's cranky world-outlook - pacifism, social credit and 'Christianity'. That former members of the B.U.F. and other antisemites should be attracted to this group is not totally surprising. At the start of the war, Scrutton's earlier group, the United Christian Petition Movement, had also been popular with B.U.F. members.<sup>240</sup> The P.C.L.P.'s first two years were unimpressive, limited to near-empty public meetings and attacks in its organ, Parliament Christian on international usury.<sup>241</sup> By late 1942 this changed with larger audiences many of whom shouted support for the B.U.F. and Mosley.<sup>242</sup> Although the P.C.L.P. was tinged with the antisemitism associated with social credit circles, its leader did not encourage fascist support.<sup>243</sup> Scrutton barred Godfrey from speaking to the organization and by the middle of 1943 its use by ex-Mosleyites seems to have stopped. That such a feeble group should be chosen by ex-18B detainees shows the desperation of these men and women to return to politics

and to resuscitate British fascism. Via two other organizations explicitly geared to the 18B cause, the revival of the B.U.F. took a step nearer completion.

Throughout 1942 Mosley received a series of visits in Brixton by ex-18B detainees and sympathizers with the aim of setting up an 18B organization. Mosley was adamant that such an organization should be non-political, but many others on the outside wanted to collect funds to use to fight by-elections on a negotiated peace line.<sup>244</sup> Mosley's will largely prevailed and by September 1942 the 18B (British) Aid Fund was registered as a war charity.<sup>245</sup> At the same time a sister organization, the 18B Publicity Council, was launched.<sup>246</sup> However, if the groups were not explicitly 'political', they were also not as widely based as Mosley had hoped. Prominent authors such as Osbert Sitwell, Henry and Hugh Ross Williamson refused to take an active part, and apart from Francis Yeats-Brown, the group was limited to support from ex-18Bs and The Patriot.<sup>247</sup>

Not surprisingly, its first public meeting in December 1942 was widely perceived as an attempt to revive the B.U.F.<sup>248</sup> Fascist and antisemitic remarks were heard throughout the meeting and in general the 18B groups gave the impression that the regulation was imposed on British citizens for their anti-Jewish activities.<sup>249</sup> The groups operated to fulfil two functions simultaneously. At one level, to protest against 18B and to collect funds for the dependants of detainees, at another to maintain political contacts, and as Herbert Morrison suggested to "serve as a nucleus for a political party until the ban on the B.U. is raised".<sup>250</sup> Francis Yeats-Brown confirmed Morrison's analysis in a letter to Henry Williamson before the first



meeting: "So we aren't all sheep, and we still want to hear of British Union!".<sup>251</sup> As a result the groups became a re-union club for ex-detainees, partly social with concerts and house meetings, and partly political with the emergence of new leaders to pave the way for Mosley's return.<sup>252</sup>

Meetings continued into 1944 and 1945, but by this time the 18B groups had spawned their own successors, as yet again the British fascist movement was to splinter. By 1943 the more explicitly pro-Mosley 18B groups were rivalling Godfrey's English National Association,<sup>253</sup> but the demands for a purely political Mosleyite group were still growing. On the street level fascist activities were reviving, slogans and defacements reappearing especially in London. In February 1943 the most notorious incident happened, with the painting of 'P.J.' on the Lenin memorial.<sup>254</sup> In August of that year, the ex-18Bs showed their renewed confidence and attempted to break up a left-wing meeting in their old territory of Ridley Road.<sup>255</sup> With the release of Mosley and his wife in November 1943 tensions between fascists and anti-fascists grew stronger. Although left-wing groups were at the forefront of the campaign against the B.U.F. leader's release, there is little doubt, as Mass-Observation suggested, that "the indignation...was spontaneous, deeply felt and felt by an overwhelming majority".<sup>256</sup> Even Conservative groups joined in the chorus of disapproval.<sup>257</sup> After this, any attempt which could be vaguely seen as a revival of fascism would face violent opposition.

Despite this atmosphere, fascists were willing to risk

public meetings. In June 1944 the Jewish Defence Committee reported on the first open-air antisemitic street meetings since the fascist internments three years earlier.<sup>258</sup>

Later that summer, both the 18B Detainees Group and the League of Ex-Servicemen attempted meetings in Hyde Park - a hostile crowd faced both organizations.<sup>259</sup> The latter group had been active in the Leeds and Acton by-elections supporting the fascist candidates, but in 1944 it was to come into its own at the forefront of the attempted fascist revival. Even as late as October 1944 it was not particularly active, concentrating its attack on aliens and on the policy of the British Legion.<sup>260</sup> A month later it was to be transformed as its platform saw scenes of conflict not seen since the 1930s.

Leading its transformation was Jeffrey Hamm, an ex-B.U.F. member and 18B detainee.<sup>261</sup> Hamm's internment in the Falklands appears to have strengthened his commitment to Mosley and after a spell in the army he was determined to revive the B.U.F. In November 1944 the first meetings of the new-styled League of Ex-Servicemen were held in Hyde Park. Only three meetings took place, with up to 200 people in the opposition.<sup>262</sup> Due to police protection Hamm was to get his message across of 'Britain for the British' as well as his attacks on 'international finance' and the 'House of Rothschild'.<sup>263</sup> His partner Victor Burgess announced that those not "100 per cent British by race" would be disqualified from voting and confirmed that the League was a fascist body.<sup>264</sup> Dunlop, the main force behind the 18B groups, was upset at this, as he had carried



out Mosley's instructions regarding the non-political status of the 18B groups since 1942.<sup>265</sup> Out of this disagreement came the first split in the post-'18B' world of British fascism. Hamm was to continue as leader of the League of Ex-Servicemen, being heavily involved in an anti-alien campaign at the close of the war.<sup>266</sup> Burgess was to run an antisemitic publishing company, Corporate Utilities, and his own political group, the Union for British Freedom. Finally Dunlop, who had laid the basis for the Mosleyite revival, disappeared into obscurity.<sup>267</sup>

The pattern for post-war British fascism was clearly set by the close of hostilities. On a 'street level', Jeffrey Hamm's League of Ex-Servicemen would come to represent the dangers of a fascist revival with its violent public meetings in London.<sup>268</sup> Yet by 1945 another level of fascist/antisemitic activity had been firmly established. In June of that year a group calling itself the National Front After Victory held its first secret meeting. As Lord Vansittart was to suggest a year later, what was remarkable about this group was its interesting membership.<sup>269</sup> Its Chairman was A.K. Chesterton, by now deputy editor of Truth, and other individuals involved included Collin Brooks, also of Truth, G.F. Green and Cuthbert Reavely and H.T. Mills of The Patriot, Pepler of the Weekly Review, Henry Williamson, J.F.C. Fuller, Ben Greene and Lord Portsmouth.<sup>270</sup> Taken together, the group represented a fair cross-section of the antisemitic radical right-wing world (excluding Mosleyites).

In fact the National Front had been formed 12 months earlier, but it was only with the end of hostilities in

Europe that this group, which aimed to coordinate the various anti-Jewish organizations, started to operate. Although the Front's main aim was to protect national sovereignty from "the further extension of Jewish power and influence in Britain", members were wary of adopting an openly anti-Jewish policy. Instead a more guarded statement on "the real Jewish problem" was produced.<sup>271</sup> Co-operation was the key word for the Front and contact was made with the whole spectrum of groups in Britain's anti-semitic network. Closest links were achieved with the newly reformed British People's Party which included moderates such as Bedford, and extremists such as A.T.O. Lees. Indeed, the National Front nearly became a branch of the latter organization.<sup>272</sup> At the other end of the fascist spectrum, contact was made with ex-members of the Imperial Fascist League, who were supposedly considering an armed uprising. However, such activities as well as sympathy towards William Joyce were frowned upon by the Front.<sup>273</sup> Support was also given to Hamm and the Hampstead petition movement.<sup>274</sup>

The National Front was like its later namesake, an unstable coalition bringing together moderate antisemites and Nazi supporters. All were united in a profound anti-communism, but such a bond was not sufficient to keep the Front together.<sup>275</sup> Instead, it managed a separate existence for only a year or so before being swallowed up into the British People's Party.<sup>276</sup> This in turn contributed members to A.K. Chesterton's League of Empire Loyalists



which in 1967 was one of the two major components of the second National Front.<sup>277</sup> Over the first twenty post-war years, the radical right in Britain had turned full circle.

In considering in 1947 why the fascist revival had happened so quickly and thoroughly, Douglas Hyde perceptively pointed out that "the answer is that (in the war) the Fascist organizations never went out of existence".<sup>278</sup> Some of the groups covered here were feeble enterprises with limited funds and only a few dozen members. However, as they self-consciously realised, they filled a function of keeping a fascist and antisemitic tradition in Britain alive. To do so in a total war against the Nazi enemy was in its way a major achievement, showing perhaps the strengths and weaknesses of liberal democracy. Civil libertarian feeling was strong enough for the government to tolerate the revival of fascism. Fortunately for parliamentary democracy in Britain, the post-war world did not offer the opportunities for fascism to expand outside the fringes of society.

If there is a paradox in the continuity of organised British fascism during the Hitler war, then it is strengthened when the parallel existence of a strong British antisemitic ideological movement is also taken into account. If the British antisemite had to hunt around for a suitable organization to join in the war, this was not true of the printed word. At least four weekly antisemitic journals continued throughout the war, supplemented by five or more publishing companies devoted to antisemitica.<sup>279</sup> In the course of the war against the genocidally antisemitic Nazis,

some 'classic' and virulent printed antisemitism was produced in Britain. The purpose of this last section will be to examine how the Second World War affected contemporary British antisemitic ideology, and to see what impact this had on society.

No man likes to be an island, and this includes those in the antisemitic world in Britain. Antisemitic propagandists have made constant reference to what has been said or written before. Yet this must not disguise the fact that even at its low intellectual level, antisemitic ideology (including its most extreme form), has developed and responded to economic and social change. It has been suggested that the fast-changing world of post-1918 Britain could be viewed by some in terms of a crisis, and that this needs to be taken account of in explaining the growth of conspiratorial antisemitism in the 1920s and 30s.<sup>280</sup> In the Second World War, with radical internal developments and the external battle against an antisemitic enemy, this sense of crisis intensified in the extreme world of British Jew-hating. How then did antisemitic ideology adapt to the war?

Whatever their differences, in the 1930s what fascists and antisemites of all shades and hues could agree on was that the Jews were planning a World War. To some it was all written in The Protocols, to others a slightly less conspiratorial but vaguer concept of Jewish power was responsible for war.<sup>281</sup> However when war came, such general ideological agreement disappeared. By then the Nazi-Soviet Pact had been signed, and the antisemitic groups, which had



viewed Hitler as the saviour of the world against International Jewry, and Russia as the home of the latter, were thrown into a state of confusion. .

The Patriot showed these tensions most clearly. A strong supporter of Hitler since 1936,<sup>282</sup> it reverted back to its original anti-German policy with the pact. Nesta Webster defended The Patriot, saying it would support the war "now that Hitler by his base betrayal of the anti-Soviet cause...and reversion to the old Prussian system of broken pledges...has forfeited the sympathy that many of us felt for him".<sup>283</sup> Others in the extreme antisemitic world followed The Patriot in reversing their policy with the war. The Militant Christian Patriots, the group that had attempted to coordinate antisemitic activities in Britain, and which had also supported Hitler in the late 1930s, claimed it was closing its offices and paper, attacking the Nazi regime as "Prussianism in a new guise".<sup>284</sup>

Yet to some groups such a turnabout was unnecessary. The advantage of a conspiracy theory is its total flexibility. It could be said that elements within the Social Credit movement brought the conspiracy theory to its ultimate absurdity. One section, the Social Credit Secretariat, based in Liverpool and controlled by the movement's founder, Major Douglas, believed that not only was international socialism and finance controlled by Jews, but the Nazi movement itself. The antisemitism of Hitler had not impressed this group which was convinced that the Pan-German-Jewish threat continued, and that the war was inevitable given the power of this secret force. Douglas himself wrote in

November 1939 that "not only is anti-semitism (anti-Judaism) not Nazi-ism, but Nazi-ism is pro-Judaic".<sup>285</sup> Belief in the theory that 'Hitler's Policy is a Jewish Policy',<sup>286</sup> would seem to be asking too much even of the conspiratorially-minded extreme antisemitic world in Britain, yet it is perhaps surprising how successful it was amongst the fringe. The Patriot of 21 September 1939 referred to "the sinister significance of (the) Moscow-Berlin Pact" and reported shortly after that Hitler has "sold his soul to the devil".<sup>287</sup> Nesta Webster commented that she had always pointed out the Pan-German as well as the Pan-Jewish danger,<sup>288</sup> and James Dell of The Britons and Free Press concurred, suggesting that Hitler was "doing what the Jewish leaders desire".<sup>289</sup> These arguments were also to be used by the popular publicist, Douglas Reed.

However, while the Douglas Social Credit movement opposed the war, as it would only lead to the Judaising of Europe "via Hitler or via Mr. Greenwood", both The Patriot and the Militant Christian Patriots reluctantly supported it, if only for the sake of the British Empire.<sup>290</sup> The distributist Weekly Review also offered luke-warm support of the war effort, largely because Catholic Poland was being threatened by 'Jewish Bolshevism-Naziism'.<sup>291</sup> Angus Calder has commented on the paradox of "antisemitic right-wing patriots" fighting against Hitler, but this was not, of course, true of all the extremists.<sup>292</sup> Whilst Arnold Leese was shocked by the Soviet-German pact and remarked that "Hitler has been a marvel, but is no longer one", he did not lose all faith in Hitler and could not bring himself



to support the war effort.<sup>293</sup> Although others in the I.F.L. supported Hitler in all his actions, Leese's criticism of Hitler stopped short of suggesting that he was under Jewish control.<sup>294</sup> Leese could not support the Social Credit theory being propagated by his one time ally, the Britons; as he wrote to the leader of the latter: "No, Dell, I think it's all Bunk with a big B".<sup>295</sup> Alexander Ratcliffe, leader of the Scottish Protestant League, lost even less faith in Hitler than Leese, opposing a war fought for "World Jewry and the Papacy".<sup>296</sup>

If there were bitter ideological disagreements in the antisemitic world on the nature of the war and the position to be adopted towards Hitler, then on internal war developments there was much more consensus. Even those supporting the war stressed the need to keep an eye on Jewish activities at home. Free Press summarised this viewpoint. Whilst supporting "the Government in the War against our open enemies", it warned that "the subtle forces which are working ceaselessly to destroy our religion and country is (sic) as great as ever".<sup>297</sup> These extreme right-wing groups, which had seen any attempt at planning the British economy in the 1930s as evidence of the Jewish conspiracy,<sup>298</sup> continued to view any such activities in the war in a paranoid manner.

The greatest bugbear of the radical antisemitic right had been P.E.P., a non-party group that represented a growing interest in the planning movement in the 1930s.<sup>299</sup> Any antisemitic reference to this group was inevitably linked up to the involvement of Israel Moses Sieff in P.E.P., and from there a direct link was made to The Pro-

tocols.<sup>300</sup> With the war even more was blamed on the organization. Miscellaneous statements made by P.E.P. throughout the 1930s, that war would bring good opportunities for planners, were constantly churned out by the antisemitic groups as explanations for the imposition of Jewish control over society.<sup>301</sup> It has to be said that the Second World War gave good opportunities for those worried by planning to have their worst fears confirmed. If, essentially, the planning movement of the 1930s had caused concern only to the radical right, the Second World War developments created shudders across the majority of the Conservative Party.<sup>302</sup>

In the fringe world of the radical right, the explanation for government interference was automatic - Jewish power. At the start of the war, A.R.P. and evacuation were seen as alien - Bolshevik plots, the former to introduce local socialism,<sup>303</sup> and the latter to destroy the English countryside by the introduction of 'verminous Jews'.<sup>304</sup> However, such minor plots paled into insignificance compared to the new development in the supposed Jewish World Conspiracy - Federal Union. This "Utopian Project"<sup>305</sup> originated in America and was popular amongst liberal and left wing circles as a way of solving international problems by creating a European federal state.<sup>306</sup> In Britain interest was shown by the publication of a Penguin Special advocating Federal Union in November 1939. At the same time, fascist and antisemitic groups began attacking the movement.<sup>307</sup> The Social Crediter, always quick to spot a conspiracy, was the first to identify Federal Union as part of Israel Moses Sieff's world plan. The M.C.P.'s Free Press soon followed claiming it was all "outlined in The



Protocols of the Elders of Zion".<sup>308</sup>

It has already been pointed out that at this same point, Mosley was also attacking the Jewish plot of Federal Union.<sup>309</sup> This shows not only the tendency of the B.U.F. leader to move towards a conspiracy theory, but also the wide degree of ideological agreement of British anti-semites on this matter. Indeed, it is hard to find any such extremist group or individual who did not attack 'Jewish' Federal Union at some point in the war.<sup>310</sup> Why the Jewish connection was made is not immediately obvious. Few Jews were prominent in the movement, nor did it say much about Jewish matters. However, Federal Union could be viewed as a typical P.E.P. stunt if one so wished, even if the latter or kindred bodies had no official connections to it. As the Social Crediter succinctly put it, "the Jew must be adjudged guilty until he is proved innocent".<sup>311</sup>

By the end of 1940 both the left and the antisemitic right had lost interest in Federal Union. However, the latter did not take long to find other evidence of the Jewish conspiracy. From the start of the war, some antisemitic groups had warned about the government powers under Regulation 18B.<sup>312</sup> After the mass arrests in 1940 these fears enlarged and the Regulation came to be seen as yet more evidence of the Jewish conspiracy in Britain.<sup>313</sup>

Jews were using the Regulation to prevent any criticism of their behaviour and at the same time removing long-held civil liberties, enabling their stranglehold on Britain to tighten. The identification of 18B as a Jewish Regulation, either as racial revenge, or more sinisterly, as part of

The Protocols was a constant feature of the propaganda of the revived fascist movement in the war.<sup>314</sup> However, the Regulation was seen as only part of the conspiracy in antisemitic circles. Government actions in social policy were viewed with even greater alarm.

In late 1942 the long-awaited Beveridge Report was published, the huge queues for it revealing the public's deep concern over the Welfare State.<sup>315</sup> The Report, which examined the three areas of family benefits, employment and the national health service, gained nation-wide support except, according to the government's Home Intelligence, from "a hostile minority".<sup>316</sup> This latter opposition, as will be later shown, came from large sections of the Conservative Party but it also included fringe groups on the extreme right who saw the 'Beveridge Plot',<sup>317</sup> as more proof of the increasing Jewish domination of Britain.

By the start of 1943 most in the extreme antisemitic world were despairing of Britain's future. They had warned that 'Jewish' planning groups would exploit the opportunities of war to enslave Britain; the Beveridge Report confirmed their worst fears. Beveridge's linkages to the "London School of (Judaic) Economics"<sup>318</sup> and to Israel Moses Sieff's P.E.P. were stressed and his Report was viewed as a culmination of plots all stemming from The Protocols.<sup>319</sup> Out of this concern came a group specifically created to oppose one aspect of the Beveridge Report - the proposals on the Health Service. The Medical Policy Association (M.P.A.) was formed in March 1943 and it was soon to achieve both notoriety and some success.<sup>320</sup>



The background of the M.P.A's leadership shows the importance of the antisemitic tradition in Britain in providing an ideological structure for its later adherents. Of the four men who controlled the organization, two had been weaned on the conspiracy theories of The Patriot since the 1920s,<sup>321</sup> another was a leading Douglas Social Crediter,<sup>322</sup> and the final one's world-view owed much to the British volkisch-mystical tradition and British-Israelitism.<sup>323</sup> Such a collection does not appear impressive and given that the first bulletin of the organization directly linked medical planners to The Protocols (via P.E.P. and the L.S.E.),<sup>324</sup> it could be expected that the M.P.A. would have been limited to an obscure fringe of the medical world. Its relative success as a pressure group needs a convincing explanation.

It has been suggested that part of the M.P.A's appeal came from its antisemitism.<sup>325</sup> This argument suggests that the M.P.A. played upon a strong tradition of antipathy to Jews in the British medical world, born out of insecurity, the threat from refugees and money-lenders. However, its author recognises that this prejudice does not imply support for a Jewish conspiracy argument.<sup>326</sup> Whilst medical antisemitism will be examined in greater depth at a later point, it must be suggested that the M.P.A's popularity was generally despite its antisemitism. Only if the deep fear of government intervention into the medical world amongst the majority of British G.Ps (and the conservative B.M.A.) is taken into account, can the M.P.A's success be explained.<sup>327</sup> Feeding off this fear, the M.P.A. managed to inject a conspiracy theory into the argument, one that

was at first explicitly antisemitic.<sup>328</sup> In such a way, arguments which might be considered to be outside the mainstream of ordinary belief - such as the Jewish origins of Hitlerism and Israel Moses Sieff's control of British life - were introduced to a wider public. The M.P.A. might not have stopped the implementation of the National Health Service, but as a pressure group it was successful in augmenting opposition to planning in the medical world.<sup>329</sup>

In general, extreme antisemites in Britain were not so positive as the M.P.A. in their attempts to stop the tide of 'Jewish' planning. A resigned pessimism is more typical of the attitude of such individuals. Writing in the Social Crediter, J. Dell of The Britons commented on an article by Harold Laski in July 1942. Laski had suggested that the war offered opportunities for revolution and counter-revolution.<sup>330</sup> To Dell this was tacit admittance of the essential message of The Protocols and he commented "Has the Jew become so confident that he does not mind whether cats are let out of the bag?"<sup>331</sup> Francis Yeats-Brown believed himself an optimist in thinking 'that the Jews will not rule the world, as they confidently expect'.<sup>332</sup> Certainly, with Hitler defeated and a general left-wing transformation of British society, the right-wing antisemite had little to be cheerful about. Even Jewish atrocity stories offered little comfort, for these were generally seen by such extremists as propaganda designed to help Jewish control of the world by getting Gentile sympathy.<sup>333</sup>

In summarizing antisemitic ideology in the Second



World War, it is important firstly to stress how it contained a dynamic element. Although constant reference was made to an older antisemitic tradition, new factors evolving from developments in the war itself were constantly added.<sup>334</sup> Secondly, although emphasis has been put on some of the ideological agreement of these groups, conflict must also be taken into account. Distributist attacked social creditor,<sup>335</sup> crank dismissed crank as crank, and antisemite dismissed antisemite as 'Jewish'.<sup>336</sup> To some Catholicism was the answer to the Jewish Peril, to others the two were in league with the devil. Even Arnold Leese's attack on Mosley's 'kosher fascism' did not end with the start of the war.<sup>337</sup> The third point to note is the varying solutions they offered to the 'Jewish problem'.

Supporters of a Nazi-inspired racial antisemitism were rare in Britain, and no-one in the war publicly advocated extermination.<sup>338</sup> Arnold Leese, who had earlier put forward 'the lethal chamber' as the solution to the Jewish problem, was vaguer in the war itself, suggesting only that "the Jew must be taken out of Europe".<sup>339</sup> Leese's other suggestion, that of sending Jews to Madagascar, found support from both the Social Credit Secretariat and The Britons.<sup>340</sup> The idea of exporting Jews also appealed to the B.U.F. Perhaps one of the most revealing aspects of the papers relating to Mosley's 18B interrogation was his reported willingness to carry out this policy when he had power. Rather than keep the Jews in Ghettos, as "an eternal irritant within the body politic", Mosley was happy to remove all foreigners. Asked if this included the Jews, Mosley replied: "Quite right".<sup>341</sup>

Not all the extreme right went as far as to demand the expulsion of the Jewish minority. Some, while agreeing with Mosley that the Jews were "a nation within a nation",<sup>342</sup> wanted to recognise that fact legally, with ordinances controlling Jewish activities.<sup>343</sup> However, even here there was a tendency towards supporting expulsion if such apartheid failed.<sup>344</sup> However, extremist support for 'zionism', of the Jews achieving redemption on the soil of their own lands, did not apply to Palestine. Paradoxically, although those in the extreme antisemitic world were 'race conscious' to a high degree, they still championed the Arab cause in the Middle East. Rather than being simply the backing of the Jews' Palestinian rivals, this support came out of a genuine philo-Arabism. The fact that Arabs were also 'Semites' was conveniently ignored.<sup>345</sup> It will be interesting now to examine how important 'race' was in British antisemitic ideology.

How far were genetic explanations of Jewish behaviour accepted by extreme antisemites? Only a few isolated groups like the I.F.L. were open supporters of racial antisemitism,<sup>346</sup> but racial explanations also played their part in other extremists' ideology. For example, although Mosley emphasised in his first 18B interview that the B.U.F., unlike the Nazis, did not attack Jews on racial grounds,<sup>347</sup> his arguments on the Jews were based on an ethnocentrism that at times became deterministic. Mosley later argued that his antisemitism came from a long British tradition coming from the soil, and that antagonism to Jews was "probably latent in the racial...consciousness of a great



many (English) men".<sup>348</sup> As Richard Thurlow has suggested "It is sometimes difficult in practice to distinguish between 'scientific' and 'common sense' variants of a (belief) system" on racial matters.<sup>349</sup> Generally speaking the B.U.F's views on Jews were Lamarckian rather than Darwinian. E.D. Hart in the B.U. Quarterly of Spring 1940 suggested that culture, not race, was the essence of the Jewish problem, and that the solution was to end the Jews' nomadism and to settle them on the soil.<sup>350</sup> Similarly, in the Social Credit movement, the opposition to Jews was theoretically limited to Jewish financial activities.<sup>351</sup> However, yet again the matter is more complex, for not only was a form of conspiratorial antisemitism employed, but also biological explanations were given by Social Crediters for Jewish activities. Jews according to C.H. Douglas "have a...race consciousness which is perhaps unique".<sup>352</sup> What is more, the Social Credit guru also praised the Nazi ideology of 'Blut und Boden'; each culture should be racially related to the soil argued Douglas.<sup>353</sup> Others in Britain during the war supported such a volkisch outlook. Groups connected to Lord Lymington such as New Pioneer, the English Array, English Mystery and the League of Husbandry continued to hold summer camps. They also distributed literature attacking the malevolent alien Jewish influence on the English race, and advocated a return to the land.<sup>354</sup>

As a whole antisemitic ideology in Britain during the Second World War continued its earlier pattern with a greater emphasis on conspiracy ideas.<sup>355</sup> There was also a tendency to replace racialist attacks on Jews with language

that was less explicit, being based on a more ethnocentric approach. Some ideologists such as A.K. Chesterton abandoned their earlier support for more Nazi-orientated anti-semitism, and concentrated on the threat to British national sovereignty from the alleged international Jewish influence.<sup>356</sup> Whatever their stance, all extreme antisemites had to re-examine their beliefs in the war against Hitler. Although a few did not change their outlook at all in the 1939-45 period, most had to modify their ideology to some extent.<sup>357</sup> The absurd results that some came up with - such as the Jewish origins of Adolf Hitler or Julius Streicher - show what a desperate time the Second World War was for Britain's antisemitic fringe. Nevertheless it also shows how flexible and durable conspiracy ideas have been in British society.

Extremist antisemitism thus took many forms in Britain during the war. One final vital question needs to be asked: what was their impact and importance in British society? As far as organized political groups are concerned, one has only to examine the pathetic showing of movements such as the B.U.F. or the E.N.A. in the war by-elections to prove how distant they were from electoral success. A total of 1,549 votes in four contests does not indicate a mass following.<sup>358</sup> However, as Stuart Rawnsley has perceptively pointed out, groups like the B.U.F. could exert more influence than mere membership figures would suggest, especially over certain issues.<sup>359</sup> In the Second World War the constant fascist opposition to Jewish refugees and to the Jews' War made their impact on British society. As late as 1943



the social commentator, James Hodson, reported on a survey of new recruits and what they thought they were fighting for. The response "I am fighting because Jewish international financiers wanted a war", was not isolated. Indeed, Hodson commented that there were many such replies "of which this is representative".<sup>360</sup> However, it is doubtful whether other aspects of fascist propaganda, such as the need for a corporate state, made any impact on the public either in the 1930s or in the war.<sup>361</sup>

Part of the B.U.F.'s limited success came from its pragmatism. Whereas its rival, the I.F.L., was a one-trick pony with a limited appeal of its physically and verbally violent antisemitism, the B.U.F. adapted to local 'needs'. In Bristol it was anti-Welsh and in Liverpool and Cardiff it was anti-black.<sup>362</sup> In East Anglia it concentrated on rural issues.<sup>363</sup> Its British Traders Bureau, aimed at lower middle class malcontents, enjoyed some success, especially in North-East London, here the Jewish issue being used successfully.<sup>364</sup> Used effectively, on a street level, antisemitism remained one of the B.U.F.'s best crowd pullers.<sup>365</sup> The organized fascist and anti-semitic groups thus helped Britain to remain Jew conscious into the Second World War.

What of the power of the antisemitic word in the 1939-45 period? In 1940 John Hooper Harvey, a man previously associated with the literary committee of the I.F.L., wrote The Heritage of Britain, an Aryan history of Britain.<sup>366</sup> Harvey believed that the knowledge contained in the book could "yet save the British nation from

the downfall which awaits those who lose race-consciousness, and who mix their blood with that of lesser breeds".<sup>367</sup>

It is doubtful if an unsuspecting member of the public who by chance managed to read one of the few hundred copies of The Heritage would have been impressed. Even the Weekly Review remarked that Harvey's book was nonsense, "based on the undigested reading of anthropologists".<sup>368</sup> Harvey's work obviously belongs to the world of the lunatic fringe and his activities with his war-time ally, Count Potocki, would seem to confirm this judgement.

Potocki was pretender to the Polish Crown and his 'court' in Little Bookham, Surrey, in March 1943 was the scene of one of the most bizarre incidents in the war.<sup>369</sup> Frederick Bowman, ex-18B and supporter of the Duke of Bedford, was to be knighted by the 'king' for his services to the crown.<sup>370</sup> Harvey, dressed up in a Robin Hood tunic, played his flute, whilst Potocki "as high priest of the sun" lit the incense, intoned a prayer and knighted Bowman.<sup>371</sup> Can Potocki or Harvey be taken seriously given the nature of these events, and the obscurity of their publications?

The answer, perhaps surprisingly, is yes, for on the one hand Harvey was in the process of becoming an eminent architectural historian and on the other, Potocki's activities were not limited to sending 'court circulars' to fellow eccentrics. The intriguing aspect about John Hooper Harvey was his ability to work at many different levels. His 'gutter antisemitism' letter to Arnold Leese in April 1940 has already been mentioned,<sup>372</sup> yet with The Heritage he could produce more reasoned 'Aryan' antisemitism.



Moreover, although he had contributed to The Fascist in the 1930s, at the same point he had written respectable academic articles.<sup>373</sup> In the war itself Harvey's first major book, Henry Yevele, managed to combine both this academic respectability and Harvey's 'Nordic' philosophy.<sup>374</sup> In it Harvey praised the Gothic (which he had earlier stated was the same as the Aryan), attacked cosmopolitanism and planning and advocated a Golden Age of the fourteenth century.<sup>375</sup>

His next work, Gothic England, completed at the end of the war, was a similar mixture. Whereas in The Heritage of Britain he had bluntly praised Edward I's treatment of the Jews, in Gothic England the phraseology was more guarded. Here Harvey stated that "England had been given back to the English by Edward I";<sup>376</sup> the same message - but a respectable tone. This was the great danger of Harvey, the ability to communicate an anti-Jewish message in a publicly acceptable manner. In his most famous book, The Plantagenets, Harvey did this at the most sophisticated level.<sup>377</sup> Again he praised "the statesmanship of Edward's decision to remove the whole Jewish community", but in this case Harvey actually managed to suggest that the Jews had indeed committed ritual murders in twelfth and thirteenth century Britain.<sup>378</sup> The subtle way in which Harvey was able to bring in the medieval blood libel against the Jews is shown by the fact that it is only now, nearly forty years later, that this book, a school best-seller, has been suppressed by its publishers.<sup>379</sup>

Harvey thus succeeded in bringing extremist anti-semitic ideas into mainstream British society. However,

he was not alone. Antisemitic periodicals like the Social Crediter, Weekly Angles or The Vanguard had a circulation of up to 2,000.<sup>380</sup> The Patriot may have had up to 5,000 subscribers.<sup>381</sup> Their influence on their own was thus not great. In 1940 the Home Secretary, John Anderson, suggested that the 20 or so fascist or antisemitic periodicals "circulate among the same limited groups of people".<sup>382</sup> As will be shown shortly this in itself did serve a function, but these figures show the limited appeal of such antisemitism. However, the ideas contained in them were not exclusive to these periodicals. Again a system of diffusion into wider society operated. In the war, both the periodical Truth, located in most 'respectable' clubs and with links to the Conservative Party,<sup>383</sup> and the popular publicist, Douglas Reed, were putting out similar ideas to those of The Patriot or the Social Crediter. The language was less hysterical but the message was similar. Reed and Truth attacked l6B as Jewish revenge;<sup>384</sup> the Beveridge Report, P.E.P. and Federal Union were seen in terms of Jewish conspiracy,<sup>385</sup> as was the black market;<sup>386</sup> and both doubted the stories of Jewish persecution in Europe.<sup>387</sup> Reed even went as far as suggesting the Jewish origins of Hitlerism, the same view held by the Social Credit Secretariat.<sup>388</sup> The impact of Reed and Truth on British society will be left to later chapters, but at this point it is necessary to point out that both were ways that extreme antisemitism managed to percolate into wider society.

What then of Potocki? Whilst the total eccentricity of his behaviour and appearance paradoxically made him



an acceptable literary figure in the 1930s,<sup>389</sup> the political impact of the Right Review and his Polish Royalist Associated was negligible.<sup>390</sup> However, the war gave Potocki a certain prominence despite his obvious crankiness. The antisemitic world was short of outlets to print its material, and the mad Pole, with his primitive press, became a vital link in helping extremist groups to get their message across. In 1942 he published the literature of the 18B Publicity Council,<sup>391</sup> and a year later, after he had fallen out with the latter group, Potocki printed the second edition of Alexander Ratcliffe's The Truth About the Jews.<sup>392</sup> A Jewish Chronicle reporter suggested it was "probably the vilest antisemitic pamphlet yet produced in Britain".<sup>393</sup> In it Jews were blamed for 90% of all crimes, pornography, birth control, and the war.<sup>394</sup> Perhaps the worst feature of the book was his claim that "there is not a single authentic case on record of a single Jew having been massacred or unlawfully put to death under the Hitler regime".<sup>395</sup>

The book became notorious and although only several thousand were produced, according to the Glasgow police "100,000 copies could easily have been printed and sold".<sup>396</sup> The circulation of The Truth About the Jews also illustrates how closely knit the antisemitic world was in Britain during the war. The Potocki/Ratcliffe link was only one of several connections. The book was also sold by Essential Books, an antisemitic distributor and publisher of Taunton, and by Edward Godfrey, the English National Association leader.<sup>397</sup> John Hooper Harvey's

home itself acted as a nucleus keeping an antisemitic coterie alive in Britain. Potocki, Alfred Day and Frederick Bowman were just some of the extremists given refuge by Harvey in the war.<sup>398</sup> Journals such as The Vanguard and The Patriot (whose offices were also a meeting place for ex-18B detainees) also kept individuals in touch with one another in this most difficult of periods.<sup>399</sup> Such antisemitic coterie were not limited to the organized extremist groups and papers. In Durham, a viciously antisemitic Mass-Observer spent the war attacking Jews along with her husband, friends, coalman and grocer!<sup>400</sup>

These coterie also performed the function of keeping antisemitic ideas alive in Britain. Indeed, in November 1941 The Patriot launched a desperate appeal for funds to keep the journal going, stressing "the need for an organ devoted both to exposing the undermining of the country's social structure and to providing ideas for maintaining intact the heritage which has come to British people".<sup>401</sup> Elsewhere other groups fulfilled the same function. It is highly ironic that the Britons Publishing Company produced two new editions of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion in the war, at the same time as the Germans were using it as a major propaganda weapon against the Allies.<sup>402</sup>

At the very end of the war Douglas Hyde could write that "there is now a growing network of (antisemitic) bookshops (in Britain) stretching from Liverpool to Taunton".<sup>403</sup> Hyde was exaggerating to an extent because there were few in between,<sup>404</sup> but his point that the antisemitic and fascist world had re-established itself by May 1945 is a sound one. By the efforts of the extremist organizations



and journals the antisemitic world in Britain had been maintained during the war. Limited in size, it was still large enough to keep the government worried about a fascist or antisemitic threat to British society.<sup>405</sup> Whilst the government's fears may have been exaggerated, it is true that the foundations had already been laid for the post-war fascist revival. Under the guise of the League of Ex-Servicemen and later Mosley's Union Movement, fascist violence, so prominent in the 1930s, was to return to the streets of the East End of London after the war. What had happened to the East End Jewish-Gentile relations in between these two periods will be the subject of the next chapter.

FOOTNOTES: Chapter 2

1. Encyclopedia Judaica, (vol.3) 'Anti-Semitic Political Parties' (Jerusalem, 1971), 79.
2. By the outbreak of the war even the B.U.F., the biggest fascist group, was operating on the fringe of political respectability. However, five years earlier when under the Rothermere patronage, this could not be said. This shows the danger in permanently classifying such groups as beyond the political pale. M. Billig, Fascists: A Social Psychological View of the National Front (London, 1978), 105 makes this point about the National Front and its rapid transformation from the lunatic fringe to political credibility. Since Billig's book was published, the National Front's relapse back to the fringe has been equally rapid.
3. Such as Hilaire Belloc, A.K. Chesterton and Cuthbert Reavely.
4. For Truth see chapter 4 p.309-12.
5. See chapter 1 p.74 for an outline of the splinterings of the British radical right in the late 1930s.
6. Quoted by Robert Skidelsky, Oswald Mosley (London, 1975), 440.
7. Skidelsky, *ibid*; 332 claims a figure of 40,000 at the war's outbreak. G.C. Webber, 'Patterns of Membership of and support for the British Union of Fascists', Journal of Contemporary History 19 (1984), 578-9 for a critique of Skidelsky's estimate. However, Nicholas Mosley's comment that in the summer of 1939 "the old spirit of British Union seemed to come alive again" is perceptive - the peace campaign gave the movement a new kind of conflict to thrive upon. See his Beyond the Pale: Sir Oswald Mosley 1933 - 1980 (London, 1983), 157.
8. Skidelsky, *op. cit.*; 442.
9. See the Special Branch reports of 14 October 1938 and September 1939 in HO 144/21 281/98-102 and HO 144/21429/16-20 respectively. Not all East Enders were alienated by Mosley's peace campaign. Phil Piratin remembers the loss of support due to the attention turning away from local issues such as housing and jobs, but also the B.U.F. making a limited impact from the despair at the thought of war in 1939 from East Enders. Interview with the author 18 July 1984.
10. According to a Special Branch report of 18 September 1939 in HO 144/21429/16-20.



11. *ibid.* This is confirmed by a regional study of the B.U.F. See S. Rawnsley, 'Fascism and Fascists in Britain in the 1930s' (Ph.D. University of Bradford, 1981), 208.
12. The Trevelyan Scholarship Project, 'The British Union of Fascists in Yorkshire 1934 - 40' (Unpublished ms. Leeds, 1960), 13 comments that branches were as strong in 1939 as in 1936. To put this in perspective in 1935 Leeds had 135 members. See Special Branch Report of February 1935 in HO 144/20144/123-132 quoted by Webber, *op. cit.*; 584.
13. For Birmingham's growth from 50 in 1937 to 100 in 1938 - 9 see John D. Brewer, Mosley's Men: The B.U.F. in the West Midlands (Aldershot, 1984), 78. A Special Branch report of 23 March 1936 confirms these low figures, in HO 144/20147/378-87 and HO 144/21061/311. Quoted by Webber, *op. cit.*; 584.
14. Statement by Anderson in reply to J. Wedgwood in Hansard H.C. vol.363, col. 966-7, 25 July 1940. A Cabinet memo on British Union by Herbert Morrison on 14 April 1943 put the total at between 8 - 10,000 paying members in 180 - 200 districts. See CAB 66/35 WP (43) 148.
15. The figure is from a Special Branch report of 9 March 1936. It suggested a maximum membership of 150. The League itself claimed 2,500 members. In HO 45/24967/37.
16. J.E. Morell, 'The Life and Opinions of A.S. Leese: A Study in Extreme Antisemitism' (M.A. Sheffield, 1974), 25 suggests that the I.F.L.'s pacifism before the war gave it a greater level of support. I have come across no evidence to support this. H. Lockwood, a senior member of the I.F.L., told the 18B Advisory Committee in January 1941 that it had "never more than 30 or 40" members. In HO 283/46 L34 notes of Appeal meeting 29 January 1941.
17. The New Pioneer was started in December 1938. It was well produced and had a general volkisch philosophy, its contributors including John Beckett, William Joyce, Lord Lymington, A.K. Chesterton and Anthony Ludoviki.
18. Richard Griffiths, Fellow Travellers of the Right: British Enthusiasts for Nazi Germany 1933 - 9 (London, 1980), 377 argues the case for their isolation by 1939. G. Webber, *op. cit.*; 598 suggests that Griffiths is wrong to depict the anti-war groups of 1939 as extremist. Whilst it is true that some people might have joined these organizations seeing them as respectable anti-war groups, it does not distract from their extremist stance. Only isolated commentators such as Ward-Price and Collin Brooks acted as a link between the 'respectable' world and these fringe groups.



19. Figures from Griffiths, op. cit.; 307.
20. The Link's organ the Anglo-German Review was strongly antisemitic. Domville in December 1938 criticised the Baldwin appeal for Jewish refugees as it "showed a lack of understanding of the mentality of other countries". Quoted by Simon Haxey, Tory M.P. (London, 1942), 205.
21. Both Griffiths, op. cit.; 311 and Z. Zeman, Nazi Propaganda (London, 1973), 111 suggest this.
22. She was also a Mass-Observer. See M - OA: Diarist S390, 8 September 1939.
23. From an MI5 report in late 1936. Quoted by The Guardian, 9 November 1983.
24. For Joyce's career see J.A. Cole, Lord Haw-Haw and William Joyce: The Full Story (London, 1964).
25. The approach is mentioned in Colin Cross, The Fascists in Britain (London, 1961), 184 - 5.
26. David Pryce-Jones, Unity Mitford: A Quest (London, 1976), 232-4, deals thoroughly with this personal crisis.
27. 'Mosley's Message', 1 September 1939. A copy is in the Ivan Greenberg papers 110/5.
28. According to a Special Branch report of 18 September 1939 in HO 144/21429/16-20. For an account of an East End Company officer in the A.F.S. who was a fascist see Anon, The Bells Go Down: The Diary of A London A.F.S. Man (London, 1942).
29. Beckett's estimate on B.U.F. numbers is to be found in Time and Tide vol.20 no.49 (16 December 1939). For reaction to this see Time and Tide vol.21 no.2 (13 January 1940).
30. Report of 18 September 1939 in HO 144/21429/16-20. HO 45/24891/84 has a letter from D. Theou explaining why she joined British Union and not the P.P.U. after the outbreak of war. In her view, P.P.U. would not have defended Britain.
31. Special Branch memo of 18 September 1939 in HO 144/21429/16-20. The estimate for February 1938 is in HO 144/21281/24-5. It also needs to be taken into account that in 1938 Action had a B.U.F. 'rival' in Blackshirt.
32. Metropolitan Police figures for August and September in MEPO 2/3127.
33. District instructions to the B.U.F. 14 September 1939 in HO 144/21429/65-7.



34. The meetings were on 20 September and 24 September 1939. See the J.D.C. reports in C6/5/1/1. Action no.187 (30 September 1939) gives the same figure of 300 for the latter meeting.
35. Special Branch memos on the B.U.F., September 1939(?) in HO 144/21429/16-20.
36. For the censorship see the letter to the public prosecutor, Sir D. Somervill 26 September 1939, referring to Action of 26 September 1939 in HO 144/21429/4-5. The Sunday Dispatch, 8 September 1939 has comment on this as has Action itself - see the issue of 12 October 1939, no.189.
37. For instance in a meeting on 24 September 1939 'Mick' Clarke did not specifically mention the Jews for fear of the police. See C6/5/1/1. MEPO 2/3127 for September 1939 commented on the month that "there has been little active Jew-baiting".
38. Quoted by Action no.187 (30 September 1939).
39. Neville Laski, President of the Board of Deputies, commented in a general meeting of this organization on the problems of the epidemic of fascist slogans in the black-out and the difficulty in catching the offenders. See the B of D minutes, A30 15 October 1939. A Metropolitan police report of 18 October 1939 suggested that this was part of an official B.U.F. campaign, referring particularly to the addition of a star of David to the crown on government posters. In HO 144/21429/100.
40. Angus Calder, The People's War: Britain 1939 - 45 (London, 1969), 61-2 refers to this "succinct" change. See also the Metropolitan Police report in note 39.
41. See the MI5 Report of October 1939 on 'The Fascist Movement in this Country' in HO 144/22454/185-8. For further details of the League see file HO 144/21247.
42. See the Branch comment of 16 September 1939 in HO 144/21382/290-6 or MI5, October 1939 in HO 144/22454/185-8. Leese's own explanation in a circular of 14 September to I.F.L. members was that the closure of the branches was due to financial problems and the ill-health of Leese himself. Unbeknown to both the Security forces, Leese intended to continue the I.F.L. in different premises. See M-O A: Politics TC Box 10 File C.
43. Special Branch report 16 September 1939 in HO 144/21382/290-6.
44. See Board of Deputies memo to New Scotland Yard, October 1939 on the I.F.L. in C6/10/26. The main tasks were to chalk slogans, deface posters and enter into conversation on the 'Jews' War' as much as possible.



45. Although the Special Branch report of 16 September 1939 suggested that Angles had not been seen since August 1939, the weekly publication did continue and there were issues on the 2nd and 9th of September 1939.
46. The change is outlined in a MI5 report of October 1939 in HO 144/22454/85-9. M. Billig, op. cit.; 98-102 discusses the idea of separating coteries, pressure groups (or front) and political parties and how there can be movement from one to another.
47. This organization has not received any attention from students of British fascism. Although denying the title 'fascist', it was viciously antisemitic, nationalist and anti-communist. For the denial of fascism by its leader see the Hackney Gazette, 6 December 1939.
48. Houston's B.U.F. career is highlighted in two Special Branch reports of 24 October 1935 and 2 November 1936 in HO 144/20145/14-17 and HO 144/21062/283 respectively. Two recently released Home Office files, HO 45/25713 and HO 283/41 deal with Houston's career and 18B internment.
49. Houston claimed to have left the B.U.F. in 1936. See the Hackney Gazette, 6 December 1939.
50. Houston was involved in several 'front' meetings of extremist antisemitic groups in April and May 1939. In both Houston threatened Jews with pogroms. See Jewish Chronicle, 21 April 1939 and 19 May 1939 or Special Branch and Board of Deputy reports of 5 May 1939 and 23 May 1939 on the Trafalgar Square meetings in HO 144/22454/24-31.
51. Special Branch report of 4 October 1939 on pro-Nazi antisemitic groups in HO 144/22454/96-7.
52. See the J.D.C. reports on the Nationalist Association meetings of 24 September 1939 and 20 November 1939, both at Finsbury Square. In the latter, Houston's references to eskimos was made. Both in C6/5/1/1.
53. Report of J.D.C. on 4 December 1939 meeting at Finsbury Pavement in *ibid*.
54. For this violence and the Nationalist Association's singing of Captain Ramsay's 'Onward Christian Soldiers' see the Jewish Chronicle, 15 December 1939 or the Hackney Gazette, 6 December 1939.
55. In a letter to Neville Laski, 20 October 1939 in C6/9/1/3F3. The left-wing columnist Hannen Swaffer also suggested this. See the Jewish Chronicle, 22



- December 1939. The only evidence for this is a weekly B.U.F. instruction sheet of 9 October 1939 withdrawing three antisemitic leaflets from circulation - 'American Hebrew', 'Jews Threaten Britain' and Mosley's Message. In HO 144/21129/100.
56. A J.D.C. report on meetings in Ridley Road of 1 October 1939 (Raven Thomson) and 8 October 1939 (Mosley) suggest an increasing antisemitism. Both in C6/5/1/1.
  57. The estimate is Special Branch's. See MEPO 2/3/27 for October 1939. Mosley's wife estimated it at 3,000 and claimed "it was far and away the most moving speech I ever heard him make". His sister-in-law, Baroness Ravensdale, felt otherwise commenting "How comical". See Diana Mosley, A Life of Contrasts (London, 1977), 162 and Baroness Ravensdale, In Many Rhythms (London, 1953), 147.
  58. This was Young at Ridley Road 12 November where less than 200 attended. See J.D.C. report in C6/9/1/3.
  59. MEPO 2/3127 for November 1939 comments on the slight increase in meetings but the small numbers attending. In Manchester, the main B.U.F. provincial stronghold, a similar decline occurred. See C6/1/1/2 JD report for 24 October 1939 and Council of Manchester and Salford Jews Annual Report 1939 - 40 (Manchester, 1940).
  60. J.D.C. report in C6/9/1/3 for the meeting in Buckfast Street, 19 November.
  61. Quoted by Action no.195 (23 November 1939).
  62. See notes 60 and 61.
  63. The eleven page pamphlet is available in the Wiener Library. Action no.204 (1 February 1940), claimed that 20,000 copies were sold in the first 4 days and that it was "the war's best seller". They also claimed sales would soon be 250,000. No evidence is available to confirm these figures.
  64. O. Mosley, The British Peace: How to Get It (London, 1940), 9.
  65. N. Mosley, op. cit.; 232-3. This contrasts with Mosley's later contention that "a world conspiracy run by the Jews" was "complete nonsense", in his autobiography My Life (London, 1968), 342.
  66. 'Jobs for Aliens', Action no.196 (30 November 1939). In December 1939 3 Dalston B.U.F. members were charged for putting up a notice 'Aliens sign for British jobs'. Quoted by the Hackney Gazette, 4 December 1939.
  67. Action no.211 (28 March 1940). Both E. Allen, It Shall Not Happen Here: Anti-Semitism, Fascists and Civil



- Liberty (London, 1943), 13 and New Statesman vol.19 (6 January 1940) comment on the B.U.F.'s concentration on the 'refujews'.
68. As early as 23 September 1939. See Action no.186 of this date.
  69. Action no.209 (7 March 1940). For other example see Action no.188 (5 October 1939) - editorial comment "Stop Profiteering" or Peter Heyward 'Food Control Committees', Action no.201 (11 January 1940).
  70. In 'London Diary' the columnist commented on meeting a fascist in London who "spoke with some confidence about the success of the word 'refujew', which was going over well in places like Manchester, Leeds and the East End of London". In New Statesman vol.19 (6 January 1940).
  71. March 1940 memo on 'Anti-War Groups' in INF 1/319.
  72. J.D.C. report on 13 May 1940 Brighton meeting in C6/5/1/1.
  73. See the reports for December 1939 and January 1940 in MEPO 2/3127.
  74. *ibid.* for February 1940. A Home Office official put the decline down to the cold weather. See J.M.R. minutes 22 February 1940 in HO 144/21382/337. The J.D.C. reports for February 1940 comment on there being less than 100 regulars at the B.U.F. stronghold of Ridley Road. In C6/5/1/1.
  75. The details of the conference can be found in a Special Branch report of 1 February 1940 in HO 45/24895/3. 450 people attended the conference. See MEPO 2/3127 for January 1940.
  76. Mass Observation, War Begins at Home (London, 1940), 421-2.
  77. Quoted by the Jewish Chronicle, 19 January 1940.
  78. Webster, although a member of the Nationalist Association, formed his own organization in February 1940, the Anglo-Irish Fellowship. This attracted many Irish B.U.F. supporters and attempted to connect the Irish issue to the Jewish question. Hence on 26 February at Finsbury Webster's message was on "Irish girls who were on the streets of London" sent out "to earn money by the Jews". See C6/5/1/1. For Webster's subsequent career in founding Essential Books in 1943 and for his earlier activities see the Special Branch report of 28 April 1943 in HO 45/25398/213-7.
  79. At a meeting of 27 March 1940. See C6/5/1/1. See MEPO 2/3127 for January and February 1940 for further comments on the Nationalist Association.



80. A J.D.C. report for a Houston meeting of 20 November 1939 reported that 4 policemen, including one sergeant, grinned at his antisemitic jokes. A similar reaction occurred at B.U.F. meetings and led to the disciplining of the police in charge of the East End fascist meetings. See Daily Telegraph, 22 December 1939 and Action no.197 (7 December 1939) and no.200 (4 January 1940) for the B.U.F. reaction.
81. See C6/5/1/1 J.D.C. report for 27 March 1940.
82. INF 1/319 Home Intelligence memo on 'antiwar movements'. March 1940 commented that the I.F.L. was limited in operation to London and to distributing Angles. A J.D.C. report for 8 March 1940 commented on the public appearance of Angles at Finsbury Square and Hyde Park. It was sold as "the paper for white men" and "not Jewish mongrel racials". See C6/9/1/3. It was also sold at more respectable peace meetings such as Lord Tavistock's on 3 April 1940, according to the Jewish Chronicle, 5 April 1940.
83. According to a Special Branch report of 20 February 1940 in HO 45/24895/16. See also Action no.206 (15 February 1940) for an appeal for funds for the Leeds and Silvertown by-elections.
84. Action no.213 (4 April 1940) commented on the need to involve women, and the line that should be used - "Why sacrifice your sons for the sake of Jewish finance?" The Jewish Chronicle, 8 March 1940 noticed the large proportion of women in a B.U.F. meeting at Finsbury Square.
85. A Special Branch report of 27 March 1940 commented on Mosley's instructions for increased efforts in Hackney, Bethnal Green, Shoreditch and Limehouse. Mick Clarke, the East London inspector, was to devote all his time to this. In HO 45/24895/27.
86. Out of the 7 there were 4 branches in West Ham according to the B.U.F. conference on 30 January 1940. See the Special Branch report of 1 February 1940 in HO 45/24895/6. The Jewish Chronicle, 23 February 1940 pointed out that there was no local B.U.F. branch.
87. M-OA: FR39 'Silvertown By-Election 29 February 1940, suggested that "Moran never had a chance in Silvertown".
88. Action no.206 (15 February 1940). Moran also stressed this. See the Jewish Chronicle, 23 February 1940 for his campaign.
89. For its attack on Labour see Action no.206 (15 February 1940) and for the Communists, M-OA:FR39 and the B.U.F. slogan "Vote for Pollittski or Peace".



90. The circulation figures are in M-OA: FR39.
91. A summary of Silvertown Dawn can be found in the Jewish Chronicle, 23 February 1940.
92. F.W.S. Craig, Minor Parties at British Parliamentary Elections 1885 - 1974 (London, 1975), 12 has the details. The 151 represented .3% of the electorate.
93. M-OA: FR39 Pollitt in his election leaflet "Silvertown against Fascism" attacked the fascist version of peace, which was a disguise for a joint Chamberlain-Hitler war against Russia. The C.P., on the other hand, would not fight to save capitalism but to destroy it. Quoted in J. Attfield and S. Williams, 1939: The Communist Party and the War (London, 1983), 183.
94. M-OA: FR39. Only 18% felt the B.U.F. were entirely independent and a further 17% were doubtful. 46% didn't know at all.
95. *ibid.* Labour's Election News stressed the fascists' antisemitism and possibly helped to discredit it. The C.P. obtained nearly a thousand votes. See Craig, *op. cit.*; 20.
96. Action no.208 (29 February 1940). Blame was put down to press lies - Jewish power again.
97. British Union Quarterly vol.iv no.1 (Spring 1940).
98. Craig, *op. cit.*; 12.
99. Allen's election address was based on an appeal to ex-servicemen, stressing the need for "a land fit for heroes", as well as for British Peace and opposition to the alien quarrel of Jewish Finance. For a full copy see 'The Trevelyan Scholarship Project', *op. cit.*; 31-2. The support from the League of Ex-Servicemen, leader J. Taylor, which stated "We are not prepared to lend any support to a minority of international stockbrokers, moneybags or Jews" can be found in the Jewish Chronicle, 15 March 1940. For later activities of the League see this chapter p.161-2.
100. Again there was a mixture of opposition to international and local Jews. In the Leeds B.U.F. newsheet The North-East Leeds Pioneer, there were the usual comments such as "Conscript the Jews to fight in their own quarrel", as well as opposition to refugees stealing British jobs plus attacks on Burtons. The Yorkshire Evening News, 13 March 1940 commented on the proliferation of antisemitic posters.
101. Reported in M-OA:FR A61 'Extract from the Leeds North East By-Election'.
102. *ibid.* In Silvertown 31% of the M - O sample were "anti-Jew", only 14% at Leeds; however, the antisemitism of this 14% "was very fierce indeed".



103. Action no.211 (21 March 1940) commented on the good street attendances before the election. Mosley spoke to a meeting of 1,000 before the by-election. See H. Mosley, op. cit.; 162.
104. The recently released Home Office file on Mary Allen has details of her long and militant career, including her '18B' interview. See file HO 144/21933.
105. See her article on 'Nude Exhibitionism' in Action no.219 (16 May 1940).
106. Baroness Ravensdale, op. cit.; 147 comments on the Caxton Hall meeting. The report of the Holborn Hall meeting is in the Jewish Chronicle, 8 March 1940.
107. See note 34.
108. Action no.209 (7 March 1940). There were 103 B.U.F. meetings in March 1940 compared to 41 the month before. See MEPO 2/3127 for February and March 1940.
109. Civil Liberty no.13 (March 1940) commented on the dangers of discounting the Fascist threat and that its antisemitism continued despite receiving less press attention.
110. New Statesman vol.19 (27 April 1940). An editorial on British Fascism warned that they were carrying out "Their propaganda in circles from which the Fifth Column may hope to be recruited".
111. Raven Thompson was speaking at Finsbury Square in early April. See the Hackney Gazette, 8 April 1940. Flockhart, B.U.F. leader in Shoreditch, was prosecuted for the pogrom remark, reported in MEPO 2/3127 for April 1940.
112. In London 26 April 1940, Mosley referred to "the lackeys of usury whose humble task is to fit the noble mask of St. George over the repellent features of Shylock". Quoted by Action no.217 (2 May 1940). At Leeds, 3 days later Mosley referred to Leeds as "controlled by a Jewish council". In a response, the Yorkshire Post, 30 April 1940, called this claim "sheer stupidity".
113. The B.U.F.'s British Traders Bureau was set up early in 1939 by Peter Heyward. Its main activities were recruiting the small businessman, using the menace of the (Jewish) Chain store as the bogey. With the war it warned that the multiples would destroy the small man - see for example Heyward's Shopkeepers at War (London, 1940?). Its organ, The British Trader, advocated peace. In February 1940 efforts were made to increase the circulation of The British Trader (see Special Branch report of 20 February 1940 in HO 45/24895/16) and this appears to have had some success. Its new prominence fooled another Special



Branch report into thinking it was a new organization (April 1940 in MEPO 2/3/27), and the Jewish Chronicle referred to a Heyward meeting in late April where most of the sizeable audience came from Bethnal Green. 'Jock' Houston in his 18B Appeal interview, 29 April 1941, told the Advisory Committee that "the main point of (members) attachment to British Union (was that) they objected to cut price Jewish shops". Houston had been particularly active in North-East London. See HO 283/41/840436.

114. MEPO 2/3127 Special Branch report for May 1940.
115. HO 45/24895/31-4 Special Branch report for 22 April 1940. According to Mr. Watkins, M.P., the permit for the meeting was given "to the great annoyance of the vast majority of local people". Hansard H.C. vol36 col.354, 25 April 1940.
116. The figure is Special Branch's in a report for May 1940 in MEPO 2/3/27. The Jewish Chronicle, 10 May 1940, was less generous, suggesting only several hundred, and calling the meeting "a feeble affair".
117. Jewish Chronicle, 10 May 1940.
118. Quoted by Action no.218 (9 May 1940).
119. "Mick" Clarke claimed 800 people heard Thomas and himself speak in Hackney and South West Bethnal Green. See Action no.220 (23 May 1940).
120. Nicholas Mosley op. cit.; 165 has suggested that up to the invasion of the West, the B.U.F. peace policy was "tolerated if not electorally supported". This slightly oversimplifies the issue for there was violent opposition to Mosley and the B.U.F. before May 1940. A Northern member of the B.U.F., R. Bellamy, in his unpublished autobiography 'We Marched With Mosley', 3-4 claims that the only violent reaction to the B.U.F. was in Chadderton in May, when Mosley was attacked. However, there had been violence at earlier Manchester meetings in Wilmslow, November 1939. See Truth no.3296 (10 November 1939) for a sympathetic account to the B.U.F., and a J.D.C. report for December 1939 in C6/9/1/3 F3, for the reverse.
121. Philip Game of New Scotland Yard had instructed the police to take a strong line on anti-war activities in early May as feeling was very high and resentment easily aroused. Memo of 14 May 1940 in MEPO 2/3127. The closure of the 4 meetings is mentioned in the Special Branch report for May 1940, loc. cit.
122. The turn-around in Dalston is in a J.D.C. report for 25 May 1940 in C6/5/1/1. An earlier report for



- 14 May 1940, loc. cit.; had commented that the "man on the street was anti-Fascist but definitely not pro-Jewish".
123. Haslam, a 43 year old engineering director, and a veteran of the First World War, attacked Jews, rising prices, international finance and the sufferings of war. See M-OA: FR154: Middleton and Prestwich By-Election. Another B.U.F. newsheet, The Middleton and Prestwich Pioneer, had the usual line of "this is a quarrel of Jewish finance", but according to a reporter "no one was interested". See the Jewish Chronicle, 24 May 1940.
124. Even the Conservative candidate, Gates, fought on the anti-fascist issue - see M-OA: FR 154. A Home Intelligence report commented on the "high anti-fascist feeling", INF 1/264 no.11 (30 May 1940).
125. R. Bellamy, 'We Marched', 3-4, comments on the Mosley attack. According to Bellamy the B.U.F. had "only a meagre handful of members and contacts" in Middleton, whereas G.P. Sutherst, the organiser of the district, claimed 200 members, in an interview with S. Rawnsley, 16 February 1977. Rawnsley himself believes the 400 plus votes were not necessarily in support of the B.U.F. but more "a protest against the war". S. Rawnsley, 'Fascism and Fascists', 214.
126. The Secretary of State decided to amend Regulation 18B on 22 May 1940 to include association with hostile countries or being subject to foreign control. The Cabinet plan was to arrest 25 to 30 leading members and cripple the B.U.F. See CAB 65/7 WM 133 (140) 22 May 1940. According to Mass-Observation, the Mosley internment brought unanimous support: "Very seldom have observers found such a high degree of approval for anything". M-OA: FR135, The Public and Mosley. See INF1/264 no.6 (24 May 1940) for similar.
127. The figure is quoted by Herbert Morrison in CAB 66/35 WP (43) 48, 14 April 1943. The new Regulation 18AA making the B.U.F. illegal, and membership or the passing of its propaganda equally unlawful can be found in the Advisory Committee's recommendation on Mosley, 2 August 1940, HO 283/18/3.
128. For example, MI5 noted now the Imperial Fascist League, although not banned, had simply ceased to exist. MSW minutes 11 May 1943 in HO 45/24967/674960.
129. Illustrated by the excitement over the release of the Mosley papers. See for example, The Times, 13 December 1983.
130. Domvile wrote in his diaries "Had a talk to Carroll (editor of The Link's Anglo-German Review) - 'Link'



is dissolved", Domvile Diaries DOM/56, 4 September 1939. Domvile told the Daily Mail, 6 September 1939: "The Link, of course, was closed down as soon as war broke out...Now we are at war, the king's enemies are our enemies". Four members of The Link were arrested at the outbreak of war.

131. Domvile's diaries give good detail of the origins of the B.C.C.S.E. Out of a private luncheon in the second week of the war, involving Domvile and Carroll of The Link, Ben Greene and John Beckett of the British People's Party and Gordon Canning (ex-B.U.F.), a new Council of the ten present was formed. MI5 believed Domvile to be the moving spirit in an organization "with a fascist tinge". See report for October 1939 in HO 144/22454/88.
132. Some quickly left the B.C.C.S.E. when they realised its true nature. See the Jewish Chronicle, 13 October 1939 for this and a list of its other members. Beckett's claim was in the Daily Mirror, 20 October 1939. The B.C.C.S.E.'s biggest meeting attracted only 400 in January 1940, according to the Jewish Chronicle, 2 February 1940. See also HO 45/25698/840167/1 on John Beckett.
133. The B.C.C.S.E's 'Statement on the European Situation' and other documents can be found in M-OA: TC Politics Box 10 Files C - D. Time and Tide vol.20 no.43 (28 October 1939) described the group as "a home from home for unrepenting members of the discredited Link" and Harold Nicolson made a similar analysis in The Spectator vol.163 (27 October 1939).
134. By then another element had been added to this coterie, that of Norman Hay and Launcelot Lawton who ran Information and Policy, a 'volkisch', pro-fascist and pacifist paper. After a few hiccups, a meeting was arranged with Mosley on the 13 October 1939. According to Domvile, they made "good progress". See Dom 156, 7, 10, 12, 13 October 1939.
135. The MI5 report is of October 1939 in HO 144/22454/85-6.
136. See *ibid.* and Special Branch report of 16 September 1939 in HO 144/21382/298-9 and H.O. minutes of 24 September 1939 in the same.
137. See the MI5 report of October 1939 on the Right Club in HO 144/22454/87, and Special Branch report of 16 September 1939 in HO 144/21382/299.
138. *ibid.* In the Special Branch report it was stated that "it is reliably reported that the two have reached agreement".
139. Domvile diaries, report for 26 October 1939 in Dom/56.



140. *ibid.*
141. Dom/56 diary entry for 8 November 1939.
142. *ibid.*; diary entries for 22 November 1939 and 6 December 1939. Domville described the former meeting as "informal - over a cup of tea".
143. In January 1940 the B.U.F.'s two biggest meetings were private, 450 attending both. See Special Branch report for January 1940 in MEPO 2/3127. Other private antisemitic groups seeking an accommodation with the Nazis were coming into existence such as the 'Pro-British Association' - Special Branch report of 2 April 1940 for its activities October 1939 - February 1940 in HO 144/22454/112-3. Another fringe fascist-pacifist group was the People's Common Law Parliament which will be examined later.
144. At a meeting in Tavistock's house with Lymington, Marr, Fuller, Gordon-Canning, Beckett, Ben Greene, Stuart Morris (of the P.P.U.) and Domville. Diary entry for 13 February 1940 in Dom/56. The idea of such a deputation had been put forward earlier by the Nordic League which as early as 8 October 1939 had suggested contacting Germany via Ireland. See the MI5 note to Holderness of the Home Office, 13 October 1939 in HO 144/22454/102.
145. Mosley regarded Tavistock as "a good fellow, but woolly headed"; he also respected Greene of the B.C.C.S.E. but still felt John Beckett "was a crook". He was willing to co-operate with such a group because they were "sincere". Special Branch report 31 January 1940 in HO 45/24895/11. Domville reported that Mosley was "very interested in Tavistock's meeting" - diary entry for 15 February 1940 in Dom/56. McGovern's interest can be found in his autobiography, Neither Fear Nor Favour (London, 1960), 137-9, and Beaverbrook's in A.J.P. Taylor's Beaverbrook (London, 1972), 403. Tavistock felt the peace effort was doomed as the "British government did not want peace" - Dom/56 diary entry for 29 February 1940. F. Bowman's 18B related papers reveal that in May 1940 the Tavistock movement unsuccessfully attempted to contact the Duke of Windsor to achieve a negotiated peace. See HO 45/25729/860/19/1.
146. McGovern defended Tavistock after a meeting in London on the 3 April 1940. See the Jewish Chronicle, 12 April 1940. The platform was also shared in Glasgow. See the autobiography of Tavistock (later the Duke of Bedford) Years of Transition (London, 1949), 181 and correspondence to the author from J.T. Caldwell, 5 May 1985.
147. In HO 283/16/93.



148. Mosley's reaction to Birkett differentiating impeding the war effort from treachery was "gratitude"; see *ibid.* Stokes repeated this in a slightly distorted form in the Commons - Hansard HC vol.367 col.836-9, 10 December 1940.
149. The quotes from Mosley are from the second meeting of the Advisory Committee, 3 July 1940 in HO 283/14/84-5.
150. All quotes from Advisory Committee recommendations, 2 August 1940 HO 283/18/21.
151. Domvile, the Mosleys and the Ramsays dined together on the 26 July 1939; see Dom/56.
152. Material contained in a Special Branch report of 25 June 1940 on Commander Mary Allen's 18B file HO 144/21953/330-1.
153. Material on Lees can be found in a letter from Sidney Solomon of the Board of Deputies to Victor Gollancz, 31 December 1945. Lees was Treasurer of the British People's Party. In C6/10/22. See also the recently released files on Lees HO 45/25728 and HO 283/45. In HO 45/25728/860060/1. Scotland Yard reported on 24 May 1940 that Lees had been present at private meetings convened by Mosley "for the purpose of discussing with the leaders of various pro-fascist and anti-semitic groups the formation of a vast revolutionary organization, in which they would all collaborate". Special Branch in a report of 8 June 1940 in the same file commented on the meetings' aim of "carry(ing) on open and under-cover acts with the object of establishing a fascist government in Britain" but that "no concrete plans" had yet been made.
154. Within the I.F.L. there were a group, opposed to the leader Leese, who were according to MI5 "more German than the Germans". See the report for 3 March 1942 in HO 45/24967/674960/105-8. A similar group operated within the Nordic League. See Special Branch report for 16 September 1939 in HO 144/21382/298-9. As far as the B.U.F. was concerned, several individuals were actually found guilty of aiding the enemy, the most famous of whom were Duvivier and Crowle in January 1940. See the Jewish Chronicle, 2 February 1940 and Birkett's comments on the B.U.F., 5 June 1940 in HO 283/1/12-14 for details and Mosley's reactions.
155. Peter and Leni Gillman, Collar the Lot! How Britain Interned and Expelled its Wartime Refugees (London, 1980), 118 wisely differentiate subversion and collaboration. They define treason in this context as helping the German invasion through spying or sabotage, which will be employed as a definition here. Activities designed to bring about peace are not thus regarded as treasonable, but those which aimed to help a German victory over Britain and her allies are



156. Action no.218 (9 May 1940). This became part of the classic defence of B.U.F. war policy - see Mosley's My Answer (Ramsbury, Wilts, 1946), 40.
157. Quoted in Action no.219 (16 May 1940).
158. Action News Service no.3 (14 May 1940).
159. According to Special Branch the B.U.F. was attacking the Nordic League "in order to avoid suspicion of being labelled as pro-Nazi" and thus to avoid any government '5th column measures'. In his second 18B interview Mosley claimed he had no links to the Nordic League - "these people are (an) anathema to us". Lees of the League was in Mosley's words "certifiable". See Advisory Committee of 3 July 1940 in HO 283/14/91.
160. CAB 65/7 WM(28)(40) 18 May 1940.
161. CAB 65/7 WM(33)(40) 22 May 1940.
162. The first claim was by Peter and Leni Gillman, op. cit.; 122-3. They claim that it was a plot to remove Kell, head of MI5 and Anderson who were seen as too soft on Mosley. The arrests, in their words, were "stunningly convenient". The charge is repeated in Anthony Masters, The Man Who Was M: The Life of Maxwell Knight (Oxford, 1984), 89-90. According to Masters, the Kent-Wolkoff issue was used by Knight "in a bid to find an excuse for at last arresting and interning Mosley".
163. A.H.M. Ramsay, The Nameless War (Crawleigh, Devon, 1968 (first published 1952)), 99-100. Ramsay's explanation was that he did not want to cause difficulties to Chamberlain.
164. The latter leaflet which outlined that the war was one of revenge of International Jewish Finance, and that the last war as well was due to the satanic conspiracy of the Jewish 'octopus', was regarded as seditious by the authorities but the Home Office decided not to prosecute as its circulation was so small. See minutes of 22 November 1939 in HO 114/22454/103-110.
165. When asked about antisemitism, Wolkoff claimed "I was literally suckled on it", Earl Jowitt, Some Were Spies (London, 1954), 43. Kent claimed she was practically Ramsay's political secretary. loc.cit.; 85.
166. *ibid.*; 42. Nigel West has suggested that Kent was in fact a Moscow agent. See The Times, 10 December 1983. It is possible that Kent was accepting Soviet money but his subsequent neo-nazi career would suggest that Kent's heart was not with the Russian cause.
167. Anthony Masters, op. cit.; 80-9, deals thoroughly with the Kent case and MI5's involvement in it.



168. Jowitt, op. cit.; 49-55.
169. *ibid.*; 68 and Masters, op. cit.; 80.
170. Ramsay, op. cit.; 73, attempts to explain his interest in the papers as an innocent party. Jowitt, op. cit.; 49, points out that Ramsay indicated that he might well require at some point a copy of the two telegrams.
171. Hansard H.C. vol.360 col.1378-82, 9 May 1940. After Anderson said no differentiation was made, the important thing being that the war effort should not be impeded, Ramsay replied that Anderson had been confined by the "Jew-ridden press".
172. Ramsay, op. cit.; 102-3.
173. Wolkoff wrote to Joyce telling him to increase his antisemitism and warnings about freemasonry. See Jowitt, op. cit.; 70-1.
174. 'Subversive Activities in London' - a Confidential Annex in CAB 65/13 WM (40) 133, 22 May 1940.
175. CAB 65/7 WM 133 (40) 22 May 1940.
176. Masters, op. cit.; 89.
177. *ibid.*
178. An MI5 report for October 1939 on the Right Club stated that "there is talk of a military coup d'état but no agreement on leaders" - Mosley was regarded by some with suspicion. In HO 144/22454/85-7. Even Masters admits that Ramsay's aim was to replace Churchill and to organise a parliamentary coup to replace the government with one that would negotiate with Hitler, op. cit.; 81.
179. H.O. minutes, (February 1940?) in HO 45/24895/1.
180. In an interview with the Manchester Guardian's editor, W.P. Crozier on the 22 October 1943, Churchill claimed "I did it. I sanctioned it, because the country was in danger of destruction and we could run no risk..." In A.J.P. Taylor ed., W.P. Crozier Off the Record Political Interviews 1933 - 43, (London, 1973), 381.
181. Churchill claimed that if Mosley was Prime Minister it was "exactly what he would do". Telegram of 9 June 1940 in Churchill papers 20/14 quoted by Martin Gilbert, Winston S. Churchill: Finest Hour: 1939 - 41 (London, 1983), 486.
182. Advisory meeting for 22 July 1940 in HO 283/16/82-7.
183. Z.A.M. Zeman, op. cit.; 144, and Colin Cross, op. cit.; 183, suggest that the Nazis were more concerned with the friendship groups and the Right Club than the B.U.F.



184. This is not to suggest that either Domvile or Ramsay would have collaborated.
185. Norman Longmate, If Britain Had Fallen (London, 1972), 225 has details on the 'White List'.
186. Quoted by Diana Parkin in The Sunday Times, 18 December 1983.
187. Ramsay claimed this in the Kent-Wolkoff trial. See Jowitt, op. cit.; 45.
188. Marley had said this in the Lords on the 13 June 1940 - see the Manchester Guardian, 14 June 1940 for details. Ramsay got his solicitor, Oswald Hickson, to deny the charge in The Times, 29 June 1940. Hickson stated it was entirely untrue to say that Ramsay had been in touch with the enemy, is an enemy agent or would be approached by the enemy to assume dictatorial powers. Ramsay later sued the New York Times for suggesting that he was a traitor. See The Times, 1 August 1941. Ramsay received only a farthing's damages.
189. The title of David Littlejohn's The Patriotic Traitors: a history of collaboration in German-occupied Europe 1940 - 5 (London, 1972) suggests the ambivalence and contradictions of such people's patriotism.
190. Jowitt, op. cit.; 68. Wolkoff denied she had said that, although she admitted that her nick-name was 'Julius Streicher'.
191. *ibid.*; 42-3.
192. In Angles no.86 (9 September 1939). Leese said he understood but could not support such a view in war-time.
193. Jowitt, op. cit.; 66. In a letter one female friend of Wolkoff wrote to another, 18 December 1939, that she wished the Germans "could have got one good shot into the Hood".
194. MI5 report, 5 March 1942 on the I.F.L. in HO 45/24967/674960/105-9.
195. *ibid.*; in a letter of 19 April 1940. Harvey's career will be examined later.
196. Mosley in the 22 July 1940 Advisory meeting in HO 283/16/88.
197. In CAB 65/7 WM 133(40) 22 May 1940. The MI5 men said there was also no evidence of fifth column activities amongst B.U.F. leadership or rank and file.
198. Nigel West, MI5: British Security Service Operations (London, 1981), 120 and 129-31, has details on the

- major cases. A H.C.C.L. leaflet 'The B.U.F. Roll of Honour' has these and others in a more emotional form. See H.C.C.L. Archive 259/2 and also the recently released Home Office renegade files - HO 45/25799-25839.
199. Morrison memo on the B.U.F. in CAB 66/35 WP (43) 148, 14 April 1943.
200. Details of the numbers interned due to 18B can be found in file HO 45/24893.
201. The statement is Charles Solomon's, ex director of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in London, in the Jewish Bulletin no.10 (June 1942).
202. Colin Cross, The Fascists in Britain (London, 1961), 195, suggested that "British Fascism ended in May 1940 and has not since been revived under that name". Whilst technically correct, Cross's statement makes no allowances for groups that were composed of ex-fascists and whose policies were similar to the earlier fascist groups, which emerged during and after the Second World War.
203. Action no.221 (30 May 1940).
204. The Metropolitan Police report for June 1940 stated that there were five B.U.F. meetings; in MEPO 2/3127.
205. Lady Mosley in her 18B interview claimed that the B.U.F. was left in "a most appalling mess", salaries left unpaid and the continuous arrests making it impossible to continue Action. See HO 144/21995/22. Police found notes at the home of Richard 'Jock' Houston in July 1940 that indicated how British Union would continue secretly after the arrest of the major leaders. According to these notes Lord Lynton would become deputy leader. In HO 45/25713/840436/1.
206. Action no.222 (6 June 1940).
207. See Nelly Driver's unpublished autobiography 'From the Shadows of Exile', 47 for the situation in a local Lancashire branch in Nelson.
208. The Evening Standard, 5 June 1940 reported that the B.U.F.'s h.q. had reopened. A question was asked about this in the Commons by Mr. Silkin to which Anderson replied that it was being watched and that he was considering making the B.U.F. illegal. Hansard H.C., vol. 362 col.228, 20 June 1940.
209. The Daily Herald, 10 July 1940 has an account of the B.U.F. leafleting and whispering campaign from its Bethnal Green branch. The next day the police raided the office and removed the leaflets; see the East End Observer, 13 July 1940. This activity had prompted another question in the House. See Hansard vol.362 col.1322, 11 July 1940.



210. The Daily Herald, 1 August 1940; The Star, 13 August 1940 and the Sunday Express, 15 September 1940, have reports on these anonymous, and usually antisemitic letters. The Metropolitan Police reports for July, August and September 1940 comment on the decline of B.U.F. chalkings and stickybacks. See MEPO 2/3127 and also M-OA: 'Jokes and Wall-Writing' Box 246, File A, where in early October 1940 only 1 fascist slogan was spotted.
211. The New Statesman vol.19 (5 October 1940) and the Jewish Chronicle, 25 October 1940, have details of fascist whisperings and leaflets in the tubes. The Jewish Chronicle, 1 November 1940, commented that in Leicester Square and Finsbury Park there was even an attempt to stop Jews sheltering though the police soon stopped such activities. The notes referred to in note 205 found at Houston's flat include the claim that fascists were urged to join the Communists in their shelter campaign so as to embarrass the government, lead on to a Red scare which would then result in the release of Mosley!
212. The report on Mosley is by the governor of Brixton, 8 November 1940 in P.COM.9/878 and the Daily Telegraph is of 27 November 1940.
213. The Daily Telegraph, 17 October 1941 has details.
214. Daily Worker, 5 January 1943.
215. CAB 66/35 WP (43) 148, 14 April 1943. Morrison pointed out that there was disagreement on leadership and also on whether to view Germany as a friend or an enemy.
216. Nora Briscoe's 18B file HO 45/25741 covers the last days of active members of the Right Club before internment in January 1941.
217. A Special Branch report of 28 April 1943 in HO 45/25398 has details on Godfrey. Morrison commented on Godfrey's refusal to admit Mosley's leadership. See CAB C6/35 WP (43), 14 April 1943. A Jewish Defence Committee report of 21 August 1944 called Godfrey "a man of no importance, a pompous windbag". In C6/2/13e.
218. Morrison's estimate is in Hansard HC vol.387 col. 1329-30, 18 March 1943.
219. The J.D.C's in C6/2/13g. Two members, Stokes and Craven, were arrested for attempting to pass information to the Germans. See the Daily Worker for 13 February 1943 and 7 April 1943.
220. From February to April 1943 protest marches against the B.N.P. were organised. See the Jewish Chronicle, 26 February 1943 and 9 April 1943. A town meeting was called in Hackney to discuss the impact of the



- B.N.P. upon the borough - Hackney Gazette, 5 April 1943.
221. Godfrey outlined this difference to the Acton Gazette, 3 October 1943.
222. The B.N.P. policy can be best analysed from a variety of its leaflets available in the British Library - 'Six Points of Sanity', 'To All Private Traders', 'Foundations on which the B.N.P. is formed', all in 8184 a.8; and from its short-lived organ, British National News no.1-3 (17 August 1942 - 14 September 1942).
223. In 1942 the B.N.P. published Collin Brook's article first published in Truth - 'Antisemitism and Treachery'. This was without Brook's support - see the Daily Worker, 31 October 1942. The article outlined the essential alien nature of Jews in Britain and advocated apartheid as the solution. Godfrey was willing to go further and remove the Jews to another territory. See his 'My Views on the Jews' in the Acton Gazette, 10 December 1943.
224. For example, his statement in the British National News no.1 (17 August 1942) "for an honourable peace".
225. The point that the B.N.P. was used by ex-fascists for this purpose is stressed by Douglas Hyde, who at the time was the Daily Worker's correspondent on fascist matters. In an interview with the author, 15 September 1983. The Communist Party certainly made the most of its opposition to the B.N.P. See the Daily Worker, October 8, 28, 29, 31 1942 and February 5, 11, 13 1943 and April 7, 10 and 20 1943.
226. Potocki literature was circulated in the B.N.P.'s sister organization, the New Order Group. See New Order no.11 (11 June 1943). He also distributed Alexander Ratcliffe's The Truth About the Jews. See Special Branch report of 7 September 1943 in HO 45/25398/191.
227. The major B.N.P. meeting was to have happened at the Stoll Theatre, 21 February 1943. After much opposition the Theatre refused permission for the meeting. See the Daily Worker, 11 February 1943.
228. Godfrey claimed he was closing down the B.N.P. because of the attacks on it as a fascist group. However, several days later the E.N.A. emerged dedicated to "the banner of St. George and Merrie England" - the Jewish Chronicle, 16 April 1943.
229. Morrison refused to take action against the B.N.P. as it "in no way merits the importance which has recently been attributed to it, and which tends to give it a needless advertisement". Hansard HC vol.387 col. 1329-30, 18 March 1943.
230. The address can be found in the Acton Gazette, 10 Dec-



231. M-OA: FR 1983. Acton by-election commented that his policy was chiefly anti-trust mixed in with anti-semitism. The attack on hidden forces can be found in the Acton Gazette, op. cit.
232. He received 3.1% of the vote - F.W.S. Craig, ed., British Parliamentary Election Results 1918 - 49 (Glasgow, 1969), 421. The public reactions to Godfrey can be found in M-O A: FR 1983.
233. M-OA: FR 1983 and also News Chronicle, 9 December 1943, comment on the farcical element of Godfrey's campaign.
234. A 'Jewish Defence' report of the Jewish Chronicle, 23 April 1943, made this point.
235. Acworth and the League of Ex-Servicemen's support can be found in the Acton Gazette, 3 December 1943. F.C. Chester-Hash, Chairman of the League, gave his "whole-hearted support to Godfrey" in a letter to the same paper, 10 December 1943. This contrasts strangely with Jeffrey Hamm's later remark to the author that he knew nothing of Godfrey. Hamm was to be the League's leader from 1944. Letter to the author from J. Hamm, 17 February 1984.
236. Bedford wrote for New Order no.11 (11 June 1943), and claimed that he would co-operate with the B.N.P. because of their opposition to war - interview with Douglas Hyde in the Daily Worker, 20 April 1943. A J.D.C. report suggested that Bedford may have given financial support to Godfrey - C6/2/13g.
237. In 1944 Godfrey was associated with the English Legion, whose policy was "out and out antisemitism" - On Guard no.6 (December 1947). Godfrey maintained his links with Bedford after the war, chairing a British People's Party meeting in December 1945. See the Jewish Central Information Office, 'Organised Antisemitism in Great Britain 1942 - 1946' (Unpublished ms., 1946), 13. However, the E.N.A. seems to have survived. At a meeting of another fascist revival group, the National Front After Victory, Ben Greene was meant to be its leader. See the Ivan Greenberg papers, Mocatta Library 110/5 'Memo on the National Front', 20 September 1945.
238. Figures for July 1943 quoted by Herbert Morrison, Hansard HC vol.400 col.2380, 16 June 1944.
239. The phrase is from the Jewish Central Information Office, op. cit.; 33.
240. See the Jewish Chronicle, 3 November 1939 for this and other details about the group.
241. A Mass-Observation report for September 1940 commented on a P.C.L.P. meeting with 10 elderly and



- middle class members present. M-OA: FR no.411, 'Parliament Christian'. For its attack on international usury see Parliament Christian, vol.2 no.4 (May - June 1942).
242. At a meeting at the Stoll Theatre, 1 November 1942, the audience shouted pro-Mosley and antisemitic remarks. One ex-18B forced his way to the front to speak to the audience. For reports of this meeting see the Jewish Chronicle, 6 November 1942 and J.D.C. report in C6/2/13e.
243. Scrutton's reluctance to attract fascists was reported in the Jewish Chronicle, 27 November 1942. The Spector documents in the Wiener Library on the British National Party comment that Godfrey instructed B.N.P. members to join P.C.L.P. branches but Scrutton refused to allow Godfrey permission to speak officially at P.C.L.P. meetings. The P.C.L.P. denied any antisemitic intention - see the Jewish Chronicle, 27 November 1942 and 25 December 1942. However, see Parliament Christian vol.2 no.11 (February 1943) for an attack on the Jewish responsibility for "the money power" and from that, planning. It also saw the Beveridge plan as a plot and stressed the involvement of I.M. Sieff in P.E.P. - Jewish Chronicle, 12 March 1943. The Germans gave support for the group in a radio broadcast, obviously believing it to be a pro-Nazi group. See Reynolds News, 16 May 1943 for details.
244. Mosley was visited by George Dunlop, 'soon to be prominent in the fascist revival, on 18 February 1942. Dunlop informed Mosley that he had registered a company for the 18Bs and that there was support for it being political. Mosley on this occasion and in a later visit by a Mr. Swan, 19 September 1942, stressed his opposition to this idea. See prison officer reports in HO 45/24891/403.
245. Morrison told Mander in the Commons that the London County Council had granted a certificate of registration in September 1942. Hansard HC vol.404 col.950, 2 November 1944.
246. The Council's aim was to spread information about the working of Regulation 18B. See their pamphlets The Case of G.R. Merriman (London, 1942), Magna Carta in the Dustbin (Little Beckham, Surrey, 1942) - printed by Count Potocki and finally Persecuted Women in Britain To-day (London, 1945).
247. On 14 September 1942 Mosley informed a visitor that he was writing to Osbert Sitwell to get a group of novelists together to attack the regulation. In HO 45/24891/404. The Patriot gave its support to the organization - see issues no.1085 (26 November 1942), no.1087 (10 December 1942), no.1090 (31 December 1942) and no.1132 (21 October 1943). The Jewish



- Central Information Office, 'Organised Antisemitism' 23, called The Patriot the 18B groups' "mouth-piece".
248. See the Daily Worker, 7 and 8 December 1942 and the Jewish Chronicle, 18 December 1942 as well as Mander's question in the Commons, 15 December 1942 - Hansard HC vol.385 col.1780.
249. Anthony Phelps, one of the principal speakers at the first meeting at Holborn Hall on 6 December 1942, had earlier claimed that he was not antisemitic as otherwise he would have been interned. See the Spector documents on the People's Common Law Parliament at the Wiener Library. A J.D.C. report of 11 December 1942 commented on the aim of the 18B Publicity Council to claim that internees were imprisoned because they were antisemites.
250. CAB 66/35 WP (43) 148, 14 April 1943. The function as a charitable group is commented on by Middleton fascist, G.P. Sutherst, who claimed that the Aid Fund "collected money, books, clothing". Interview with S. Rawnsley, 16 February 1977.
251. Yeats-Brown wrote to Williamson on 1 December 1942 "How I wish I could have you at the Holborn Town Hall!" E. Wrench, Francis Yeats-Brown 1886 - 1944 (London, 1948), 258.
252. At an '18B Revision meeting' 500 turned up in London during March 1943. See the Jewish Chronicle, 26 March 1943. Other meetings were purely social such as a concert at the Kingsway Hall - Domville Diaries, 27 May 1944 Dom 56, Patriot no.1132 (21 October 1943). The Treasurer of the 18B Detainees fund claimed they were disbursing 1,500 a year to dependants in an interview in the News Chronicle, 27 October 1944.
253. Daily Worker, 25 May 1943 comments on this rivalry.
254. See Hansard HC vol.387 cols.1316-17 and 1353-4, 18 March 1943 and HC vol.395 cols.409-14, 1 December 1943 for questions on the Lenin and other antisemitic wall-daubings. Douglas Hyde, I Believed: The Autobiography of a Former British Communist (London, 1951), 139, comments on the growth of such slogans, and the N.C.C.L.'s Civil Liberty, no.8 (March 1944) suggested that there was a direct link between the increase in antisemitism and the release of 18B detainees since 1942.
255. Reported by the Jewish Chronicle, 6 August 1943.
256. The story behind Mosley's release can be found in file HO 45/24894. Churchill's and Morrison's explanations are in A.J.P. Taylor, op. cit.; 381-2. Robert Skidelsky, op. cit.; 401, has claimed that the opposition to the release was "largely, though not exclusively,



- organised by the Communist Party". This disguises the genuine unpopularity of the decision - see M-OA: FR no.2011 'Mosley and After' or the Home Intelligence report of the "storm of indignation" - INF 1/292, no. 164 (16 - 23 November 1943).
257. See the Daily Worker, 19 November 1943.
258. J.D.C. report for 8 June 1944 in C6/2/13J on meetings at Notting Hill Gate and Tower Hill.
259. At one 18B Detainees Group meeting the speaker could not be heard for over an hour due to the opposition, and at the League of Ex-Servicemen meeting, their platform was overturned. Both reported in J.D.C., 30 August 1944 in C6/2/6.
260. *ibid.* Hamm was to claim that the League suffered from too much petty detail when he first joined it. See his autobiography, Action Replay (London, 1983), 136.
261. Details of Hamm's career can be found in Action Replay, *op. cit.* and in C6/9/3/1. Hamm suggested that the internment experience made him more anxious to get into politics. Letter to the author 17 February 1984. See also his 18B file HO 45/25740.
262. Details of the meetings can be found in the Jewish Chronicle, 10, 17 and 24 November and the Daily Worker, 6, 13 and 20 November 1944, and there is a J.D.C. report, November 1944, on the meetings in C6/9/13/(b). Pritt and Rathbone asked questions in the Commons concerning the League and Morrison replied that "its activities will...be very carefully watched". As it had only recently been formed Morrison said it was "too early to say whether it will acquire any significance". Hansard HC vol.404 cols.1526 and 1546, 9 November 1944.
263. Hamm put forward a Mosleyite economic nationalist argument along with his attacks on the Rothschilds. This brought forth a response from the crowd: "Here we go again. Here's where the Jew-baiting begins". Report in the Jewish Chronicle, 24 November 1944.
264. Burgess was 'Director of Propaganda' of the League of Ex-Servicemen. His comments were in the second meeting at Hyde Park, 12 November 1944. See the Jewish Chronicle, 17 November 1944.
265. The disagreement between Burgess and Dunlop, which later spread to Hamm and Dunlop, is well-covered in a defence report in the Spector files at the Wiener Library - Spector Documents 610 '18B Publicity Council', 24 November 1944. A J.D.C. report 'Personalities in the Fascist and Anti-Semitic Movement' May 1947 in C6/9/3/1, section on Dunlop, comments on the split.
266. The League did not manage any further meetings in



1944. At the end of the war 'Corporate Utilities', Burgess's fascist press, was distributing sheets "the Land Fit for Heroes" attacking alien finance. The League of Ex-Servicemen was issuing similar propaganda aimed at returning soldiers and asking whether they had a livelihood now. Again blame was put on our 'alien financial masters'. Both can be found in C6/9/1/3(7). Jeffrey Hamm became heavily involved in the anti-alien petition movement in Hampstead which will be dealt with later. See C6/3/3/6 J.D.C. report on Face the Facts Association, 30 November 1945.
267. Details of Burgess's and Dunlop's later careers can be found in C6/9/3/1 op. cit.
268. Hamm's account of the post-war campaign can be found in Action Replay, op. cit.; 137-40. For an account from the 'other side', namely the 43 group, see Alexander Hartog, Born to Sing (London, 1978), 74-7.
269. Hansard HL vol.140 col.40, 12 March 1946.
270. Membership names taken from an intelligence report for 6 July 1945 on the National Front in the Ivan Greenberg papers 110/5. The National Front After Victory has received little attention. F. Mullaly, 'Political Extremism in Britain' in A.G. Weidengeld and H. de C. Hastings (ed) Britain Between West and East (London, 1946), 47-8, is the fullest account, suggesting that the National Front was 'the nucleus around which an authoritarian right-wing movement' would ultimately take shape. David Baker, 'The Making of a British Fascist', also makes brief comment on the National Front.
271. At the first meeting, 16 June 1945, J.F.C. Fuller wanted a non-political facade to the group. Chesterton was not impressed but an ambiguous statement on a need to solve "the real Jewish problem without rancour" was passed. Details in Ivan Greenberg papers 110/5.
272. At the fourth meeting in September 1945 Chesterton was against merger with the British People's Party as he felt the National Front would be swamped. See Greenberg papers 110/5 report of 20 September 1945. The British People's Party was revived in June 1945, although its organ People's Post was produced in late April 1945. The B.P.P. in 1945 attracted two ex-Nordic League extremists, A.T.O. Lees and Elizabeth Berger. See Spector notes in Wiener Library 016: 251/0486.
273. Commented on Spector Documents, Wiener Library no.610 'Fascist National Front'.
274. *ibid.*; and Greenberg papers 110/5 report for 25 October 1945.



275. In September 1945 John Beckett sent a message for the need for unity against Communism and Lord Nuffield was said to be interested in such a movement - Greenberg papers 110/5 reports for 20 September 1945 and -25 October 1945.
276. In 1946 Chesterton and Mills both addressed the British People's Party's London Central Branch, according to a Spector report in the Wiener Library 251/0486. In the last issue of People's Post (February 1954) the League of Empire Loyalists was strongly recommended to members. See the Wiener Library Bulletin vol.8 no.5-6 (September - December 1954).
277. The other component was the British National Party (no relation to the Second World War Group). For details of the early make-up of the National Front see Martin Walker, The National Front (Glasgow, 1977), 74.
278. Ralph Jeffries (Douglas Hyde), 'Fascist Revival in Britain', On Guard, no.1 (July 1947).
279. The journals are The Patriot, The Weekly Review, The Vanguard and the Social Crediter. This does not include the various fascist publications, all suppressed by June 1940. The antisemitic publishing companies were The Britons, Boswell Publishing Company, Corporate Utilities, Essential Books and Potocki's Right Review press. These nine were not the only antisemitic outlets, but they were responsible for much of the extreme literature produced in the war.
280. C. Holmes, Antisemitism in British Society 1876 - 1939 (London, 1979), 173.
281. To groups like the I.F.L., the Militant Christian Patriots and the Britons The Protocols explained everything. To others, like the B.U.F. it was 'international Jewish Finance' or 'International Jewish Bolshevism', or both. However, this conspiracy theory did not refer directly to any written source such as The Protocols.
282. Richard Griffiths, op. cit.; 66-7 summarises The Patriot line on Germany through the 1930s.
283. Nesta Webster, 'The Record of The Patriot', The Patriot no.918 (14 September 1939). Richard Gilman, Behind World Revolution: The Strange Career of Nesta Webster (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1982), 51, comments on Webster's turnaround.
284. In a circular to members reported in a Special Branch report on the M.C.P., 16 September 1939 in HO 144/21382/297. However, as we shall see, its organ, Free Press, continued into 1940.
285. In the Social Crediter vol.3 no.10 (18 November 1939).



286. This is the actual title of a social credit pamphlet of 1941, written by P.R. Masson and Borge Jenson and published by K.R.P. Publications, Liverpool.
287. The Patriot no.919 (21 September 1939) and no.930 (7 December 1939).
288. Nesta Webster 'Our War Aims', The Patriot no.932 (21 December 1939). The Patriot's sister paper, The British Lion, actually quoted a Douglas article 'The Mark of the Beast' which suggested there was a Jewish conspiracy over Russia and Germany - vol.8 no.9 (November 1939).
289. Dell was prominent in the M.C.P. See his article 'Zionism, Hitler and Anti-semitism' in Free Press no.41 (November 1939).
290. Social Crediter vol.5 no.6 (19 October 1940) and (2 November 1940), vol.5 no.8 for comments on how "the Jews cannot lose the war". For The Patriot's support of the war, see 'Britain at War', in the 7 September 1939 issue, no.917, and the M.C.P.'s Free Press no.40 (October 1939).
291. In an article in the Weekly Review vol.29 no.11 (1 June 1939), 'What a Russian Alliance Means' it was suggested that Jewish financiers sponsored by Moscow, were forcing Germany into a world war. In the war itself hints of a German-Russian Jewish alliance were made - Weekly Review vol.30 no.14 (24 December 1939). However, as the historian of the Distributist movement has written, "the Weekly Review supported the Allied war effort but consistently emphasised that the number one enemy was the Soviet Union, not Nazism". J.P. Corrin, 'Chesterbelloc and the Distributist Circle' (Ph.D. Boston University, 1976), 338. Another pro-Polish anti-semitic organ was Count Potocki's Right Review which also supported the war. See no.11 (September 1939).
292. A. Calder, op. cit.; 57, comments that they viewed Hitler "as a reincarnation of Kaiser Wilhelm" and thus "fought to defend the British Empire from the Huns".
293. In a letter to H.H. Beamish, 6 November 1939 in HO 45/24967/674960/105-9, MI5 report 8 March 1942.
294. The MI5 report above comments on the pro-Hitler extremist/'moderate' split in the I.F.L. Leese wrote to the Social Crediter vol.4 no.8 (4 May 1940), saying that he did not view Hitler as a demi-god, but as "a German patriot. That is all, but it is not a little!"
295. From the Britons Archive, quoted by G. Lebzelter,



- Political Anti-Semitism in England 1918 - 39 (London, 1978), 82.
296. The Vanguard no.259 (11 November 1939).
297. Free Press no.40 (October 1939).
298. Holmes, op. cit.; 174, comments on this opposition.
299. For a brief history of P.E.P. and other planning groups see A. Marwick, Britain in the Century of Total War (London, 1968), 303-9.
300. A classic example is the I.F.L.'s, P.E.P. or Sovietism by Stealth: Britons Shall Be Slaves (London, 1935). For other cases of anti-planning antisemitism see the Spector documents, '18B Detainee Groups', 5-9, in The Wiener Library.
301. See for example the Medical Policy Association Bulletin, no.1 (1943) for the P.E.P. statement of 4 October 1938 that "we have started from the position that only in war, or under threat of war, will a British Government embark on large-scale planning". Available in the N.C.C.L. archive 310/6.
302. H. Kopsch, 'The Approach of the Conservative Party to Social Policy During World War II (Ph.D. University of London, 1970), 43 and 71, comments that the majority of Conservatives were opposed to a 'Beveridge Society'.
303. Guy Andrews (The Anonymous Group), For Britain: Truth in War-time (Southend-on-Sea, Essex, 1939), 3 and the British Lion vol.9 no.9 (November 1939) makes the claim that A.R.P. shows 'the plot' at home.
304. The phrase is Arnold Leese's - Weekly Angles no.89 (30 September 1939). The antisemitic world had campaigned against 'Jewish' evacuation before the war started. George Pitt-Rivers, Your Home Is Threatened (London, 1939), commented on the threat of bolshevisation by alien billeting and at the Nordic League in June 1939 A.F. Cole said evacuation was a Jewish-Bolshevik plot - N. Laski report, 27 June 1939 in HO 144/22545/50-2. The B.U.F.'s Action carried out a less conspiratorial (but equally gutter-like) campaign against Jewish evacuees until its demise in June 1940. See Action no.186 (23 September 1939) - "Jews Flood Brighton"; no.193, 9 November 1939 on the "second exodus" and no.196 (30 November 1939).
305. The phrase is Paul Addison's in The Road to 1945 (London, 1977), 73.
306. The originator of the movement was Clarence Streit whose Union Now (London, 1939) was popular on both sides of the Atlantic.



307. W.B. Curry, The Case for Federal Union (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1939). Curry was headmaster at the controversial Dartington School.
308. Social Crediter, vol.3 no.4 (7 October 1939) and Free Press no.41 (November, 1939). The latter also commented that such schemes "are anti-British stunts boosted by left-wing and Jewish elements who are taking no real part in the war".
309. See notes 64 and 5 above.
310. The New Statesman vol.18 (9 December 1939) pointed out the parallel campaign of Mosley and Free Press against Federal Union. For other examples see Weekly Angles no.101 (23 December 1939) - 'a Federal Union - Europe under Jewish Control', The Patriot no.936 (18 January 1940) - 'Beware of Federal Union', and no.946 (28 March 1940), no.1007 (29 May 1941), no.1047 (5 March 1942) and no.1142 (30 December 1943) for more cases. Captain Ramsay warned that if Federal Union was adopted it would mean the setting up of a Jewish Masonic super-state - Hansard HC vol.360 col.1200, 8 May 1940. Clarence Streit's second book, Union Now With Britain (London, 1941), 90, commented on how the Nazi answer to Federal Union "is to cry 'Jewish propaganda'".
311. Social Crediter vol.3 no.5 (14 October 1939).
312. For example Free Press no.40 (October 1939) commented that 18B marked the death of habeas corpus, and warned that it could be used against criticism of Jews such as Hore-Belisha.
313. Leading the way in the 18B/Protocols linkage was The Patriot. It pursued a constant anti-18B policy from 1941 onwards, often pointing out the supposed Jewish origin of the Regulation. See particularly Cuthbert Reavely's article in no.1015 (24 July 1941), and C.F. Ashton's comment that the Zionists were underneath it in no.1068 (30 July 1942) and G.F. Green's similar point in no.1147 (3 February 1944). Where The Patriot went, the Social Crediter was usually also to be found and editorial comment, vol.10 no.3 (27 March 1943) asked why no Jews had been imprisoned under 18B. Douglas Reed, A Prophet at Home (London, 1941), 78-80 and All Our Tomorrows (London, 1942), 311-2 suggested that the Regulation was to silence so-called anti-semites.
314. The British National Party attacked 18B as vicious persecution; it was "unBritish". See its 'Foundations' (1942) in British Library, British National Party - miscellaneous leaflets in 8184 a.8. Its sister organization, New Order no.11 (11 July 1943), claimed that 18B was to punish antisemitism. The Duke of Bedford's campaign against Regulation 18B also hinted that this was its *raison d'être*. See his Is This Justice? (Glasgow, 1943) and Regulation 18B (Glasgow, 1944).



The latter was a speech to the House of Lords, 25 January 1944.

315. For the reception to the Beveridge Report see Paul Addison, The Road to 1945 (London, 1977), 218.
316. INF 1/292 no.114 (1 - 8 December 1942).
317. This is the title of a Social Credit pamphlet of C.H. Douglas, (Liverpool, 1943).
318. The phrase is R.J. Northin's, The Beveridge Report: War and Finance (Bradford, 1943), 2.
319. Question Master, The Evolutionist's Brain Trust: What the B.B.C. Omitted (Edinburgh, 1943), 24 stated that out of 'Jewish controlled Federal Union, Atlantic Charter, Lease and Lend, Compulsory Communism and Fascism' and 18B "a silly Beveridge Report is born". C.H. Douglas, The Beveridge Plot, 7, suggested it was a plan to control all aspects of human life. Individual initiative, warned Douglas, was the most dangerous weapon against the plan, according to The Protocols. The Sieff link was stressed by the People's Common Law Parliament. See the Jewish Chronicle, 12 March 1943 for a report on this.
320. Despite the fuss that the M.P.A. created, it has until recently been neglected by medical historians. Frank Honigsbaum, The Division in British Medicine: A history of the separation of general practice from hospital care 1911 - 1918 (London, 1978), 275-283, remedies that gap though he perhaps overstresses the importance of the M.P.A.
321. These were the brothers Russell and Basil Steele. Information supplied by Basil Steele to the author, 29 August 1984. Russell Steele contributed to The Patriot throughout the war - see no.908 (6 July 1939), no.937 (25 January 1940) and no.1034 (4 December 1941).
322. This was the Australian, Bryan Moynihan. See his The Problem of the Medical Profession (Liverpool, 1943) published by Douglas's K.R.P. Publications and now obtainable from The Britons successors, Bloomfield Books.
323. Alexander Rugg-Gunn. Rugg-Gunn was a strange mixture of Viking romanticist and a modern pioneer of contact lenses. See The Times obituary, 7 September 1972 or The Lancet, 16 September 1972. His 'mystical' side is best illustrated in his Osiris and Odin: The Origin of Kingship (London, 1940) which argued for the 'awareness of that final ecstasy which is mystical union' (pp.163). His M.P.A. contribution was British Medicine and Alien Plans (Liverpool, 1943).
324. Bulletin no.1 can be found in the N.C.C.L. archive 310/6. It suggested that whatever the origins of The



Protocols "there is no doubt that they are effective plans".

325. Honigsbaum, op. cit.; 274-80.
326. *ibid.*; 280.
327. A plebiscite carried out by the M.P.A. in 1943 found that 77% of doctors were against state control. See B.W. Monahan in The Fig Tree no.1 (June 1954). The B.M.A. in September 1943 voted 200 to 10 against the Beveridge Report, the News Chronicle, 27 September 1943.
328. Its first Bulletin, 'The Opponents of the Medical Profession' suggested that all planning groups were interconnected and funded by International Jewish Financiers. It did not claim that The Protocols were not a forgery but suggested that they were still 'an effective plan' and that they explained the 'threat' to the medical profession. The Bulletin is available in the N.C.C.L. archive 310/6. Later issues maintained a conspiracy theory but did not mention The Protocols by name - see no.10 on the government's white paper on health in the Social Crediter, vol.11 no.26 (4 March 1944) and no.12 'The Apostacy of the B.M.A. in the same journal vol.12 no.14 and 15 (June 10 and 17, 1944).
329. In the Evening Standard, 9 September 1943, an interview with the 4 doctors produced the remarkable comment from the M.P.A. "We are not against the Jews, we are against Jewish Fascism". The impact of the M.P.A. is difficult to assess. Their bulletins had a maximum circulation of 2,500 (information supplied to the author from Basil Steele, the General Secretary of the M.P.A., letter of 29 August 1984), though their influence may have been much greater as prominent B.M.A. delegates were targets of their propaganda. Certainly the contemporary press felt it important - see The Spectator vol.173 (29 September 1944) and the comment of the Daily Worker, 5 May 1945 on its "astoundingly successful activities". The Social Crediter vol.17 no.16 (21 December 1946) claimed it had stopped the B.M.A. from negotiating with the government over the N.H.S. Act and Honigsbaum, op. cit.; 274, agrees with this analysis.
330. Harold Laski's article was in the New Statesman vol. 24 (11 July 1942).
331. In the Social Crediter, vol.8 no.20 (25 July 1942). Laski's misquoted statements joined other 'classic' Jewish statements supposedly accidentally outlining the Jewish plot. See The Britons, What the Jews Say About Themselves (London, 1943), in the Britons Miscellaneous Pamphlets in the British Library, W.P. 6762.



332. In a letter to Henry Williamson, 24 November 1942 quoted in E. Wrench, op. cit.; 257-8. For less optimistic comments from Yeats-Brown see loc.cit.; 259 or the comments of C.M. Stoddard in a letter to Miss Bloomfield 27 October 1942. In the British Library X529/18340.
333. At the start of the war the B.U.F. dismissed the Government White Paper on German atrocities as "hate propaganda". See Action, no.192 and 193, 2 and 9 November 1939. The I.F.L.'s Weekly Angles went further saying it was "a Jewish plot to help aliens here". Social Credit organs denied Nazi persecution of Jews throughout the war - see the Social Crediter vol.9 no.18 (9 January 1943) and vol.14 no.12 (26 May 1945) or Reality no.27 (14 July 1944) - suggesting there was no evidence of the Jewish atrocity reports and it was all a design to get British and U.S. sympathy. Perhaps the most notorious case of denial was Alexander Ratcliffe's Truth About the Jews (Glasgow, 1943), 15-6 which stated that there was not one single authenticated case of a Jew being massacred under the Hitler regime. The atrocity stories were 95% forgeries and the invention of the Jewish mind. Although journals such as Truth, The British Lion, The New Pioneer and The Patriot were dubious about the reality of Jewish persecution, the quasi-fascist Weekly Review condemned Nazi atrocities - see vol.36 no.13 (23 December 1942) - editorial on 'Mass-Murder'.
334. References to the Jewish responsibility for the Russian Revolution were constant, but other significant events in antisemitic history such as the Marconi Scandal were also referred to - see Weekly Review vol.30 no.18 (25 January 1940) which saw a parallel between the Hore-Belisha case and the Marconi Scandal or C.H. Douglas, The Big Idea (Liverpool, 1942), 44 for another mention of this incident. Past anti-semites such as Cobbett, Nesta Webster and Elizabeth Fry were popular sources of quotes. However, new dangers such as Federal Union, the Beveridge Plan, 18B, the Black Market, the influence of Harold Laski, and other topical issues were added to the old concerns.
335. Despite their similarities distributists felt that Social Crediters accepted the "vicious principles of industrial capitalism" - Weekly Review, vol.34 no.5 (30 October 1941).
336. See A.K. Chesterton's attack on A. Ratcliffe's 'crankiness' in the Weekly Review, vol.38 no. 25 (16 March 1944). The Social Crediter suggested on several occasions that Arnold Leese was controlled by Jews - vol.4 no.7 (27 April, 1940), vol.8 no.5 (11 April 1942). Leese returned the compliments telling his readers to look at Douglas's portrait and "to learn to recognise kosher when you see it".



Gothic Ripples no.7 (30 November 1945). See also issue no.8 (22 December 1945) for similar comments.

337. The right-wing Catholic World, represented by the Catholic Herald and The Tablet and even further to the right, the Weekly Review, saw Jewish Communism as the threat to the world. To Alexander Ratcliffe, however, Britain was fighting 'for World Jewry and the Papacy'. Vanguard no.259 (11 November 1939). Leese in the war attacked Mosley's policy of returning the former German colonies - see Weekly Angles no.93 (28 October 1939), and how with peace the I.F.L. would have to compete with "kosher anti-semitism" - *ibid.*; no.95 (11 November 1939).
338. However, there were anonymous circulars advocating extermination, such as one sent to "the Jew-paid editor" of Tribune. It stated "All Jew Pigs will be exterminated the Hitler way - the only way to get rid of the Yids. P.J." Reported by George Orwell, 'As I Please', Tribune, 19 May 1944. In private Hitler's extermination policy was supported. In Mass-Observation directives on Jews in October 1940 and March 1943, three or four respondents agreed with Hitler's final solution. See M-OA: DR 2535, DR 1145, DR 2402, October 1940 and DR 2090, DR 2265, DR 2829, March 1943.
339. Leese's earlier solution was in The Fascist, no.69 (February, 1935). His war declaration was in Weekly Angles no.91 (11 October 1939).
340. The Social Crediter, vol.9 no.18 (9 January 1943) suggested that "Madagascar is the obvious place for the New Jerusalem". An N.C.C.L. report on the Social Credit movement commented that the Britons Press also supported this idea. N.C.C.L. archive 310/2.
341. In the first hearing, 2 July 1940, HO 283/13/40-2.
342. *ibid.*
343. This was the attitude of Truth as will be later examined. However, one article by its editor, Collin Brooks, needs to be examined at this point as it played a role in a more extreme world. The article was 'Anti-semitism and treachery' which appeared in Truth no.3130 (5 June 1942) and it was circulated by the British National Party. Brooks warned that Jews were essentially alien and that their power in Britain needed to be controlled. In the Acton by-election, Edward Godfrey made similar comments, saying that the Jews were "a state within a state" and should be treated like "alien(s) in our midst". Interview in the Acton Gazette, 10 December 1943. A.K. Chesterton also came to support a system of apartheid in the war. See the Weekly Review vol.38 no.25 (16 March 1944)



where he suggested that the Jews as 'guests' should be more respectful of their British hosts.

344. Brooks, op.cit.; suggested expulsion could be a final solution, and Godfrey was of similar mind; indeed, he supported Edward I's expulsion of the Jews - Acton Gazette, 10 December 1943.
345. Arnold Leese and Richard Burton were two of the most extreme antisemites in modern British history and both were pro-Arabists. Throughout the war The Patriot made play of Jewish sponsored 'atrocities' in Palestine and the dangers of Zionism - see no.944, 14 March 1940, no.946, 28 March 1940, no.1035, 11 December 1941, no.1119, 17 February 1944. The Militant Christian Patriots were also violently anti-Zionist and pro-Arab - see Free Press no.36, (March 1939), and no.44-5 (February and March 1940).
346. Although fascist in name, the I.F.L's main concern was the Jews. As one of its war pamphlets stated: 'Race is the true basis of politics' - from 'Fascism: Why We Require It' in M-OA: TC Politics Box 10 File E.
347. 2 July 1940 meeting in HO 283/13/36-9. Mosley used the classic B.U.F. defence that Jews were not attacked because of what they were, but on account of what they did.
348. In the fourth meeting, 22 July 1940, Mosley stated that "anti-semitism is an old English growth". In HO 283/16/30.
349. R. Thurlow, 'Ideology of Obsession', Patterns of Prejudice vol.8 (November - December 1974), 25. Michael Banton has argued that the term 'racism' should not be applied unless biological determinism is involved - The Idea of Race (Cambridge, 1977), 159-61, whilst John Rex has suggested that other forms of determinism can operate - such as on religious, cultural, historical, ideological and sociological grounds. In Race Relations in Sociological Theory (London, 1978), 159. Although there is some strength in Rex's pragmatic approach, his refusal to separate genetic racism is a weakness, for it does have totally different connotations as Banton suggests.
350. E.D. Hart, 'The Menace of the Homad' B.U. Quarterly vol.IV no.1 (Spring 1940). For the impact of Spenglerian 'cultural antisemitism' on Mosley, and his Lamarckian outlook see R. Thurlow, 'Destiny and Doom: Spengler, Hitler and 'British' Fascism'. Patterns of Prejudice vol.15 (October 1981), 25.
351. J.L. Finlay, The English Origins of Social Credit (London, 1972), 104, has argued that "to Douglas Jewishness was not a racial term at all" and that his conspiracy thence cannot "be called anti-semitic in



- the normal sense - loc.cit.; pp.103-4. Such explanations are not convincing as Douglas's antisemitism took many forms.
352. C.H. Douglas, The Big Idea (Liverpool, 1942), 20.
353. C.H. Douglas, The Brief for the Prosecution (Liverpool, 1945), 79.
354. For a brief history of these groups see R. Griffiths, op. cit.; 317-21. New Pioneer was published until January 1940. Its opposition to Jewish refugees was on "eugenic grounds" vol.1 no.10 (September 1939). Rolf Gardiner, a member of the English Array, suggested that there were two alternatives - the soil or alien values - England Herself (London, 1943), 165. Lymington in his Alternative to Death (London, 1943), agreed, talking of a Golden Age based on "race memory" - p.14. Race was a "biological truth" although Hitler had distorted it - p.22. What was needed was a "unity of blood, language and customs - p.23. It is ironic that these groups volkisch summer camps continued throughout the Nazi war - see Gardiner op. cit.; 39, and that a new group called the 'League of Roland' was set up in the war. Reported by Home Intelligence in INF 1/292 no.22 (5 - 12 March, 1941). The group was described as a "neo-fascist organization".
355. As has been suggested, as far as the B.U.F. was concerned, there was an increased tendency towards the conspiratorial after the outbreak of war. This tendency was also true of other fascist and antisemitic groups, perhaps not surprisingly given the problems that the war created for these groups. As far as pure racial antisemitism was concerned, with the exception of the I.F.L., only a few items were printed in the war. J.H. Harvey's, The Heritage of Britain (Little Bookham, Surrey, 1940), was based on the racialist writings of L. Waddell and H. Gunther. A racialist publication by Alfred G. Pape, England's Answer, advertised by 'The Question Master', The Evolutionist's Brains Trust (Edinburgh, 1943) never appeared as far as the author has been able to find out.
356. For Chesterton's career see R. Thurlow, 'Ideology of Obsession', and David Baker, 'The Making of a British Fascist'. Up to the war Chesterton was capable of gutter racist antisemitism. In a Nordic League meeting in July 1939 Chesterton told the audience that 'lamp posts' should be used to solve the Jewish problem. See J.D.C. report in C6/2/5. In Free Press no.38 (June 1939) he stated "World Jewry once again grows into the vitals of the German people and poisons the blood-stream of their economy". With the war, Chesterton immediately joined up and upon his release he wrote for Truth, The Patriot and Weekly Review. His main concern was the preservation of British



- sovereignty against alien (Jewish) attack via Federal Union or similar plots. See for example The Patriot no.1142 (30 December 1943). Although Chesterton felt that Jews could never be British, he abandoned a Nazi-racial form of antisemitism that had been present in the 1930s.
357. Arnold Leese, it has been pointed out, was profoundly shocked with Hitler's war actions but after the war he returned to his support of Hitler and even of William Joyce whom he had attacked at the start of the war. See Gothic Ripples no.4 (13 October 1945). Many B.U.F. stalwarts such as "Mick" Clarke lost interest in politics after their 18B experiences - see R. Skidelsky, op. cit.; 490. Others returned but were still profoundly affected by the war.
358. See F.W.S. Craig, Minor Parties, 12 for the B.U.F. results and British Parliamentary Election Results, 421 for Godfrey.
359. Stuart Rawnsley, 'Fascism and Fascists', 25-6.
360. Diary entry for 23 February 1943 in J.L. Hodson, Home Front (London, 1944), 298-302.
361. Malcolm Muggeridge, The Thirties: 1930-40 in Great Britain (London, 1940), 210-1, commented how recently Mosley has stopped emphasising the corporate state. At the Silvertown by-election, February 1940, Mass-Observation pointed out that the public was not sure what fascism was, or what its links to Nazism were. M-OA: FR no.39 Silvertown by-election.
362. Report of the Jewish Chronicle, 16 February 1940.
363. See Home Intelligence reports of 17 January, 19 January and 1 February 1940 for the B.U.F. campaign in Norfolk and Suffolk. In INF1/319.
364. See the Jewish Chronicle, 3 May 1940 for the British Traders' Bureau impact on Bethnal Green, where many non-Jewish shop-owners felt a Jewish threat. Edward Godfrey in the Acton by-election also got some local support for this issue. See M-OA: FR 1983 Acton By-election.
365. At Brighton, 13 May 1940, a hostile audience warned to the B.U.F.'s antisemitism but not to its foreign policy in general. J.D.C. report in C6/5/1/1. A J.D.C. report a day later commented that the man on the street was anti-fascist but definitely not pro-Jewish - loc. cit. As a Home Intelligence report suggested, the fascists' "only popular appeal is the antisemitism" - March 1940 in INF1/319.
366. Harvey's link to the I.F.L. is unclear. It seems



certain that the articles in its organ The Fascist no.86 and no.104 (July 1936 and January 1938) signed 'J.H.H.' were Harvey's. A J.D.C. report on the I.F.L. for 1937 stated that Harvey was on the literary committee of the I.F.L. - Board of Deputies, Defence Committee records, I.F.L. File. The Heritage of Britain was advertised by Arnold Leese and was available from its h.q., the White House. See advert. in HO 45/24967/674960. However, Count Potocki published the book in March 1940. Not many could have been sold, only 50 of the vellum copies, and most of the remainder were destroyed in a bomb raid - the Right Review no.15 (Spring 1943). However, at this point a paperback edition was produced. Copies have been found only at the British Library and at Cambridge University Library by the author.

367. The Heritage of Britain, 6.
368. Weekly Review vol.37 no.24 (11 March 1943).
369. Potocki achieved some notoriety in the 1930s for an obscenity trial. He was also a familiar figure due to his eccentricity of dress and manner. For a sympathetic account of his life see R.T. Risk, It is the Choice of the Gods: The Remarkable Life of Count Potocki of Montalk (Francetown, New Hampshire, 1978). Potocki published his own paper, The Right Review, from 1936 to 1973. It was viciously antisemitic, anti-communist, pro-Polish and with a tendency to the pornographic.
370. Bowman was in James Maxton's words: a Conservative who began to think about politics: "a disastrous thing for a Conservative to do". He was impressed by the Duke of Bedford and was imprisoned under 18B - Hansard vol.381 col.1462, 21 July 1942. His Liverpool journal, The Talking Picture News, advocated a negotiated peace and also doubted the atrocity stories - see issue no.1326 (25 May 1945). See also his 18B file HO 45/25729.
371. The report of the knighthood is from the Daily Express, 29 March 1943.
372. See note 197 above.
373. Such as the joint article written with his father, William Harvey, Master Hugh Herland (London, 1936) which appeared originally in Connoisseur (June 1936).
374. Henry Yevale (London, 1944) published by B.T. Batsfords. The Societator claimed the book was "accurate, enthusiastic (and) fully documented".
375. Harvey in the Heritage of Britain, 8 had stated "for convenience and simplicity I have used the words 'Goth' and 'Gothic' throughout to indicate the pure



- Aryans of the ancient royal caste and their tradition". For Harvey's philosophy in Henry Yevele see the preface, vi - vii and p.77.
376. J.M. Harvey, Gothic England: A Survey of National Culture: 1300 - 1550 (London, 1947), 15. The book was again published by Batsfords.
377. The Plantagenets was first published by Batsfords in 1948 as part of a six volume series - 'The British Monarchy'. The book has been revised in 1959 and 1981, and is in its 18th impression, now being published by Fontana. For objections to it in 1974 by the C.C.J. and the recent controversy over The Plantagenets see the Jewish Chronicle, 16, 23, 30 November 1984. See also C. Holmes and T. Kushner, 'The Charge is ritual murder', Jewish Chronicle, 29 March 1985, which draws the issue together.
378. The Plantagenets, (London, 1972 edition), 118-20.
379. For its withdrawal by Fontana see the Jewish Chronicle, 14 December 1984.
380. The Social Crediter had a circulation of 1,000 in the war. See Special Branch report of 4 October 1949 in HO 45/24966/674112/50-4. Weekly Angles probably had a lower circulation. Its successor, Gothic Ripples, had between 500 - 600 readers according to an MI5 estimate in March 1946 - in HO 45/24967/109. The Vanguard had a circulation of 2,000 in 1942 (Home Office minute, 12 March 1942), rising to 2,500 in 1944 (Home Office minute 7 October 1944). Both in HO 45/25398/38 and 288-9.
381. An intelligence report in the Spector documents 'The Captain' in the Wiener Library estimated that the circulation of The Patriot was 5,000.
382. Hansard HC vol.360 col.355, 25 April 1940.
383. Truth was to be found according to a J.D.C. report "in every club and most messes". Memo of 1941 in CIS/3/33. See the Tribune, 1 October 1943 and 29 December 1944 for its impact in army and navy wards. For the links to the Conservative Party see Time and Tide vol.22 no.47 (22 November 1941) and Sir Thomas Douglas's comments to Collin Brooks in March 1941, quoted in Stephen Koss, The Rise and Fall of the Political Press in Britain vol.2, The Twelfth Century (London, 1984), 611. Dugdale, the new Tory Chairman, told Brooks that Truth was the "nearest to a dependable organ" of the Party.
384. See Brook's 'Anti-semitism and Treachery' in Truth no.3150 (5 June 1942) and Douglas Reed, A Prophet At Home (London, 1941), 78-80 for the Jewish 18B link.



385. For the Federal Union link see Truth no.3512 (31 December, 1943). For opposition to the Beveridge plan. and P.E.P. see issue no.3388 (15 August 1941) and no. 3454 (20 November 1942).
386. Truth no.3417 (1 March 1942) and Douglas Reed, All Our Tomorrows (London, 1943), 148.
387. Truth no.3295-3298 (3 - 24 November 1939) had correspondence and editorials doubting Nazi atrocities. Reed, in Lest We Regret (London, 1943), 250, commented on the exaggerated atrocities.
388. Reed, Lest We Regret, 261. The Social Crediter approved of Reed; see vol.5 no.19 (18 January 1941); vol.10 no.1 (13 March 1943).
389. Derek Stanford remembered Potocki as a familiar Bloomsbury figure of the 1930s with his "flowing cloak and peakless velvet cap" - Inside the Forties: Literary Memoirs, 1951-57 (London, 1977), 14.
390. Morrison when asked about Potocki and the Polish Royalist Association called it "an imaginary projection" and said that Potocki's 'nonsense' shouldn't receive too much attention: Hansard vol.389 col.1248, 20 May 1943.
391. Douglas Hyde stressed Potocki's importance due to his printing abilities. Interview with author, 17 September 1983. Potocki printed Jane Zedd's Magna Carta in the Dustbin and Henry St. George: In Search of Justice: 18B for the Council in 1942. He later fell out with them. See Right Review no.15 (Spring, 1943).
392. F. Newsam minute, 9 September 1943 in HO 45/25398/191.
393. Jewish Chronicle, 9 April 1943.
394. A. Ratcliffe, The Truth About the Jews (Little Bookham, Surrey, 1943), 4 - 9.
395. *ibid.*; 15-6.
396. Glasgow C.I.D. report, 29 May 1943 in HO 45/25398/286-7.
397. For details on Essential Books see the Jewish Chronicle, 3 November 1944. A Special Branch report of 28 April 1943 commented on their distribution of Ratcliffe's book and the same report for Godfrey's link. Both in HO 45/25398/213-7.
398. See the Daily Express, 29 March 1943 and Surrey Advertiser and County Times, 10 October 1942 for information on Harvey's cottage at Little Bookham, Surrey, and its inhabitants.
399. Admiral Barry Domvile's diaries at Greenwich give a



rare insight into the antisemitic underworld. It is obvious that The Patriot and The Vanguard gave him much pleasure and he enjoyed his weekly meeting with fellow ex-detainees at The Patriot's offices. See Dom 86 and 7, diary entries for 27 October 1943, 18 February, 1 April, 4 May, 14 June all in 1944 and 6 January 1945.

400. See M-OA: DS296, September 1939, January 1943, February 1943. It is interesting that her diary entry for 15 September 1939 commented on how she and her husband started the war by re-reading Eye Witness for the last war, showing the deep rooted tradition of antisemitism in Britain and the persistence of its ideas.
401. The Patriot no.1030 (6 November 1941). See no.1173 (3 August 1944) for a similar appeal and warning.
402. The Britons published a 1941 edition of 1,500 copies with a reprint of 1,000 in 1943. See the Evening Standard, 8 October 1943. A copy is available in the John Rylands Library, University of Manchester. The only addition to the 1941 edition was a note on p.5 showing the Protocols to be proved by Disraeli in his 'Lord George Bentinck'. For further information on The Britons activities in the war, see Tribune, 17 December 1943. For the German use of The Protocols in the war see L.P. Lochner (ed.), The Goebbels Diaries (London, 1948), 296-7 diary entry for 13 May 1942.
403. In the Daily Worker, 27 April 1945.
404. Hyde himself listed these in the Daily Worker, 5 May 1945 - Central London (The Britons ?), Edgware (Corporate Utilities), Liverpool (The Social Crediter), Glasgow (Ratcliffe) and Taunton (Essential Books).
405. Frederick Mullally, 'Political Extremism in Britain', 46, estimated Britain's potential fascist support at about 5,000. A year later Sidney Salomon of the Board of Deputies put the figure slightly higher at 6 - 7,000 - see C6/7/3/2. The government's, and particularly the Home Secretary Herbert Morrison's fear of antisemitism will be dealt with later. Morrison's comments at a Cabinet meeting at the end of the war "that he was seriously alarmed regarding the possibility of anti-semitism in this country" illustrates the point in CAB 95/115 JR (45), 16 May 1945. Richard Law, an under-Secretary in the Foreign Office, also voiced his concern that antisemitism feeling would soon become organised in Britain - note on the Bermuda Conference, 7 May 1943 in FO 371/36731 W6933. Recently released papers reveal that the Home Office was reluctant to release men such as Jeffrey Hamm and John Beckett for fear that they would lead a fascist



revival in Britain. See HO 45/25740/8262/541/2,  
MI5 report, 15 June 1944 for Hamm and minutes of  
14 June 1943 in HO 45/25698/840167/44 for Beckett.

## CHAPTER 3

The East End and Evacuation Experiences : Concentrated Jewish-Gentile Relations in Britain During the War.

The East End had been of central importance in modern Anglo-Jewish history up to the declaration of the war. The Aliens Question, the riots of World War I and the battles with the B.U.F. in the 1930's were all staged at their most dramatic level in this concentrated part of the Metropolis. Indeed when in late 1938 Mass-Observation decided to undertake a detailed study of antisemitism in Britain, it decided to base its study in Stepney.<sup>1</sup>

The complexity of Jewish-Gentile relations in the East End has not stopped contemporary or modern observers making unsubtle generalizations about the subject.<sup>2</sup> As a Times correspondent perceptively pointed out at the height of the B.U.F. campaign in 1936: "(they) have seen what they would have liked to see and heard what they wanted to hear."<sup>3</sup> The Mass-Observation survey was no exception, with Tom Harrisson's anthropological background coming to the fore. To Harrisson, the East End was like another foreign expedition, with the tribes concerned being Jewish or Gentile, or perhaps Lascar and Chinese.<sup>4</sup> Jewish behaviour patterns were observed and compared to their 'Cockney' equivalents. The complicating factor that some Jews saw themselves as Cockneys, and that there were 'Irish' cockneys as well as 'English' cockneys never occurred to "these innocents abroad".<sup>5</sup>

However the thorough report did provide an indication of the position of Jews in East End society in the period



immediately before the war. Socially Jews and non-Jews did not mix very often and the image of the pub as a Gentile preserve was not without foundation.<sup>6</sup> East End Jews, contrary to popular belief, were not flashier than 'Cockneys', although they were smarter. Generally what emerges from the study is the similarities, rather than the differences, between the two communities. Both liked the cinema, music-hall, boxing and billiards and although there were peculiarities distinct to each community, there was also common ground.<sup>7</sup> The reading of newspapers most clearly indicates this point. The Yiddish (but Anglicized) Jewish Times was a Jewish preserve, as were the Irish papers on the 'Cockney' side. Yet the News-Chronicle was the most widely read paper marking "the meeting point of politics" of the two communities.<sup>8</sup> This could be seen in local politics with a right-wing Labour group dominating Stepney Borough council, made up of Irish Catholics but also of moderate Jews. Further to the left was a group of more radical Jewish councillors, including from 1938 a communist, Phil Piratin.<sup>9</sup>

The Stepney Communist Party was not totally dominated by Jews; in fact, it aimed to give the impression of Jewish-Gentile cooperation. Of 500 members in 1939 "half or more were Jewish".<sup>10</sup> However whilst the Catholic world was largely anti-Communist in the East End, the Jewish Community was at least tolerant of the Communist Party.<sup>11</sup> In Whitechapel Library, the Daily Worker was read eighteen times more by Jews than by Gentiles.<sup>12</sup> With the Stepney Tenants' Defence League, the Communist

Party did succeed in uniting Jews and non-Jews in political action, and by June 1939 its membership had risen to 7500.<sup>13</sup> Up to £45,000 had been refunded to Stepney tenants with rent and rates rebates, proving that it was not true that the working class Gentile cockney "recoiled from active combination" with Jews, as The Times had claimed three years earlier.<sup>14</sup>

Thus by the summer of 1939 Jewish-Gentile cooperation was as common, if not more significant than the conflict represented by the clashes with the B.U.F. However, within the East End there were other factors which complicated the overall pattern of community relations. The Mass-Observation Survey of 1939 found that women were less antisemitic than men, and that 13% of females compared to 2% of men actually liked Jews socially.<sup>15</sup> Moreover both men and women were capable of ambivalence on Jews and families could often be split on the subject; a resident of Ernest Street felt that antisemitism "was a shame" even though her husband was a Mosleyite.<sup>16</sup> The most common response (16% women and 9% men) was "live and let live".<sup>17</sup> A resident of Maryland Street who "did not agree" with antisemitism, but "didn't like Jews" was typical of many East Enders' attitudes, showing both the strengths and weaknesses of toleration.<sup>18</sup>

On top of individual and gender issues, the Mass-Observation survey showed how antisemitism could vary from street to street. Poplar, an area which had given strong support to the British Brothers' League's anti-alien campaign at the turn of the century, still remained



a hostile region, as did Bethnal Green.<sup>19</sup> The threat of a Jewish 'invasion', or perceptions of Jewish entry into these areas remained strong and antagonistic. However, even in Bethnal Green the Mass-Observation team did not really find the blatant antisemitism that they had expected to find.<sup>20</sup> As a Jewish East Ender put it: "those who like are as abnormal as those who hate, and the average absence of liking must not be interpreted as the presence of disliking."<sup>21</sup> In areas of Jewish concentration such as Stepney, social relations were good and the B.U.F. was despised because it was "trying to destroy the feeling of neighbourliness".<sup>22</sup> In other areas, such as Bethnal Green where Jews remained on the periphery of society the B.U.F. was generally tolerated. However, despite the higher tension, Bethnal Green Jews were largely left alone. A comment of a thirty year old Bethnal Green woman that the Jews have "as much right to live in Bethnal Green as any other foreigner" shows the social distance between the two communities, but also the limitations to hostility.<sup>23</sup>

The success of the B.U.F. in the East End in the middle 1930's showed the potential for organised antisemitism in the area. By 1939, however, the Mosleyites were in general retreat from the East End, having failed to permanently mobilize the economic and social tensions of this poorest of areas. The earlier crisis in the East End at the time of mass immigration had also showed the possibilities for antisemitic agitation. Would the Second World War, which had such a devastating impact on East London, bring another wave of antisemitism to the area?

The initial impact of the war was to bring some chaos to East End life. The population of Stepney, which had stood a fraction under 200,000 before September 1939, declined to 139,000 by the end of that month.<sup>24</sup> The fall in numbers was largely attributable to the evacuation of children and women, and although many of these were to return by Christmas 1939, the general population of the borough was never to recover. Indeed by 1942 at 72,000 it was at a level of just over one third of the pre-war total.<sup>25</sup> It seems doubtful that East End Jews left at a greater rate than their non-Jewish neighbours (despite the fascist rumours of a Jewish panic from the metropolis).<sup>26</sup> Given that the Jewish population had been declining faster throughout the 1930's a liberal estimate of the Jewish population until mid-1940 would be around 60,000, or 45% of the Stepney population.<sup>27</sup> By the end of the war only 25,000 - 30,000 Jews would remain in what had been the heart of the immigrant quarter just half a century earlier.<sup>28</sup>

Whilst the war was to show the disorganisation and corruption of Stepney Borough Council,<sup>29</sup> it also had a compensating effect. As the official government historian was to write: "unsuspected, and hitherto unused resources of leadership were thrown up in the back-streets of Stepney."<sup>30</sup> Amongst this grass-roots movement were to be many Jews. Whilst the First World War had shown the general isolation of the Jewish population in the East End, the start of the Second showed that Jewish East Enders, as the Jewish Chronicle gladly pointed out, were "playing their part".<sup>31</sup> How then were Jews accepted in the local civil defence forces?



Corresponding to the variations in the concentration of Jews in the East End, some A.R.P. stations were either totally Jewish, Gentile, or a mixture of both. The first category was shown by Wardens Post C125, Poplar. In its satirical organ 'Ye Olde Belle and Rattle' it made fun of its own ethnic make-up demanding "Freedom for the Aryan minority in Burcham Street" - showing perhaps not only a strong self-confidence but also a high degree of acceptance from amongst the surrounding population. <sup>32</sup>

Jews were undoubtedly prominent in the civil defence forces of the East End. However, the estimate given by the Jewish Defence Committee, that they represented some 85% of all such workers was probably an exaggeration. <sup>33</sup> Relations between Jewish and non-Jewish units appear to have been generally amicable, although there was also a competitive edge that could contain an element of antisemitism. <sup>34</sup>

In 'mixed' civil defence units in the East End relations were more complex. Jack Miller, an A.R.P. man in Brick Lane, where 75% of the station was Jewish, stated that the atmosphere was "excellent". <sup>35</sup> In White Horse Lane Auxiliary Ambulance Service Station 101, Bert Snow commented on the interesting variety of Jews and Christians, and the general harmony within the unit. Despite ideological differences between Jews and Catholics, antisemitism was "an interesting and valuable topic for discussion at Station 101". With the first Christmas of the war the Jewish members of the unit came forward to man the station so that their colleagues could celebrate the festival. <sup>36</sup> Such cooperation was not unique to Station 101. <sup>37</sup>

Elsewhere such harmony was not so evident. Fascists within civil defence units often succeeded in creating antisemitic friction. Several were reported as saying that "I shan't help Jews who get hurt, don't you worry", whilst a section of an A.F.S. station were found to be spreading rumours about Jews and the white slave traffic.<sup>38</sup> Within these units antisemitism was not necessarily aimed at fellow Jewish workers. An antisemitic A.F.S. man was reported as stating "you'll never convince me that Yids ain't bastards. Mind you, I don't say there aren't exceptions, like young Solly here and Nat".<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, in the same unit the Jewish instructor came in for a great deal of racial abuse.<sup>40</sup> To further complicate the pattern, in another A.F.S. unit in the docks, where 75% of the Station was Jewish, relations were generally good, although the Company Officer was a Mosleyite!<sup>41</sup>

Up to the blitz the relations between Jews and Gentiles in East End civil defence units were influenced by two generally conflicting factors. Firstly, the negative force of past prejudices against Jews (and also of Jews for Gentiles) carrying on into the war. Secondly, contact between the two elements within the stations which acted as an integrating force and to an extent counteracted hostilities. As a generalization the involvement of Jews in East End civil defence duties helped to improve relations within these units. However, up to the blitz, this integration was not a model for the East End as a whole. In the phoney war period, morale in Britain was probably at its lowest ebb. This was reflected in the East End where



government reports indicated that although "Mosley ha(d) lost substantial ground ... anti-Jewish feeling appear (ed) to be growing". <sup>42</sup>

The very presence of substantial numbers of Jews in the civil defence groups of the East End created tensions. A largely Jewish A.F.S. unit in the dock area were greeted by onlookers by the shout "Windy Yids", showing that the image of Jews as army dodgers in the earlier conflict had not been forgotten. <sup>43</sup> The tensions of waiting for the war to begin 'properly' were reflected in other adverse ways as far as the Jewish community was concerned. With only 30,000 shelters provided for a population six times that size, the already tense relations between landlord and tenant in the East End were made even more fraught. By the first few months of the war this conflict was assuming an antisemitic air as Jewish landlords were being selected for attack in their failure to provide air raid protection. <sup>44</sup> Realizing that this was an issue upon which the fascists could favourably exploit, the Stepney Tenants' Defence League (S.T.D.L.) organized rent strikes until satisfactory air raid protection was provided. <sup>45</sup> That such action was generally successful is shown by the rise in membership of the League to 11,000 in the summer of 1940. <sup>46</sup> Attacking both Jewish and non-Jewish landlords and being based on inter-community cooperation, the S.T.D.L. helped to minimise the racial aspect of complaints about housing and shelters. <sup>47</sup>

Other economic-based tensions threatened to endanger the relations between Jew and non-Jew in the East End. By

the second month of the war there were also rumours of profiteering by Jewish shopkeepers. Although the S.T.D.L. did its best to stop such abuses and the allegations, the idea that Jews were making financial gains from the war persisted to well after the blitz.<sup>48</sup> The difficulties the war created for small shopkeepers was also exploited by fascists, despite the similar problems faced by Jewish traders.<sup>49</sup>

Up to August 1940, whilst the war had united the East End in some ways, most clearly shown by cooperation in civil defence units, it had not brought the Jewish and Gentile communities closer in general. Indeed, the petty tensions of the phoney war period helped to create more strain. Even on the spiritual side there were problems between Jewish and Christian clergymen. Clarence Kaye of the East London Tabernacle stated that such relations were "decidedly frigid in the first part of 1940". As one observer in the East End put it "Antagonism between Jews and Christians was one of the evident but less admirable aspects of life".<sup>50</sup>

In February and April 1940 Mass-Observation carried out two surveys on attitudes to Jews in the East End districts of Silvertown and Limehouse. In the former, an area of very few Jews, 31% were categorized as "definitely antisemitic". In the latter, where more Jews resided, 15% were placed in this category. Only 27% of Silvertown's population was pro-Jewish compared to 40% in Limehouse.<sup>51</sup> Such figures give an indication of the fact that the level



of antisemitism did not necessarily correspond to the proportion of Jews in the population of East London. However, the intensity of antisemitic feeling was higher in Limehouse,<sup>52</sup> giving some credence to those that believed that the bombing of the East End, with its high Jewish population, was bound to lead to an antisemitic reaction. Would the blitz create a further deterioration of Jewish-Gentile relations as many people feared?<sup>53</sup>

How the East End Jews would behave under intensive bombing was a question that created widespread concern even at a governmental level. At the height of the invasion fear in May 1940, Home Secretary Anderson told the Cabinet that in the East End, with its large 'alien' population, "it was of value to have some aliens in services like the Warden's in order to pacify and calm their fellow aliens in time of emergency".<sup>54</sup> Frank Lewey, mayor of Stepney in the blitz, believed that "there was a pretty prevalent belief among numbers of Londoners that the Jews would panic if ever raiding became very bad".<sup>55</sup> Thus when the blitz began in earnest in early September 1940, there were both fears of how the "volatile aliens" of the East End would behave, and also of the possibility of "anti-Jewish riots" from their non-Jewish neighbours.<sup>56</sup>

By the end of September it was clear that these two pessimistic forecasts had been proved wrong. However, all was not sweetness and light. Of all the domestic episodes of the Second World War, memories of the blitz have become the most mythical. Part of this process of distortion has been to emphasize the cheerfulness and unity that was born out of the constant aerial bombardment.<sup>57</sup> It actually

began in the war itself and can be found in the contemporary descriptions of Jewish-Gentile relations in the East End. Leading the field in this matter was what could be called the Toynbee Hall approach, summarized by its warden, J.J. Mallon, in an article written in 1942. Mallon, talking of the blitz, referred to "a common sympathy, a common humanity in which differences, including the differences between Jews and Gentiles were submerged and lost".<sup>58</sup> The reality was more complex.

The pressure cooker effect of war on minority relations was to be seen at the most clearest level, as far as the Anglo-Jewish community was concerned, in the intensive bombing of the East End in September and October 1940. The first raid was on 23 August 1940 but the real blitz did not start until 7 September.<sup>59</sup> In this two week period tempers were frayed and the strain of waiting led onto some unpleasant antisemitic incidents. Quarrels broke out in queues for the shelters with the Jewish origins of anti-social offenders being unnecessarily brought into the arguments.<sup>60</sup> On 7 September, the night that the suspense finally ended (now known as 'Black Saturday'), antisemitism did not disappear. One observer heard curses against Jews as the occasional Jewish shopkeeper left to escape the area in a taxi - "Another Yid saving his skin".<sup>61</sup> The image of the cowardly selfish Jew running away or monopolising shelter space was to persist throughout the blitz.<sup>62</sup>

If antisemitism was to reach serious proportions in Britain, the conditions in Stepney in September 1940 were



to offer its best chances of success. In London as a whole there were 76 continuous nights of raids after 'Black Saturday', with 27,500 bombs.<sup>63</sup> From 7-14 September 6000 people in the capital were seriously injured or killed.<sup>64</sup> Stepney was to bear the brunt of this attack, and well over a quarter of its population were left homeless for over a day.<sup>65</sup> Conditions in the big shelters such as the Tilbury warehouse were appalling and added to the general misery. The blitz itself then provided the potential for anti-semitism and there is much evidence that the East End community was at times divided on racial lines. Late in September an incident occurred outside a Stepney shelter where 500 people were waiting to get in. Two non-Jews of Cable Street, Mary Cini and Mary Owen picked fights with Jewish women claiming that "You Jews are all the same pushing and shoving". Despite the fact that the two women were deliberately trying to start trouble, the crowd took sides, the non-Jewish minority siding with Cini and Owen.<sup>66</sup> Such incidents were not isolated; according to a J.D.C. report there were countless other examples in the tubes and shelters.<sup>67</sup>

However, the Toynbee Hall-type analysis was also not without foundation. Despite Lord Haw-Haw's threats, German bombs could not distinguish between Jew and Gentile, and the obvious common suffering of both communities did make an impact on their inter-relationship. An A.F.S. officer reported that the previous antisemitism of his unit "failed to survive the first month of the blitz". Those that had said they wouldn't help Jews "learned sense at the fires

in Whitechapel".<sup>68</sup> Within the shelters close contact between Jew and non-Jew brought tensions, but it also proved that despite their differences, the two communities had much in common. By the end of the first month of bombing the East End Jewish community had shown that it was as able "to take it" as well as the non-Jewish population.<sup>69</sup> Idiosyncrasies remained. One young Jewish warden, whose shelter had just been hit, "suddenly burst into Yiddish" as he shouted instructions, showing that old world influences had not disappeared from the East End, even amongst the younger generation.<sup>70</sup> Yet Jews and non-Jews were also discovering what they had in common. A conversation reported by Mass-Observation found that whilst Jews referred to bombs as "somebody dropping potato ludkies", to the 'Cockney' it was the same, only with peanuts being dropped.<sup>71</sup> Adversity could create harmony.

Even with the notorious Tilbury shelter, where up to 15,000 found refuge from the bombs, no prolonged anti-semitism occurred.<sup>72</sup> Blanche Dugdale visited this shelter on 12 September 1940, when sanitary conditions and general organization were at their worst. She reported that "morale ... was perfectly good and enquiry elicited no sign of antisemitism due to present conditions".<sup>73</sup> Indeed, one observer found that the race feeling at Tilbury was not so much Jew versus Gentile, but white against black, with the Indian contingent being the centre of attack from both the white communities.<sup>74</sup> However, antisemitism was not absent and it would appear that the awful environment was responsible for the occasional outbursts aimed at the



Jewish shelterers, who were roughly half of Tilbury's residents.<sup>75</sup>

At first the only medical services at Tilbury were provided voluntarily by one Jewish doctor and three Jewish nurses,<sup>76</sup> but as the blitz progressed conditions slowly improved. At the forefront of the movement to improve shelter conditions was the Stepney Communist Party. The Communist campaign for adequate air-raid protection had begun in 1937 and it had continued throughout the war.<sup>77</sup> Given the success of the Tenants' Defence Leagues, it is not surprising that the Stepney Communist Party set up committees in all the main shelters aimed at protesting to the authorities about the conditions.<sup>78</sup> These shelter committees operated on two levels, firstly aiming to improve the state of the shelters by organising food and entertainment, secondly by publicizing the conditions of the East End to the outside world.<sup>79</sup> In late September the most famous incident of the latter policy occurred with the march of 100 East Enders to the Savoy Hotel.<sup>80</sup> Although the immediate impact of this protest was negligible owing to an all-clear, the message struck home with the Cabinet, and a Committee was set up to improve conditions and ensure such demonstrations did not recur.<sup>81</sup>

In this way, through the actions of the local Communist Party, which was, according to its secretary, "tempering the Party Line to the needs of the people",<sup>82</sup> anger at the conditions of the shelters was channelled not

at an immediate scapegoat, but at its real cause - the authorities. The Communist Party was not alone in fighting for better conditions; the Settlement movements and the Churches<sup>83</sup> were also active. However, within the last category there was tremendous hostility to the activities of the Communist Party, especially from the local Catholic Church. This antagonism, following earlier Catholic opposition to left wing East End activities, was soon to be identified with antisemitism.

Reflecting on the impact of the blitz, Tom Harrisson wrote that it "confirmed hatred already felt by some, extended others, leaving many more barely touched".<sup>84</sup> The first two categories certainly apply to certain aspects of Catholic relations with Jews in the East End. In the Catholic Herald in October 1940, two priests launched an attack against Jewish Communist activities in the shelters, on the grounds that such activities were ultimately defeatist. Further articles accused the East End Jews of cowardice and low morality - the latter due to the fact that Jews were 'Oriental' and had thus a different attitude to sex!<sup>85</sup> Jews, as has been pointed out, were prominent in the local Communist Party, but they by no means dominated the shelter committees. Indeed, such activities were consciously split between Jews and non-Jews. This was illustrated by the Savoy March where there were equal numbers of Jews and non-Jews, the Communist Party attempting to present an image of working-class unity.<sup>86</sup>

This was only one aspect of Catholic-Jewish relations in the East End, for there was also a great deal of



cooperation. Food, clothing, and buildings were shared, and religious leaders of both communities helped each other to organize services.<sup>87</sup> The Mayor of Stepney, observing this positive side of the blitz, contrasted it to their previous relations when "they had long been a byword in Stepney as mortal opponents".<sup>88</sup> However, the antagonism to what was seen as Jewish communism did not disappear from the Catholic community. As late as 1943 Father Groser, once of the Tenants' Defence League, reported that one priest, formally sympathetic to Jews, was becoming antisemitic due to their activities in the East End shelter committees.<sup>89</sup> There were thus limits to the new understanding between Jewish and Christian communities.

With the improvement in shelter conditions and with better all-round planning, Jewish-Gentile relations fell into a more settled pattern after the initial blitz. Visiting Liverpool Street, one of the biggest deep shelters in London, the Marquess of Donegall was impressed with the good organisation and cooperation within the shelter.<sup>90</sup> At this point in early October 1940, Liverpool Street had its own Rabbi, although there were also common prayers delivered by all the clergy. To some this cooperation was not just a passing occurrence but "was a promise. Here was humanity - internationally at peace. Mixed races, foreign languages, were not used as barriers. Here was a new brotherhood, and a common heart".<sup>91</sup> Such comments appear idealist given the concomitant misery that the blitz created, but it shows how far the East End was from

the antisemitic riots that some had feared. Rather than panicking aliens, the bombings produced stories of Jewish bravery and courage. Of the first list of George Crosses, two out of thirteen were awarded to Jews.<sup>92</sup> If Jews admitted to nervousness at the start of a raid,<sup>93</sup> so did Gentile East Enders.<sup>94</sup> Although antisemitism did not disappear, it never succeeded in being more than localised and at that aimed at individuals rather than at the whole of Jewry.<sup>95</sup> Those who attempted to spread the rumour of the Jews' War were laughed down, and the aggression created by the shelter conditions was channelled towards the authorities and not against the Jewish population.<sup>96</sup>

After the intense bombing of September 1940 the next two months saw an overall decrease in air raids.<sup>97</sup> Moreover the East End, which had borne the brunt of the initial blitz, was not seriously bombed again until July 1941.<sup>98</sup> Whilst at the peak of the attacks 177,000 Londoners were sleeping underground, only 4% of them were using public shelters at the start of 1941.<sup>99</sup> Life in the East End shelters, where "it was one big happy family", proved to be a short-lived experience.<sup>100</sup> To the novelist Bernard Kops, the blitz had completely destroyed the sense of community in the East End. Although the shelters created "superficial friendliness", it was only temporary, and "the world as I knew it had passed away".<sup>101</sup>

Kops was not alone in sensing the general depression of the post-blitz Stepney. A report on the morale of the area in January 1941 pointed to the overall gloom of the people who were tired and miserable.<sup>102</sup> Antisemitism



persisted in the shelters: some of it encouraged by fascist elements: some of it brought on with persistent shelter problems and some of it simply part of a Saturday night exuberance.<sup>103</sup> However, the Jewish Chronicle at the same time was able to report on an increased philosemitism due to the success of Jewish entertainers in the shelters.<sup>104</sup> Indeed cooperation and harmony was a more regularly reported phenomenon in 1941 than the reverse. Even the community spirit that the destruction or damage of the vast majority of East End houses brought was not totally destroyed. Inter-faith reciprocity continued<sup>105</sup> and in April 1941 a Passover Service in the Tilbury shelter was marked by Jews singing religious songs and Gentiles English folk songs.<sup>106</sup> The Yiddish poet A.N. Stencl was deeply impressed by "the brotherhood of the people in Whitechapel in those days".<sup>107</sup> A similar service took place in Micky Davis's shelter with the chairs supplied by the Convent of Mercy.<sup>108</sup>

Despite these touches of humanity the East End was changing irreversibly. By the middle of 1942, Stepney, which at one point was home for a quarter of a million people, had only 72,000 residents and its once vibrant street life had disappeared.<sup>109</sup> The borough was "a ghost of its former self" and only in the shelters and clubs of the area was there any sense of community.<sup>110</sup> A worker in Toynbee Hall recalls its rest home in Sussex where elderly Jewish and non-Jewish East Enders came to escape. Despite their strong ties to Stepney these people "were sick of war and glad to get out".<sup>111</sup> With the hardships of the war and the general social isolation of East Enders,

most people, as a Jewish Bethnal Green resident remembers, "were too busy to worry about the Jews".<sup>112</sup> However, old tensions mixed with new factors still persisted. These can be best illustrated by a study of Jewish-Gentile relations in the districts immediately to the north of original Jewish settlement area of the East End.

The war itself intensified two trends which had affected Jewish life in the East End from the 1920's. The first was the movement north to such areas as Hackney and Dalston.<sup>113</sup> The second was a diversification of the Jewish occupational structure.<sup>114</sup> The residential shift beyond the area of primary settlement had accelerated in the 1930's, with the receiving population tending to be highly antagonistic to the Jewish arrivals. Indeed in 1939 when the B.U.F.'s East End support was in decline it was in areas of North East London such as Stoke Newington, Bethnal Green, Dalston and Hackney, where fascist gains were made.<sup>115</sup> With the war it was in this northern part of the East End that violence and tension against the Jewish community was to be found at its highest level. It was here that fascist activity was at least tolerated and at times actively supported.

In the first few weeks of the war Jewish shop windows were smashed in Bethnal Green and the pattern of violence continued throughout the war.<sup>116</sup> In late May 1940 another such shop in the same area was destroyed, and the next month 'retaliations' were made against Jews for the fascist internments.<sup>117</sup> Even with the blitz the violence continued, Jewish wardens being attacked in Hackney and Stoke



Newington.<sup>118</sup> When attempts at a fascist revival were made in the middle of the war, much of the evidence for it was found in Bethnal Green where Jewish shops were covered in the sign 'P.J.'.<sup>119</sup> However, housing and employment remained the two most contentious issues with regard to general Jewish-Gentile relations in the area. It was over the former matter that the most serious violence occurred.

Just as the most extreme and concentrated attacks against the Asian population in 1980's Britain have occurred at the periphery of its settlement area in the East End, so it was with the Jews in North East London.<sup>120</sup> In Hackney the Jewish population had been increasing considerably since the 1930's.<sup>121</sup> Indeed, the M.P. for Hackney North estimated in May 1943 that 60% of his electorate were Jewish.<sup>122</sup> He was convinced that there was "ill-feeling between the Jews and the Christians in the constituency" and his analysis was proved to be correct by incidents in the area a few months later. A new housing complex, the Pembury Estate, was the scene of much anti-semitic violence. Non-Jews were in a majority in the estate, and through the use of intimidation an element within the Gentile community wished to make the new housing area free of Jews. Jewish women were beaten up, children attacked going to school and slogans were painted on Jewish houses.<sup>123</sup> Some Jewish residents did apply to leave,<sup>124</sup> but generally incidents were not reported because the victims feared "even worse manifestations of antisemitism".<sup>125</sup> Eventually the police and the local M.P. intervened and the outward manifestations of hostility

subsided.<sup>126</sup> Although an extreme case, the Pembury Estate issue showed the strength of local feeling against the Jewish-movement into the area. Another report of a large flat complex in South Hackney, where 20% of the residents were Jewish, pointed out that none of the Jewish occupants had mezuzot on their door for fear of drawing attention to themselves.<sup>127</sup>

In analysing the course of this victimisation the Jewish Defence Committee suggested that "the Hackney Gazette has much to answer for".<sup>128</sup> It was not alone in attacking this right-wing local paper which even managed to attract the support of The Patriot.<sup>129</sup> During the war the Gazette carried on a continuous campaign against Jewish gaming clubs,<sup>130</sup> accused the Jews of cowardice in the blitz,<sup>131</sup> supported discrimination against Jewish tenants,<sup>132</sup> and generally opened its letter columns to those antagonistic to the local Jewish population.<sup>133</sup> Such a policy from this popular tri-weekly paper cannot have helped inter-community relations in North-East London, but the antipathy that it played upon was not just of its own making. East End papers, like all such papers had to be sensitive to local opinion, and the Hackney Gazette's outlook is important in that it was a mirror of the community in which it served. However, other East End papers showed the need for taking account of changing circumstances in their localities. The East London Advertiser which at the time of mass immigration was generally anti-alien, was now opposed to race hatred.<sup>134</sup> The East London Observer, which had attacked aliens in the



1914-18 conflict, was now happy, in its editor's words, "to put the Jewish point of view".<sup>135</sup> Finally the East End News, which had supported the British Brothers' League in the 1900's, was at worst neutral on Jewish matters in the Second World War.<sup>136</sup>

That the Hackney Gazette was isolated in its antipathy shows the local character of antisemitism in the East End. Yet even within its circulation area of North East London all was not hostile. Within the shelters, although at first there had been violence against Jewish officials, the blitz created a sense of camaraderie between Jew and Gentile - even in Hackney.<sup>137</sup> The leader of its A.R.P. commented that the differences between the communities "had been wiped out by the war", and it would appear that the actions of Jewish A.R.P. men did do something to dispel the latent antipathy towards Jews.<sup>138</sup> The warden of Bethnal Green's Victoria Park trench shelter commented on the "wonderful spirit" between all the different races and nationalities - this is an area which had at one point been a definite Jewish no-go area.<sup>139</sup> A Jewish chemist of Hackney recalled that "the only 'tiffs' I heard during the blitz in the shelters were between Jewish people".<sup>140</sup>

However, it was in the area of North East London in 1943 that the most serious single event of war-time domestic antisemitism occurred. On the evening of 3 March 1943 in a panic at the entrance of the Bethnal Green tube shelter, 173 people were killed.<sup>141</sup> Although news was suppressed about the disaster, rumours soon spread across

London about the causes of the tragedy, prevalent among which was the idea that it was due to a Jewish panic.<sup>142</sup> Why this slander developed will be discussed at a later stage, but it will be necessary now to examine the Jewish East End aspects of the disaster.

As the accident was in the East End it was assumed by many people that it took place in a Jewish area. This was in fact inaccurate for although there were streets or parts of roads such as Blythe and Teesdale Street (Jews' Island) that were predominantly Jewish, and close to the tube station, the area was largely Gentile.<sup>143</sup> Moreover, the Jewish population of the area was declining proportionally to the non-Jewish as the war progressed.<sup>144</sup> Perhaps the most ironic aspect of the Jewish slander was the fact that the shelter was the heartland of Bethnal Green's B.U.F.<sup>145</sup> Despite this qualification, there is still a small question mark concerning why the Jewish death toll in the shelter was so small. Only 5 Jews, or fewer than 3% of the total casualties, were killed in the tragedy, yet an estimate just after the war put the Jewish population of Bethnal Green at one tenth, or roughly three times higher than the shelter proportion.<sup>146</sup>

Why were so few Jews among the victims of the tragedy? According to one antisemite it was because the shelter was already "packed full of Jews a couple of hours before the disaster".<sup>147</sup> The reality was more complex. As early as the start of the blitz in 1940 there had been reports of antisemitism in the Bethnal Green tube,<sup>148</sup> and it would appear that "the unpleasantness" that the Jews "were always



subject to" put many off using the shelter.<sup>149</sup> Fascist bullying, or the fear of intimidation made many Jews prefer the Liverpool Street shelter, which although further away, was more Jewish orientated.<sup>150</sup> The few Jews that used the shelter at Bethnal Green, such as the Kops family, felt "strangers in a strange world".<sup>151</sup>

If there was antisemitism associated with the shelter before the disaster, then the same cannot be said of the locality after the tragedy. Whilst the rumours that it was a 'Jewish panic' spread across all parts of London, this was not true of Bethnal Green, where according to Home Intelligence "there is full knowledge that any such statement is untrue".<sup>152</sup> One or two individuals in the area attempted to spread rumours against the Jews, but local opinion in the East End realised the absurdity of such lies.<sup>153</sup> More credence was given to the idea that the disaster was instigated by fascists.<sup>154</sup> Generally, however, in Bethnal Green the grievances and blame were directed towards the local Council, which was regarded as having been negligent over the safety aspects of the shelter.<sup>155</sup> In Stepney an awareness of the small Jewish population of Bethnal Green also acted as a barrier to the success of antisemitic rumours,<sup>156</sup> and one had to go to the outlying areas of the East End, such as West Ham to find any belief in the 'Jewish panic' libel.<sup>157</sup> This again confirms the impression that it was areas on the edge of the concentrated Jewish population where prejudice was most profound - a clergyman in West Ham the year after the disaster commented that in his parish "the Jew is anathema".<sup>158</sup>

The 'Jewish Question' was one of popular discussion in war-time Britain, and the Bethnal Green disaster simply underlined how 'Jew-conscious' the public had become. Was 'the Jewish Question' of much concern in the East End in the Second World War? In late 1939 a public meeting in Stepney on this issue resulted in a lively response, with many non-Jewish East Enders giving "petty and malicious" reasons for the existence of antisemitism in the locality.<sup>159</sup> At Warden's Post 13, just outside Whitechapel the four most popular issues discussed were racing, the war, religion and finally antisemitism.<sup>160</sup> Moreover, in April 1943 a reporter in the dock area of Stepney commented that "several people complained to me, unprompted about Jews".<sup>161</sup> However, Jews or the Jewish Question was not the burning issue in the war that might have been expected from this area with such a long tradition of hostility. The new warden of Bethnal Green's Oxford House was surprised how few manifestations of antisemitism there were in the area, considering its previous Mosleyite success.<sup>162</sup> Generally speaking apart from the start of the blitz, the non-Jewish East Ender was too busy surviving to worry too much about the Jew in his midst.<sup>163</sup> Only when faced in intimate contact would the Jewish issue come to the fore, and as has been noted with the shelters and the local civil defence, such mixing could often be beneficial.

In one area however there was potential for friction. Particularly in Stepney, but also to a lesser extent in the neighbouring areas, Jews were prominent as shop owners.<sup>164</sup>



In a war where there was strict rationing, especially in food, shop keepers could quickly become unpopular figures.<sup>165</sup> As early as the third week of the war the Jewish Chronicle was reporting that a Jewish food shop in Stepney was creating antagonism amongst both communities by its profiteering. Indeed throughout the war there was evidence of East End hostility to Jewish shop owners who exploited the shortages for their own financial ends.<sup>166</sup> The image of the East End Jewish black marketeer was soon to replace that of the simple profiteer, and there was strong antagonism to those who were seen to have "got rich" with the conflict.<sup>167</sup> Nevertheless, all was not negative in this respect. Firstly, although some people were hostile to the small trader there was also sympathy to the plight of the "little man" in his fight for survival against the big shopping chains.<sup>168</sup> Representative of this sympathy was a petition signed by all the inhabitants of College Buildings in Whitechapel (half of whom were non-Jewish) when three local Jewish shopkeepers were interned in June 1940. All three were old residents of the area who had never been naturalized, and their internment caused "regret, indignation and sorrow" from their neighbours.<sup>169</sup> Secondly, many East Enders realized that not only Jews were to blame for the local rackets. The mayor of Stepney, Councillor Pritchard, defended the Jewish traders. He believed that considering their prominence in the locality, their proportion of offenders was surprisingly low.<sup>170</sup> Finally the black market also served to meet a demand, and in this respect Jewish offenders were offering a service.

Indeed one resident was hostile only to West End Jews who were said to spoil the local illicit market! <sup>171</sup>

In economic terms the East End was in a state of turmoil in the Second World War, and it was thus not only the black market that created a potential financial conflict between Jews and non-Jews. The heavy bombing and the acute shortage of male labour acted as a catalyst to trends which had been in motion since the late 1920's. Two major features were thus outlined in the war. Firstly, there was a move away from Stepney by local industry, either to North London or as far away as the Home Counties. <sup>172</sup> Secondly, industries such as tailoring were becoming less specifically Jewish. <sup>173</sup> The new demands of war, and the need for any sort of labour, thrust Jewish and non-Jewish workers together in areas that had previously been preserves of either section of the community. A Toynbee Hall report found that some employers were not happy about using Jewish workers, fearing them to be either communistic or lazy. <sup>174</sup> One East End firm actually refused to employ Jews due to the hostility of its staff. <sup>175</sup> This was not the whole picture however, for elsewhere there was satisfaction. Several businesses actually decided that they would stay in Stepney because of the Jewish labour supply. <sup>176</sup> Within the workforce, although there were reports of inter-ethnic conflict, <sup>177</sup> cooperation in the desire to help the war effort would seem to have been more common. <sup>178</sup>

Harmony was also present within the Borough Council which had been the battleground of earlier Irish-Jewish clashes. At the end of December 1942 a special meeting was arranged in sympathy with the Jews of Europe, with the



Council passing a resolution asking the government to do all that was possible to help the persecuted.<sup>179</sup> Several months later an extraordinary meeting was held to counter "antisemitic activities" in the borough, with the government being asked to pass legislation to make antisemitism illegal.<sup>180</sup> Also in November 1943 the Council unanimously denounced the government's action in releasing Mosley.<sup>181</sup> Although it was usually (left-wing) Jewish councillors that brought these issues into consideration, it was a sign of the new cooperation that all the Council acted sympathetically to them. There were still signs of conflict, such as unfair accusations that the Jews of Stepney were not pulling their weight in fire watching duties,<sup>182</sup> but generally such squabbling was put aside for the duration of the war.

Typical also of this cooperation were the clubs and settlements of the East End. With a reputation of elitism and of being patronizing, the war helped to bring these 'outside' organizations more fully into East End society.<sup>183</sup> The settlements became prominent in the war, giving services in and after the blitz. They also offered entertainment in an area that was desperately short of social amenities. Yet even the most famous of these, Toynbee Hall had only a very localised appeal and it is easy to overestimate their importance.<sup>184</sup> However, within Toynbee and the Bernhard Baron settlement there is little doubt that Jews and Gentiles mixed freely and that social relations were excellent. One East End Jew, Alexander Hartog, remembers that the atmosphere at Toynbee in the war "was truly

magical".<sup>185</sup> Even the Jewish youth clubs were practising a policy of integration, and in such clubs as the Hackney Jewish, Oxford and St. George and Cambridge Jewish it was reported that "Christian boys were mixing harmoniously with Jewish boys".<sup>186</sup> Such fraternity was also evident in the slightly less establishment world of Stepney Communist Party. A document of 1944 summarised its approach - 'Jew and Gentile Together' - aimed at "Tommy or Issy, Sarah or Jane".<sup>187</sup> Within the local Party there was "great comradeship"<sup>188</sup> according to its Secretary, and "no barriers" either politically or socially.<sup>189</sup> Although a specific attempt was aimed at winning over the Jewish electorate, Phil Piratin's Communist victory at Mile End in the 1945 election was also based on a joint communal campaign.<sup>190</sup>

How 'typical' was the 'Toynbee' or Communist Party model in regard to the integration of Jews into East End society? There is no doubt that both the settlements and the Stepney Communists were enjoying much popularity by the end of the war, the latter having 1000 members by 1945.<sup>191</sup> However the free social mixing of these institutions was probably in advance of its time, even if the war had removed some social barriers. Jews and Gentiles were in closer proximity at work and in the shelters, but the home largely remained an ethnic preserve.<sup>192</sup> An incident in the Troxy Cinema in Stepney at the close of 1944 perhaps emphasises the need for caution with regard to evaluating the positive integrative force of the war. At a showing of Louis Golding's Mr Emmanuel, a disturbance



developed where elements of the non-Jewish section of the audience shouted approval at the scenes of Nazi persecution of Jews.<sup>193</sup> Like earlier such cinema scuffles in the 1930's, and like incidents in the shelters four years earlier, the audience divided and fought along Jewish-Gentile lines.<sup>194</sup>

This qualification is just one of many needed to show the difficulties in weighing the impact of the war on communal relations in the East End. If, as has been suggested, there were many 'East Ends' in a geographical sense, it was true also of its institutions. A perspective from a Gentile, Toynbee, Communist, religious, trade unionist, zionist or whatever point of view would produce different results. Each one (or more often more than one) had its own bearings on the individual.<sup>195</sup> Yet the task of the historian is to generalize and in the final analysis the verdict has to be that the war pushed Jews and non-Jews in the East End closer together - more than it pulled them apart. If it is slightly ironic that it was German bombs that were largely responsible for this, it must be remembered that the humour of the situation is largely lost due to the simultaneous physical destruction of the East End. The sense of community in the area was a war phenomenon and was paid for both in human terms as well as in the damage to property.<sup>196</sup> Death remained a feature of East End life right until the end of war - the last V2 rocket fell in Stepney in March 1945 killing 130 people, 120 of whom were Jewish.<sup>197</sup> The overall harmony of Jewish-Gentile relations in the area during the Second World War must thus

be seen as temporary, for after 1945 the Jewish East End had largely ceased to exist. <sup>198</sup>

From this localised study of concentrated ethnic relations it is now necessary to look at a parallel development, one that was spread across the whole of Britain.

### Jewish Evacuees in the Second World War

By 3 September 1939, 3.5 million people were either officially or privately evacuated from their homes in Britain. <sup>199</sup>

Although evacuee numbers were never to reach this level again, either in the blitz of autumn 1940 or in the flying bomb raids of 1944, as a social experiment in mixing people of different class and background, evacuation cannot be regarded as a successful exercise. <sup>200</sup> Despite long term planning and the experience gained from the evacuation around the Munich Crisis, government and local authorities were not prepared to deal with the issue of selecting the right evacuees for the right areas - the priority was to shift the population in bulk. The experience of Jewish evacuation in the war must therefore not be seen as an isolated phenomenon, for although it created unique problems, it was also part of a troubled social dislocation in Britain. <sup>201</sup>

The idea that the Jewish population would panic out of the cities at the threat of war had been rehearsed in the 1938 Crisis. The B.U.F. had claimed that the Jews had fled London like "a flowing river of grey slime". <sup>202</sup>



With the start of the real conflict the accusation revived.<sup>203</sup> The imputation was neither limited to the capital nor was it only made by extremists. In the north of England, Lake Windermere was known locally as "the Sea of Galilee" and in Wales, Llandudno as "Jerusalem by the Sea".<sup>204</sup> Mass-Observation and other sources show that the image of the timid Jew, running to a safe billet, was quite widespread among the British people.<sup>205</sup> However, taken in aggregate terms, there is no evidence that Jewish evacuees proportionally outnumbered their Gentile equivalents. Indeed in the East End there was evidence that the reverse was true.<sup>206</sup> As more than one observer noted, there was something of a contradiction in arguing that London Jews crowded not only the shelters but also the safe seaside zones.<sup>207</sup> Yet looking at the question qualitatively it is true that there was a concentration of Jews in the Home Counties, the Lake District, and the West Coast of England.<sup>208</sup> Even if Jews did not dominate these areas, their presence in fairly large numbers made them conspicuous.<sup>209</sup>

However, although Jewish evacuees may have been at times conspicuous, this does not imply that antisemitism against them was therefore 'well-earned'. As will be stressed shortly, Jews had often never been seen before in evacuation areas, and thus they became even more prominent than they would have been as mere evacuees. Moreover, as the latter themselves were strangers, it was easy to label all evacuees as Jews, or at least to overestimate the proportion of Jews in the new arrivals. This explains why as Arthur Marwick has suggested "the words 'evacuees' and

'Jews' were used interchangeably".<sup>210</sup> Such generalizations hid the complexity of evacuation experiences which varied not only over time - September 1939, September 1940 and summer 1944 representing three separate developments - but also over locality - often on a village to village basis.<sup>211</sup> It was also an intensely personal experience, so much depending on the individual. In London alone 14,000 Jewish children were evacuated in September 1939.<sup>212</sup> To make sense of so many individual histories it will be necessary to concentrate on several areas of Jewish evacuation - the Home Counties (especially Bedfordshire and Oxfordshire), East Anglia and the coastal resorts. At the same time a dynamic approach will be maintained, for although evacuation was a short-lived temporary development, it was also subject to constant change.

The first evacuation of September 1939 was not a success either in social or governmental terms. By the New Year 66% of the evacuees had returned to London, and the country as a whole was reverberating with horror stories about the state of the evacuees.<sup>213</sup> The Jewish community itself was fully aware of the difficulties that could follow with "the introduction (of) the Jewish problem into many areas in which no Jews had been seen before".<sup>214</sup> The Jewish Chronicle warned its readers to behave if they were away and the community was prepared for outbursts of rural antisemitism.<sup>215</sup> Such fears were exaggerated, for although there was at times strong feeling against the Jewish evacuees, it rarely broke into violence.<sup>216</sup>

The initial evacuation did create tensions that were specifically linked to the new Jewish arrivals. At a



farcical level, rumours were heard in the Home Counties concerning Jewish prostitutes seducing the innocent village bumpkins of Hertfordshire, or of Jewish pawnbrokers ruining the local inhabitants. Neither had any foundation.<sup>217</sup> Such exotic stories were not as common as other misconceptions about Jews which, for a while, created a barrier between host and evacuee. In Chatteris, Cambridgeshire, 700 evacuees swelled the normal population of 5000, 85% of the new arrivals being Jewish East Enders.<sup>218</sup> There were initial conflicts due to the difference in habits between town and country dwellers, and also class problems, even between the agricultural and industrial poor. On top of this, however, the strangeness of the previously unknown Jews strengthened the division between newcomer and host. However, by November 1939 most of the initial difficulties had been ironed out.<sup>219</sup> In Shefford, Bedfordshire another large influx of Jews, this time schoolchildren, was being experienced as this became the new location of the Jewish Secondary School for the duration of the war. Over 500 children were billeted in and around this village, the potential for conflict being increased by the fact that most of the children were German refugees.<sup>220</sup> As in Chatteris the pattern was one of initial tension, Shefford being totally unprepared for this Jewish invasion. Jews had been seen previously either in biblical terms or less complementarily as "mean merchants" or even occasionally in demonic terms with horns on their foreheads.<sup>221</sup> The presence of these well-behaved schoolchildren overcame

some of the more bizarre beliefs about Jews, but their strict orthodoxy over ritual created much misunderstanding.<sup>222</sup> However, with tact on the side of the school and communal organizers, a regular and peaceful pattern was soon established in this remote village.<sup>223</sup>

Elsewhere this initial harmony was missing. In Little Eversden, Cambridgeshire, a Mass-Observer commented that its North-east London Jewish evacuees were generally "unloved" and that the locals were happy when they started to disperse in October 1939.<sup>224</sup> If the evacuation of the Jewish Secondary School turned out to be a model of success and integration, then its rival Jews' Free School had a disastrous evacuation experience.<sup>225</sup> One refugee worker remembers the influx of these East End schoolchildren "as a real cross to bear".<sup>226</sup> Ely in Cambridgeshire was the setting for the Free School's evacuation, and whereas organization had been strong in Shefford, it fell apart in this area of East Anglia. The strong adherence to orthodoxy in the former school broke down in the latter, whose pupils were more rebellious concerning tradition.<sup>227</sup> With a lack of mediators on the Jewish side, local animosity grew unabated and many children, after an unhappy few months, returned to the East End, or to other areas.<sup>228</sup>

In general the East Anglian counties seemed less tolerant of the Jewish evacuees than did those in the Home Counties such as Bedfordshire. The better organization prevailing in the latter explains some of this discrepancy in treatment, although there is evidence that Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire suffered more intensely from



xenophobia and insularity than most rural areas. R.M. Titmuss in his official war history felt it necessary to comment that "Jewish customs were unknown and misunderstood in the rural areas of East Anglia long settled in their habits and hostile to 'foreigners' though they might only be strangers from a neighbouring county".<sup>229</sup> A farmer in a village near Ipswich epitomised this parochial attitude, telling a Jewish East Ender, "London? I've been there once".<sup>230</sup> One East Anglian observer felt that the Jewish evacuees who came to her village at the start of the war were "as completely Oriental and foreign to our northern green as so many exotic black parrots".<sup>231</sup> In another such village, the novelist Hugh Massingham commented that the Jewish evacuees were being blamed for the black market and the housing shortage as well as being enemy agents!<sup>232</sup> Similarly in a Norfolk village it was the Jewishness of the evacuees that was objected to when several newcomers allegedly misbehaved. Writing in January 1940 the pacifist J.M. Murray believed a few trivial incidents involving the evacuees had led to "the rumblings of anti-semitism" in the wilds of Norfolk.<sup>233</sup>

If Ely was typical of the strained relations between Jewish evacuees and hosts in East Anglia, then the small town of Bedford was an example of the relative harmony in the Home Counties. Bedford's pre-war Jewish population was limited to one or two isolated families, and thus the arrival of 55 Jewish refugee children and a London secondary school that was over 20% Jewish, could well have created problems.<sup>234</sup> However, as in Shefford, integration was aided

by Jewish organizers, in the case of Bedford it being Mr and Mrs Harris. They were able to establish close contact with the local population and to set up a Jewish evacuation centre, Harris House.<sup>235</sup> In early 1940 the local population provided facilities for Passover and Arnold Harris confided to his diary "the 'goyim' are indeed exceptionally accommodating. I marvel at their spontaneity to help us in all our good work".<sup>236</sup> The success of the Bedford experience thus owed much to the Harris's; as one of his charges later commented: "it is impossible to overestimate their importance."<sup>237</sup> However other factors were important. Compared to Ely, the Jewish evacuees were much smaller in number and were generally better behaved than their Jews' Free school contemporaries. Polite and disciplined, they made ideal evacuees.<sup>238</sup> On the host side several Bedford evacuees have commented on the nonconformist tradition in Bedford which they felt helped the acceptance of the Jewish arrivals.<sup>239</sup> This certainly contrasts with the more narrow-minded view of Jews in East Anglia.

Bedfordshire and East Anglia can thus be seen as ideal types representing positive and negative features of the initial evacuation. However, it is necessary to repeat that evacuation was a very personal experience. One Jewish schoolgirl had a miserable time being shifted from billet to billet in Bedford,<sup>240</sup> whilst other Jewish schoolchildren had the times of their lives in East Anglia.<sup>241</sup> Bearing in mind these complicating factors concerning generalizations, what was the overall impact of the phoney war Jewish evacuation?



The first point to note is that it is difficult to avoid noticing the shock aspect of the Jewish influx. Stories about Jews being asked about their horns abound - an indication of the lack of knowledge of the rural population as far as Jewish matters were concerned, in this pre-mass-television age.<sup>242</sup> The confusion created by the fact that Jews were actually human quickly subsided, but other stereotypes were more persistent. The image of Jews as purely Biblical characters was as strong, as the writer Chaim Bermant found out. As a Glaswegian refugee in Dumfriesshire, Bermant remembers being regarded "with something like awe, as if I was a close relative of Jesus Christ".<sup>243</sup> Whereas he was very religious, his fellow Jewish refugee was totally lax as far as observation of Jewish diet and other rituals was concerned. This created confusion, for as Bermant suggested "I at least seemed to conform ... to what they knew of the Jew from their reading, but they were never quite sure what to make of him".<sup>244</sup>

If some of the rural population were discovering that the Jews had an absence of horns, others were finding out that many were just normal people, who often did not care for any Jewish ritual. Many friendships developed between evacuee and host where the Jewish origin of the former was simply unimportant - for either side.<sup>245</sup> Whether this development broke down any latent prejudices is debatable. Respect for the individual or the family did not necessarily mean a liking for their Jewishness. Nevertheless, it is highly unlikely that such intimate harmonious mixing acted as a negative force on the ways in which Gentiles viewed Jews as a whole.<sup>246</sup>

What happened when Jewish evacuees became more prominent through a desire to be religiously observant? In both Shefford and Bedford the local inhabitants definitely took a pride in the way their religious orthodox children adhered to tradition, to the extent of chastising them when they appeared to be slackening in their ritual.<sup>247</sup> Yet in both these centres, the Jewish community helped to provide kosher meat and made sure that the hosts had little need to worry over the religious requirements of their guests.<sup>248</sup> There was at least respect for the religious beliefs of the children in both Bedford and Shefford, and cases of attempted proselytization were very rare. In the case of Chaim Bermant and others, the respect for Jews was even stronger, based on a fervent religious philosemitism. He remembers that the practising Christians, who were his hosts, "were grimly determined to keep me Jewish".<sup>249</sup>

However outside the minority cases of religious philosemitism, or where the Jewish community could keep a close eye on its children or offer financial help to the billets, the story was less happy. Food was the obvious source of conflict. Some Jewish evacuees were happy to be unleashed from the restrictions that Judaism created on their eating habits, but others dreaded the prospect of having to consume forbidden meat.<sup>250</sup> To some children, being forced to eat rabbit or pork was a greater grievance than any physical maltreatment, and consequently many Jewish children had a totally miserable evacuation experience.<sup>251</sup> Often the price of being accepted into a family was to abandon Jewish ritual and to join the Sunday school.<sup>252</sup> There could thus



be a strange ambivalence; a liking or even a loving of a Jewish evacuee child but an antipathy to Jews as a group. Lily Joseph, who was billeted in Welwyn Garden City, was subjected to antisemitic jokes every mealtime, yet the couple she was billeted with were desperate to adopt her.<sup>253</sup> Forced proselytization was rarer than Jewish children joining the Church of their own desire. Despite this, the orthodox Jewish community was involved in some melodramatic incidents, kidnapping Jewish children who were seen to be at risk in Christian homes.<sup>254</sup>

Therefore on purely religious grounds, the Jewishness of the evacuees did create its own problems, though occasionally it could produce positive results. Such problems as there were could usually be ironed out, either by tact and understanding, or by moving billet. There were, however, other sources of conflict. Some of these were because Jewish evacuees were largely urban and usually poor. In this though, the Jewish evacuees were not unique, for the whole evacuation experience was based on a city-country cultural clash. This universal aspect of evacuation could in fact work to the benefit of the Jewish community, for although the East End Jews were poor and dirty by middle-class standards, they were probably less so than their Cockney neighbours. In Egham, Surrey, 80% of the evacuees were Jewish East Enders, (hence its nickname Eghamstein),<sup>255</sup> yet Jewish schoolchildren were often preferred because they were better spoken and cleaner than their Christian counterparts.<sup>256</sup> As the historian Norman Longmate has stated (although exaggerating slightly): "the evidence is unanimous that Roman Catholic evacuees were by far the

dirtyest, the most ragged, and since they tended to come in large family groups, the hardest to place ... Jewish evacuees, by contrast, caused little trouble." <sup>257</sup>

Generally speaking, in the first year of evacuation the city-country clash was a more powerful source of conflict than the Jewish-Gentile one, with the former tending to subsume the latter. <sup>258</sup> Chaim Bermant, when beaten up by local bullies in Annan, was delighted in the fact that his injuries "were not incurred from the fact that I was Jewish, but that I was a town boy, a Glaswegian". <sup>259</sup> Similarly the Hallgartens, evacuated to Kings Langley in Buckinghamshire, found that the locals did not like them at all: "it was not that we were Germans, and it was not that we were Jewish. It was that we came from London." <sup>260</sup> However, at times a degree of antisemitism was brought into the conflict. A young Jewish girl, evacuated into a South Wales village, found herself on the side of the evacuees when they were attacked by the locals, but there were also occasions "when both groups united to attack me as a rotten Jew". <sup>261</sup> Antisemitism from fellow evacuees was also not an uncommon experience. <sup>262</sup>

The first evacuation was not a success in national terms and in that sense the Jewish experience mirrored that of the country as a whole. Organization was often found wanting, the sheer scale of the operation proving to be a formidable barrier. However, where some stability was achieved, especially in the case of child evacuees, it was not a total disaster as far as the Jewish community was concerned. Good relations and contacts were gradually built



up, and problems such as those associated with food were overcome.<sup>263</sup> It was the short-term contact between host and evacuee that was the most fertile ground for anti-semitism. It was for this reason that there was more antagonism towards Jewish adults, who either as visitors to their children, or as part-time evacuees, attracted much hostility.<sup>264</sup> It was in the seaside areas such as Brighton, Bournemouth, Blackpool and Llandudno, or in safe zones such as the Peak District, the Lake District or the West Country, that antagonism to Jewish evacuees was most pronounced throughout the war.<sup>265</sup> This antipathy was of a totally different variety from that which confronted East End Jewish evacuees, for it was based not on opposition to their poverty, but to their alleged opulence, ostentation, vulgarity and cowardice. Summarising this approach, the novelist Andrew Soutar, wrote to the Western Morning News complaining about Jews paying extortionate rates in hotels, buying up property and keeping "their heads and civilian suits, while all about them are losing theirs".<sup>266</sup> Although not all these nouveau-riche Jews were a figment of Soutar's literary imagination,<sup>267</sup> the distortion and prejudice inherent in his letter was typical of the misunderstandings and antipathy that were felt in holiday areas against Jewish evacuees.<sup>268</sup> Unfair accusations that the Jews were not pulling their weight in war charities in both Torquay and Blackpool,<sup>269</sup> and the policy of refusing Jewish guests in Bournemouth and Margate hotels were just a few of the symptoms of a wider antisemitic undertone in the coastal resorts of Britain.<sup>270</sup> There

were thus two levels of antagonism to Jewish evacuees that had emerged by the summer of 1940; firstly against the poor 'Whitechapel' type Jew and secondly against the alleged ostentatious 'Golders Green' nouveau-riche Jew.

Taken as a whole, negative reactions to Jewish evacuees by no means predominated in the first evacuation. However, the second dispersal at the time of the blitz was to bring into greater prominence both rich Jew and poor Jew antisemitism. With the military crisis of the summer of 1940, the increased threat of aerial bombardment led to a return to the evacuation areas, but this movement did not become a flood until the actual bombing began. However, only 500,000 people left London in September 1940 which was much less than in the original evacuation at the start of the war. In the period from September 1940 to May 1941 there were only 181,000 official evacuees.<sup>271</sup> Taken as a whole, the blitz evacuation was more successful than the earlier attempts. Organizers had gained experience and both the host and evacuee had learned to be tolerant of each other.<sup>272</sup> However, as far as Jewish evacuees were concerned the reverse appeared to be true. In order to explain this paradox, one that generally did not operate in the first evacuation, the experience in Oxfordshire and the Home Counties will be examined.

At the height of the blitz, the Chief Constable of Buckinghamshire reported that the sight of London refugees had "aroused considerable indignation and pity".<sup>273</sup>

Paradoxically, at the same time the Jewish Chronicle was reporting that whilst antisemitism was on the decline in



the East End, it was rising in the Home Counties. <sup>274</sup> Were then the Jewish evacuees bringing antisemitism with them, as the fascists liked to claim, or were the Jewish newcomers simply fulfilling their age-old role as scape-goats?

A strong case for the latter was made by Tom Harrisson who believed that in September 1939 hosts tended to put the blame on all evacuees. With the obvious distress caused by the blitz, the average evacuee was no longer a permissible target to attack for the difficulties that such large population influxes inevitably created. A more specific outlet was needed and thus Jewish evacuees were blamed collectively for any problems that arose. <sup>275</sup> Harrisson's model is useful in that it explains the report by Home Intelligence, that antisemitic feeling against evacuees "was out of all proportion to the Jews arousing it". <sup>276</sup> It does, however, oversimplify the complexity of the issue, for in areas like Oxfordshire, the Jewish presence was significant.

The intensity of the blitz in London, and particularly in the East End led onto a spontaneous unofficial evacuation in September 1940. On 15 September 1940 alone, 25,000 such evacuees left for Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. <sup>277</sup> The latter county, and particularly its major town, was the centre of this movement and by the middle of September up to 20,000 evacuees had arrived in Oxford. <sup>278</sup> Many of these were East Enders, half of whom were probably Jewish. <sup>279</sup> As most of the arrivals were unofficial evacuees, Oxford became chaotic, its former

sleepy existence transformed into a confused state with a dire shortage of accommodation. This problem spread to the small-villages such as Chipping Norton and Woodstock. In some of the latter the local population blamed the lack of room available on the Jewish evacuees.<sup>280</sup> Feeling was strong, a resident of Banford commenting "round here 'East End Jew' are words of abuse".<sup>281</sup> It was not only poorer Jews who were the subject of hostility. In Oxford, the luxurious Randolph hotel had guests, who were, according to its receptionist, "unfortunately Jews".<sup>282</sup> Indeed the editor of the Oxford Times felt that the antagonism from the local population was not aimed at the poorer Jewish evacuees, but at "the very large numbers of the wealthy, purse-proud and pushful type".<sup>283</sup> Sometimes all Jewish evacuees were lumped together and attacked because of their "extraordinary bad manners - noisy, aggressive, loud and tactless".<sup>284</sup>

There is no evidence that Jewish evacuees, even rich Jewish, evacuees were any more vulgar than non-Jewish evacuees. However, those that did fit the nouveau-riche image soon came to typify the whole community. One local Mass-Observer tried to analyse her own hostility to the new arrivals. She admitted that she could not "help feeling anger at well-dressed Jews and Jewesses" in her district, stating that "if they weren't Jews I shouldn't notice them" and that there were plenty of non-Jewish evacuees whom she ignored.<sup>285</sup> In this process of distortion, the term evacuee and Jew could be used interchangeably, and Jews blamed for all the problems that



evacuation had caused.<sup>286</sup> However one should not ignore the genuine conflict that could exist between the host and the Jewish evacuee. Many of the latter found the countryside backward and tedious, and were not afraid to air their complaints.<sup>287</sup> In this they did not differ dramatically from non-Jewish town evacuees.<sup>288</sup> In Oxfordshire, the higher concentration of London evacuees, added to the larger Jewish presence than in equivalent evacuation areas, gave the potential for a stronger local antisemitic feeling. In other Home County areas, where conditions were generally better, and Jews less prominent as evacuees, relations were more congenial, and hostility aimed more at the evacuees as a whole.<sup>289</sup>

The Jewish evacuation experience by the end of 1940 had thus created three problem areas in a geographical sense - seaside and resort regions, East Anglia and Oxfordshire. However, even in these problem spots, the dynamic nature of evacuation needs to be taken account of again. For throughout 1941 there was a general improvement in Jewish-Gentile relations in evacuation areas. Again there was a settling in period, the most unhappy evacuees went home and as the blitz lessened in its intensity, more people returned. By February 1941 Mass-Observation noted that only a minority of both the hosts and evacuees continued to hold grievances, which were no longer part of mainstream evacuation life.<sup>290</sup> As part of this improvement in relations, antisemitism had subsided.<sup>291</sup>

In general if host and guest could get through the initial traumatic period, then their relationship would,

in the words of a Jewish evacuee to Berkhemstead, "mellow".<sup>292</sup> Certain areas might have a sudden rash of antisemitism if there was a new influx of Jewish arrivals, but as 1941 progressed these became rarer.<sup>293</sup> In the problem areas such as East Anglia and Oxford, a similar pattern was being followed. The Jewish community would gradually set up evacuation centres and difficulties would be ironed out.<sup>294</sup> In East Anglia a report in 1944 suggested that the earlier problems had been settled and that Jewish-Gentile relations were now "natural and friendly".<sup>295</sup> Where there was conflict it tended to be on specific questions, such as food or business matters. As regards the former, the problem of evacuees having much time and little to do could create tension. Jewish evacuees were particularly eager to queue early for such kosher commodities as fish, and thus it was often reported that queues were the source and the scene of antisemitism.<sup>296</sup> Jewish evacuees attempting to set up businesses also created local antagonism, usually based on exaggerated fears.<sup>297</sup> However, although antisemitic incidents were reported in evacuation areas in the years from 1941 - 1943, they were sporadic and should not overshadow the general harmony that existed in the small towns and countryside.<sup>298</sup>

In 1944 the final stage in evacuation occurred. The gradual and near complete return to the cities was reversed as over a million Londoners sought refuge from the macabre threat of the flying bombs.<sup>299</sup> The reactions to Jewish evacuees the third time round is interesting and it generally emphasizes the degree of integration that had taken place



by 1944. Mass-Observation believed it to be the most successful of the evacuations.<sup>300</sup> Moreover, unlike the 1940 blitz period, the Jewish experience seems to fit into this wider pattern. Jewish representatives stated that there were very few problems in 1944, giving the reason that "since 1940 there are few areas in Great Britain which are not now accustomed to have Jews as residents and neighbours".<sup>301</sup> There were minor reports of tensions,<sup>302</sup> and regional variety - Northampton, Nottingham and Luton had good relations, despite the doubling of their Jewish population, whilst Leicester was regarded as being fairly antisemitic.<sup>303</sup> The Board of Deputies believed that the latter was due to past fascist activities, which had made the local population hostile, whereas a town like Luton welcomed Jewish evacuees, who could provide business and jobs. The amount of Jewish public relations work was also much higher in Luton than in Leicester.<sup>304</sup>

Another negative aspect of a generally bright picture was the continuing hostility to Jews in holiday areas. Some improvement in attitudes had occurred since the 1940 blitz. For example, surveys from Blackpool and the Lake District reported no problems in districts which had been bitterly hostile.<sup>305</sup> In Brighton local antagonism continued with rumours that Jews were monopolizing all available goods, local housing, petrol and even the cinemas.<sup>306</sup> Across the coast in Devon, a member of the Torquay District Council reported "a general increase in feeling against Jews", an analysis shared by a Mass-Observer.<sup>307</sup> It must be suggested that these Southern

resorts, within easy reach of London, were subject to virulent antisemitism against evacuees because, unlike many rural evacuation areas, the Jewish presence in these coast towns was unsettled, and thus there was less time for good relationships to be built up. With the Jewish population in these resorts constantly changing, there was more room for misunderstandings about the evacuees. Another factor explaining Brighton's reaction to Jewish evacuees, was the existence of an antisemitic tradition in the town, fostered as in Leicester by the B.U.F. <sup>308</sup>

The Brightons, Oxfords, Torquays and Leicesters must not disguise the national trend, which by 1944 was one of good integration of Jewish evacuees into the reception areas. In the last months of the war the population returned once again to its own homes, yet by then strong bonds had been formed by many Jewish evacuees with their hosts. In Shefford many tears were shed when the refugee children finally returned to London in the summer 1945, a far cry from the hostile response they had received at the outbreak of war. <sup>309</sup> Often evacuee and host would remain lifelong friends - a sign of some of the positive results of Jewish evacuation. <sup>310</sup> Was this typical of the overall impact of Jewish evacuation, and how did evacuation change people's perceptions of Jews?

Drawing a balance sheet of Jewish-Gentile relations is always difficult and also a dangerous pursuit. Generalizing even about an area or a town is hard enough, given the diversity of human responses. Applying this on a national scale becomes near impossible. One cannot subtract



the antagonism of a Brighton from the harmony of a Shefford and come up with a final net result. Nevertheless a Board of Deputies summary of evacuation suggested that although it had created some problems, it had also "demonstrated that the Jew is very much the same as his Christian neighbour".<sup>311</sup> This was a basically sound analysis, especially in areas where locals previously "possessed thoughts that the Jew was born to do harm only".<sup>312</sup> However several qualifications need to be made to this. Firstly, good relations often depended on a degree of permanence of the Jewish arrivals, and where the Jewish numbers were great, good organization. In areas such as Oxfordshire where neither factor really operated, a long standing grievance against the evacuees could result.<sup>313</sup> Also as children were more likely to stay in one place than adults, Jewish youngsters were often better received than their parents. Secondly close and harmonious relations did not necessarily change overall attitudes to the Jewish people. With the Jewish Secondary School in Bedfordshire, despite the love of the children and the respect for their religious observance, a social worker still found that there were problems from the householders stemming from "prejudice against the Jews". Some villagers could not accept that the school was short of money and resources, believing that the Jewish community was inherently wealthy.<sup>314</sup> Similarly in Staines there was a strong Jewish presence in the town throughout the war. However as late as 1944 there were complaints against the local

Yeshiva, with "the somewhat unusual appearance of the students" causing local suspicion. <sup>315</sup>

Nevertheless even in areas where relations between Jews and non-Jews were bad, violence was rare and limited. More commonly, hostility was manifested in a refusal to give billets to Jewish evacuees. <sup>316</sup> The village pogrom in Hugh Massingham's fictionalised account of Jewish evacuation, The Harp and the Oak never materialised or even looked a likely possibility. <sup>317</sup> However, evacuation could still be a traumatic time for Jewish evacuees. In East Anglia a group of English born Jews were so unhinged by evacuation that at first they would speak only Yiddish and were taken to be refugees. <sup>318</sup> Others attending non-Jewish schools for the first time were "first made aware more starkly of being Jewish". <sup>319</sup> Given the pressures of living in a totally Christian atmosphere, and with the near impossible task of organizing children right across Britain, the Second World War years were disastrous as far as Jewish education was concerned. The legacy of these absent years is still felt today and it has been suggested that "the damage done ... at that time is incalculable". <sup>320</sup> However little of it was done by deliberate malice from the Gentile population, indeed the Jewish children were often happy to drift into a secular or Christian world. Although some Jewish children suffered miserably in the war trying to preserve their background, many more were happy to follow the path of integration. Another category found themselves accepted fully as Jewish children, whose foster parents encouraged their religious beliefs.



If evacuation tended to integrate the Jewish population, often at the cost of religious observance, it also acted as a catalyſt in breaking down the areas of Jewish concentration. As the Jewish East End disappeared new areas of settlement such as Leicester, Northampton and Nottingham emerged.<sup>321</sup> Both the blitz and its concomitant evacuation thus pushed Jew and Gentile into close proximity. The net result was that barriers and prejudices on both sides were overcome. Yet this process was not an easy one and its price was high. In the case of the East End it came through tremendous physical and human destruction, and in the evacuation areas often at the cost of Jewish tradition. Both blitz and evacuation brought tensions which created antisemitism, some of which, like the hatred of the parvenu Jewish evacuee, persisted after the war. Yet taken as a whole these two great domestic war developments pushed Jews more firmly into the wider British community. It is to the question of how British society as a whole viewed its Jewish minority in the war that we must now turn.

FOOTNOTES

1. Details of the funding of the East End project and Tom Harrisson's objectives in the study can be found in Bof D C6/10/26.
2. Perhaps most clearly shown recently by Robert Skidelsky's Oswald Mosley (London, 1975), 393 and his portrayal of the East End as "a piece of Jewish Eastern Europe".
3. 'The East End: Varying Causes of Unrest', The Times, 20 October 1936.
4. In an early BBC Television programme on the East End, Harrisson used the exact parallel to a foreign expedition. BBC TV, 12 July 1939, 9.20. Script available at M-O A: TC Antisemitism Box 1 File E.
5. Julian Franklyn, describing himself as a Jewish cockney produced a devastating report on Mass-Observation's survey for the Board of Deputies. In Bof D C6/10/26. The phrase is Franklyn's.
6. The survey of over 4000 East Enders, of whom 40% were Jewish found only three cases where a Jew was in the same group as a Cockney (M-O believed they could identify a Jew in 4 out of 10 cases). As far as pubs were concerned few or no Jews were to be found in the public bar, although 22% of those in 'saloons' were Jewish. Overall on a Saturday night just over 10% of pub goers were Jewish. All in M-O A: TC Antisemitism Box 1 File F: Preliminary Report March 1939.
7. ibid. In 1937 an East End cinema manager was quoted as saying "about fifty per cent of our audience is Jewish, but I find very little difference in taste between the young Jewish people and others" - World Film News vol. 2 no. 2 (May, 1937).
8. M-O A: TC Antisemitism Box 1 File F.
9. Phil Piratin's estimate of the 69 members of the Borough Council was that a third were Jewish, a third Catholic and a third Church of England or methodist. The dominant group consisted of M. Davis on the Jewish side and Jerry Long on the Catholic side. Both were "extremely right-wing". Piratin claimed he had 5 friends, two Jewish including Jack Fine and 3 Protestants, all of whom were left of centre labour. Interview with the author, 18 July 1984.
10. The membership figures are from Phil Piratin, Our Flag Stays Red (London, 1948), 49. The Jewish percentage estimate was supplied to me from Phil Piratin, interview 18 July 1984. Bertha Sokoloff, later the Stepney Communist Party Secretary, put the amount as high as two-thirds. Interview with the author, 1 November 1984.
11. Bertha Sokoloff pointed out that the Jewish community was generally respectful of the Communist Party and would "buy the Daily Worker if asked to do so". Interview with the author, 1 November 1984.
12. M-O A: TC Antisemitism Box 1 File F.



13. H.F. Srebrnik, 'The Jewish Communist Movement in Stepney: Ideological Mobilization and Political Victories in an East London Borough 1935-45' (PhD, University of Birmingham, 1983), 69.
14. The Times, 20 October 1936.
15. M-O A: TC Antisemitism Box 1 File A. Over 70% of the respondents were against antisemitism. 15% of men and 4% of women were "definitely antisemitic".
16. *ibid.*, a reply of a 25 year old woman of Ernest Street.
17. *ibid.*
18. *ibid.*, the reply of a middle-aged man.
19. For the early antipathy of Poplar see J.J. Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion and Jewish Immigration 1885-1905' (M.Phil., University of Sheffield, 1979), 212-13. For later reactions in Poplar see the M-O report in TC Antisemitism Box 1 File A of 4-12 February 1939 and for Bethnal Green Box 2 File F. A nineteen year old male of Green Street, Bethnal Green, summed up the fear of invasion "We see the Jews coming to Bethnal Green, they took the trade and made trouble".
20. Some Gentiles in the Bethnal Green survey were actually tolerant - a 35 year old woman of Green Street stating that she "never had any fault to find" with Jews. Others were less charitable but not violently opposed - another resident of Green Street stating that she "did not like them ... (but) they don't interfere with me just the same". All in M-O A: TC Antisemitism Box 2 File F.
21. Comments by Julian Franklyn on the M-O report, 12 April 1939 in B of D, C6/10/26.
22. This was one of the major conclusions of the M-O East End report - TC Antisemitism Box 1 File A.
23. M-O A: TC Antisemitism Box 2 File F.
24. The figures are from the Registrar-General's estimates quoted by D.L. Munby, Industry and Planning in Stepney (London, 1951), 36.
25. *ibid.* R.M. Titmuss, Problems of Social Policy (London, 1950) 174 suggests that by January 1940 66% of the evacuees had returned to London although the figure was higher for the East End.
26. D.L. Munby, *op.cit.*, 13 stated that it was impossible to say whether more Jews left Stepney than Gentiles. Action no. 193 (9 November 1939) was less hesitant stating that "the exodus of the Jews from London at the outbreak of the war now ranks only second in their history to the classic exodus from Egypt".
27. This is assuming that the Jewish population remained at the same proportion as in the late 1930's.
28. The estimate is from A.B. Levy's East End Story (London, 1950), 16 which in turn was based on Stepney Council estimates. Stepney's population had declined to 77,600 by the end of the war - see Munby, *op.cit.*, 36.
29. K. Brill, John Groser: E. London Priest (Oxford, 1971), 152 and H.F. Srebrnik, 'The Jewish Communist Movement', 10 comments on its corruption and breakdown in the blitz.



30. R.M. Titmuss, op.cit., 106.
31. Jewish Chronicle, 8 September 1939.
32. Ye Olde Belle and Rattle vol. 1 no. 1 (September, 1939). It also put in a request from the "Chief Rabbi"; 'All residents in vicinity of this post are asked to refrain from feeding Yiddisher Wardens during the Blackout.' The journal is available in Tower Hamlets Local History Library.
33. The estimate was in a J.D.C. report for in February, 1942 in Bof D C6/9/1/35.
34. The anonymous account of East End Auxiliary Fire Service life - The Bells Go Down: The Diary of a London A.F.S. Man (London, 1942), 116 reported on the reactions to Sub Station F which was all Jewish. Many stories went round about it "not all complimentary" but most of the comments were in "Cockney good humour".
35. Interview with the author 15 September 1983. Jack Miller was in the Brick Lane A.R.P. from September 1939 to February 1941.
36. H.W. Snow's account of Station 101, 'In Wartime London' is in the Imperial War Museum's diary collection for World War Two.
37. For example, Abby Levy worked in the A.F.S. in Wapping where half the members were Jewish. Relations were good, Jews and non-Jews mixed well socially and at Jewish holidays non-Jews covered and the reverse happened at Christmas. Interview with the author, 6 September 1984.
38. The claim of not helping injured Jews, by fascists can be found in a J.D.C. report of 1 October 1939 in Bof D C6/5/1/1 and also in the Jewish Chronicle, 17 November 1939. The white slave traffic allegation is in Bof D C6/9/1/3 F3.
39. Quoted in Maurice Richardson, London's Burning (London, 1942), 62.
40. *ibid.*, 33.
41. The Bells Go Down, 8 and 171.
42. I. McLaine, Ministry of Morale: Home Front Morale and the Ministry of Information in World War II (London, 1979), 34 suggests that morale in the period September 1939 to May 1940 "appears to have been lower during this period, when the impact of the conflict was relatively slight, than at any other time during the war". For the government report of September 1939 see HO 144/21429/41.
43. The Bells Go Down, 23. Abby Levy who worked for the A.F.S. in Wapping found similar resentment though it was not explicitly antisemitic. Interview with the author, 6 September 1984.
44. See the Jewish Chronicle, 29 September 1939 and 3 November 1939 for the spreading of these allegations.
45. For the activities of the S.T.D.L. over air raid protection see the Daily Worker, 12 October 1939 and 8 May 1940, the East End News, 27 October 1939 and the East End Observer, 11 November 1939 and 9 December 1939.



46. Figure given by the S.T.D.L.'s solicitor Stephen Murray. See the East End News, 28 June 1940.
47. For the S.T.D.L.'s success see the Jewish Chronicle, 22 December 1939 and 12 July 1940.
48. For the rumours see the Jewish Chronicle, 29 September 1939 and also Action no. 186 and 188 (23 September 1939 and 5 October 1939). The S.T.D.L.'s attack on this movement is also in the Jewish Chronicle, 29 September 1939. Resentment persisted into 1940. A Mass-Observation survey in Limehouse found much hostility on this ground. A female of Rhodeswell Street commented "Its thanks to them that food's so dear down here". Another of Burdett Road stated "they do put the prices up on the food". Both in M-O A: TC Antisemitism Box 1 File H. How this resentment was transformed into attacks on Jewish black marketeers in the East End will be dealt with later in this chapter.
49. The B.U.F.'s British Trader's Bureau has been dealt with in Chapter 2. The M-O Survey in Limehouse April 1940 cited in note 48 also showed the tensions of Gentile shopowners for Jewish ones. Limehouse had seen the arrival of quite a few Jewish shops and the resentment was often clear. A tobacconist of Burdett Road remarked "they take our living away". Another remarked that Jews "were taking over Burdett Road".
50. Quoted in the East London Advertiser, 22 February 1941. For the latter quote see H. Snow, 'In Wartime London', 16.
51. For Silvertown see M-O A: FR 39 and for Limehouse FR 78.
52. *ibid.* Tom Harrisson stated that a similar survey in Leeds had shown the same pattern with less anti-semitism in an area of high Jewish population but the antisemitism that existed being of a more extreme character - see the Limehouse report M-O A: FR 78.
53. Ritchie Calder commented that with the blitz the possibility of antisemitism "was a constant source of anxiety in the East End", in The Lesson of London (London, 1941), 70.
54. CAB 65/7 WM 133, 22 May 1940.
55. F. Lewey, Cockney Campaign (London, 1944), 80-1.
56. The phrase 'volatile aliens' is quoted by Reginald Ball, The Bull's Eye (London, 1942), 50 and the 'pogrom' reference is from Ritchie Calder, *op.cit.*, 74-5.
57. Arthur Marwick, The Home Front (London, 1976), 10 deals with the question of the mythologizing of the domestic front.
58. J.J. Mallon, 'Jews and Gentiles in East London', Jewish Bulletin no. 9 (May, 1942). See also his article in News Chronicle, 19 May, 1942.
59. Details for Stepney can be found in a report of the Stepney Information Service, 24 April 1950 in Tower Hamlets Local History Library, ref 081.1. For a general survey of the blitz see Terence O'Brien, Civil Defence (London, 1955), 387-390.



60. In one incident a Jewish woman pushed to the front of the queue and was greeted with the cry "get out of it you bleeding Jew". A fight followed with a soldier marching the Jewish woman to the back but attacking the other woman's antisemitism in M-O A: FR 431. For other examples of immediate pre-blitz tension leading to antisemitism see B of D C6/9/1/3 F5 on 'antisemitism in the tubes' and M-O A: TC Air Raids Box 9 File T incident of 25 August 1940.
61. R. Calder, op.cit., 70.
62. For example a P.W.E. memorandum on the impact of German air raids of 28 July 1941 stated that "indigenous groups have better morale than aliens. For example the nearest approach to panic in London was in Stepney". In FO 898/181.
63. R.M. Titmuss, op.cit., 257.
64. T. O'Brien, op.cit., 390.
65. R.M. Titmuss, op.cit., 301.
66. The incident and the subsequent court case is outlined in the East End News, 4 October 1940.
67. Report of 1940 'Antisemitism in the tubes' quoted in note 60 above.
68. M.L. Richardson, op.cit., 64-5 and 137.
69. Home Intelligence reports of September and October 1940 stressed that there was no difference in behaviour between Jews and Gentiles see INF 1/264 no. 97 (11 September, 1940) and INF 1/292 no. 1 and 2 (30 September - 7 October and 7-14 October, 1940).
70. M.L. Richardson, op.cit., 95. A Mass-Observation report of September 1940 pointed out that there was a large Yiddish speaking element in the East End and that A.R.P. notices should thus be printed in Yiddish - M-O A: FR 431.
71. The conversation is reported in M-O A: TC Air Raids Box 9 File T entry for 20 September 1940.
72. A.E. Clark-Kennedy, The London Hospital vol. 2: 1840-1948 (London, 1963), 250 has details on the Tilbury shelter.
73. N.A. Rose (ed.) Baffy: The Diaries of Blanche Dugdale 1936-47 (London, 1973), 175 diary entry for 12 September 1940.
74. M-O A: FR 431. The report indicated that Jews were to be found at the right-hand side of Tilbury, 'Cockneys' in the middle and Indians on the left. See Tom Harrisson's report in New Statesman vol. 20 (28 September, 1940) for the same analysis.
75. A non-Jew wrote to the Jewish Chronicle, 1 November, 1940 saying that although the bombing had generally united the people at Tilbury the bad conditions also lead to antisemitic outbursts. I. Rennap, Anti-Semitism and the Jewish Question (London, 1943), 108 makes the same point. The Jewish proportion of Tilbury is from F.R. Lewey, op.cit., 129.
76. B. Donoghue and G.W. Jones, Herbert Morrison: Portrait of a Politician (London, 1973), 283 point out this detail.



77. Noreen Branson, History of the Communist Party of Great Britain: 1927-1941 (London, 1985), 302 deals with this campaign. Tubby Rosen, secretary of the Stepney Tenants Defence League was fighting for the introduction of the Haldane shelter as late as July 1940. See interview of 29 July 1940 in M-0 A: TC Air Raids Box 9 File T.
78. See M-0 FR 431 for details of Communist Party activities. Phil Piratin commented on the good work carried out by activists especially in Tilbury. Interview with the author, 18 July 1984.
79. Tubby Rosen interviewed on 17 September 1940 stressed the need for shelter committees to provide things such as teas to improve morale. In M-0 A: FR 431. Phil Piratin pointed out the work of the Unity Theatre in providing underground entertainment. Interview with the author, 18 July 1984.
80. A. Calder, The People's War (London, 1969), 167; Leonard Mosley, Backs to the Wall: London Under Fire 1940-5 (London, 1971), 177, and Constantine FitzGibbon, The Blitz (London, 1957), 109 all provided details of the Savoy March.
81. Cabinet concern can be found in CAB 65/9 (WM) 250, 16 September 1940 and CAB 65/9 (WM) 280, 30 October 1940. Morrison, the Home Secretary realized some concession as far as deep shelters would be necessary, see loc. cit. Eventually a committee under Lord Horder was set up. See B.D. Vernon, Ellen Wilkinson (London, 1982), 188 for details.
82. Interview with Phil Piratin, 18 July 1984. See also N. Branson, op.cit., 286-292 for the shift in Communist Party from the end of the phoney war to the blitz.
83. M-0 A FR 431 comments on the role of clubs such as Toynbee Hall, Bernhard Baron Settlement and the Stepney Jewish in the blitz.
84. Tom Harrisson, Living Through the Blitz (London, 1976), 113.
85. See the articles by F.A. Fulford and Rev. V. Rochford in the Catholic Herald, 25 October 1940. Similar complaints were made by Dr Heenan in the issue of 29 November 1940. A Jewish Chronicle complaint in the issue of 1 November 1940 brought a repeat of the morality accusation in the Jewish Chronicle, 8 November 1940 by Rochford.
86. Information supplied to me by Phil Piratin, interview with the author, 18 July 1984.
87. For this cooperation see Ritchie Calder, The Lesson of London, 68-9 and an article by Cecil Roth in the East End News, 24 July 1942.
88. F.R. Lewey, op.cit., 76.
89. Report of an interview between John Wills and Father Groser in the Kingsley Martin papers 30/1, 1 April 1943.
90. Donegall put the good organization down to the large Jewish presence and its organizational ability. The chief marshall of the shelter was a Mr Cohen. See the Sunday Dispatch, 6 October 1940.



91. Phyllis Bottome, Formidable to Tyrants (London, 1941), 86. The civil servant Sir Harold Scott felt likewise seeing the Liverpool Street shelter as representing a time "when all our differences in religion, class and politics give way" - Your Obedient Servant (London, 1959), 151-2. The New Statesman vol. 20 (21 September 1940) commented on the "wonderful sights of cooperation" in the East End.
92. Information from a letter of Sidney Salomon to Israel Cohen in B of D C6/2/136, 27 January 1944. For further information about one of these awards see Ian Bisset, The George Cross (London, 1961), 39. Other stories of Jewish bravery can be found in the East End Observer, 23 November 1940, the Jewish Chronicle, 27 September 1940 and A. Briggs and A. Macartney, Toynbee Hall: The First Hundred Years (London, 1984), 125-6.
93. See for example M-0 A: TC Air Raids Box 9 File T, report for 10 October 1940.
94. *ibid.*, report for 1 September 1940 suggested that "Jews and Gentiles alike admit their nervousness". A report from M-0 of 10 September 1940 believed that less Jews were leaving as home ties and responsibilities were greater than for non-Jews - M-0 A: FR 392. The Board of Deputies Sidney Salomon shared this opinion - letter to Israel Cohen cited in note 92.
95. R. Calder, The Lesson of London, 70 comments on how the blitz antisemitism was largely personal due to spaces allegedly monopolised by Jews and similar petty grievances.
96. Tribune, 20 September 1940 commented on the dismissive looks of both Jewish and Gentile East Enders at the "Mosley scrawl 'This is a Jews' War'". R. Calder, *op.cit.*, 75 comments similarly.
97. Titmuss, *op.cit.*, 257.
98. O'Brien, *op.cit.*, 388-90 and 427.
99. Figures from A. Calder, *op.cit.*, 184 and R. Calder, Carry on London (London, 1941), 59.
100. The quote is from a woman of the 'East End of London group' interviewed by Thames Television for the World at War series. Tape no. 2819, Imperial War Museum.
101. Bernard Kops interviewed in the same series as note 100. Tape no. 2718, Imperial War Museum. See also his The World is a Wedding (London, 1963), 86.
102. M-0 A: TC Air Raids Box 9 File T, report of 20 January 1941.
103. At the close of 1940, five men were arrested for breach of the peace at the Tilbury shelter for shouting at five 'foreign' shelterers "We want Hitler here to deal with you" - quoted by the East End News, 10 January 1941. Rose Henriques dealt with the various causes of antagonism in an article in the Bulletin of the Society of Jews and Christians, vol. 2 no. 3 (November 1941).
104. Jewish Chronicle, 10 January 1941.



105. A report by the Salvation Army in January 1941 stated that joint services continued and that there was little conflict between faiths, though harmony was only maintained by "extreme tact". Minutes for 24 January 1941 of the Society of Jews and Christians in the Parkes papers 15.076.
106. For a report of this service see Edith Ramsay's *Life in Stepney: World War 2* (unpub. ms, 1976), 11 in Tower Hamlets local history section, 020 and A.N. Stencl 'Whitechapel Spring 1941' in the Jewish Chronicle, 1 April 1966.
107. A.N. Stencl, op.cit.
108. E. Ramsay, op.cit., 11 and F.R. Lewey, op.cit., 32-3.
109. Figures from D.L. Munby, op.cit., 36.
110. The quote is from Phil Piratin, interview with the author, 18 July 1984. G. Clutton-Brock of the Bethnal Green Oxford House settlement wrote that the sense of community "is rapidly dwindling", letter to The Times, 28 December 1940. Monty Richardson, then a young student from Stepney, pointed out how street life was transferred to the tubes in the war. Interview with the author, 8 August 1983.
111. Abby Levy, interview with the author, 6 September 1984.
112. Lena Barden, interview with the author, 20 August 1984.
113. H. Brotz, 'The Outlines of Jewish Society in London' in M. Freedman ed., A Minority in Britain (London, 1955), 140 deals with this movement.
114. See H. Pollin's Economic History of the Jews in England (London, 1982), 188-190.
115. Jewish Chronicle, 21 July 1939.
116. See the Jewish Chronicle, 24 November 1939 and also MEPO 2/3127 report for September 1939 for a report on Dalston Jewish shop windows being smashed.
117. The May incident is in MEPO 2/3127 report for May, and the beating up of Jewish citizens in June 1940 is reported by the Jewish Chronicle, 14 June 1940.
118. See the Jewish Chronicle, 27 September 1940 and 4 October 1940.
119. Reports by the Daily Worker, 9 April 1943 and the J.T.A. Bulletin vol. 24 (12 April 1943). John Bull, 27 March 1943 carried details of a fascist printing press in the area. See also the Daily Worker, 8 May 1943 for a report on Hackney wall graffiti.
120. Thus the Bethnal Green area was the most violently racist area in the early 1980's, but with the move out to the 'suburbs' of Newham, the scene of attacks has now moved further east. See The Guardian, 16 July 1985, editorial on this problem.
121. In 1926 there were only 361 United Synagogue members in Hackney, an increase of only 9 in the previous ten years. By 1936 the figure had risen to 585 and by 1950 it had reached 757, the highest number outside North West London. Source, the Official Report of the United Synagogue, 23 March 1950 quoted by H. Brotz, 'An Analysis of Social Stratification Within Jewish Society' (PhD, University of London, 1951), 95.



122. Sir Austin Hudson in Hansard HC vol. 389 cols. 1166-71, 19 May 1943. The Hackney Gazette, 14 February 1945 stated that the Jewish vote in North Hackney was "a power to be reckoned with".
123. A J.D.C. report in B of D C9/4/5, 13 December 1943 suggested that the attacks "have been going on for some time".
124. *ibid.*, report of 15 May 1944.
125. *ibid.*, report of 13 December 1943.
126. *ibid.*, report of 15 May 1944.
127. See the Jewish Missionary Intelligence vol. 35 no. 8 (August 1944).
128. J.D.C. report of 8 November 1943 in B of D C6/2/6.
129. The Daily Worker attacked the Hackney Gazette on various occasions. See the issues of 16 January 1943, and the 1, 2 and 9 February 1943. For The Patriot's support see no. 941 (22 February 1940).
130. See the Hackney Gazette, 10 January, 17 January, 2 February, 7 February, 13 March, 18 March, 15 May, 14 August, 20 December 1940. This pattern continued through to the end of the war - see the issue of 29 June 1945. The 15 May 1940 issue is important for it shows how in the one case of a Bethnal Green gaming club owner who was non-Jewish no names were produced, but in a similar case in Stepney all 25 Jewish names were given prominence.
131. In the issue of 2 October 1940 the Gazette suggested that 90% of the tube dwellers on the Northern Line were Jewish. It hinted that these 'robust and well-nourished men' should be in the army and that they possessed a 'yellow streak'. The Jewish Chronicle, 11 October 1940 objected to this claim and the Gazette replied by repeating the claim in the issue of 16 October 1940.
132. In an editorial of 5 March 1943 the Gazette argued that Britons had still the right to decide with whom they lived or employed.
133. See the letters of 10 March 1943 and F.E. Sallows letter in the Gazette, 15 June 1945.
134. See J.J. Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion', 174-207 for its earlier views. Morris Goldsmith, the correspondent on fascism in the 1930's of the Jewish Chronicle suggests that the non-Jewish editor was "opposed to race hatred". Interview with the author, 9 April 1984. In the war the Advertiser contained little on Jewish matters although it made a strong protest against the activities of the British National Party - 20 February 1943 issue. It had several articles on the improvement of Jewish-Gentile relations - 22 February 1941 and 8 August 1942 and also praised the Board of Deputies 'British Jewry in Battle and Blitz' - 6 October 1944. However it objected to the accusation of Stepney's mayor that the press was biased over its reporting of Jewish black marketeers - 1 August 1942.



135. The pre-1914 ambivalence of the Observer is dealt with in Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion', 128-54 and its 'turn' against aliens in the war is dealt with by C. Bermant, Point of Arrival: A Study of London's East End (London, 1975), 223. In a letter of 27 January 1941 Mr Phillips of the Observer stated to Sidney Salomon that the paper was in "no sense a Jewish one" but that it did help the Jewish point of view. Indeed in the war it acted almost as a Jewish defence agency, attacking the antisemitism of the National Review - 7 June 1941 and stressing the Jewish war effort - 9 April 1943. It even issued an off-print in 1942 'The Jew in the War Against the Nazis' and had a Polish Jewish section.
136. See Bennett, 'East End Newspaper Opinion', 208-229 for its earlier antagonism. In the war, as the more radical East End paper, the News gave prominence to the Stepney Tenants' Defence League - see the issues, 27 October 1939 and 28 June 1940. The News printed a series through March and April 1943 by R. Mercer Wilson attacking antisemitism, although it balanced this with an article by J.W. Poynter in the issue of 24 September 1943 which attacked Jews for their clannishness. Generally the News stressed left-wing anti-fascism and anti-antisemitism throughout the war. See issues of 14 May 1943 - report of Marx Memorial Library meeting on 'Antisemitism and the Jewish Question', 20 August 1943 and 26 November 1943 on left-wing protests about 18B and the Mosley release questions, and 24 November 1944 and 20 April 1945 for Communist Party attitudes to the Jewish Question.
137. See the Jewish Chronicle, 25 October 1940.
138. Comments of Captain Burcher in the Jewish Chronicle, 1 November 1940. See also the following issue. The mayor of Hackney praised the work of Jews in civil defence work in the Hackney Gazette, 15 May 1944.
139. Quoted by Constantine FitzGibbon, op.cit., 143.
140. Letter to the author from J. Renson, 22 March 1984.
141. The gruesome details of the disaster can be followed in the Home Security reports of 3-4 March 1943 in HO 199/144. See also the official report of the accident - Laurence Dunne, 'Ministry of Home Security: Report on an enquiry into the accident at Bethnal Green tube station shelter on the 3rd March 45' (London, 1945), Cmd. 6583.
142. There were also claims that it was instigated by fascists or by pick-pockets. The official report mentioned these alternative rumours, but commented that the Jewish panic canard "had a much wider circulation". See L. Dunne, op.cit., 12.
143. Roughly 10% of Bethnal Green's 47,000 war-time population was Jewish. Most of these were concentrated on the west side of Bethnal Green, although the 'Jews' Island' area was nearer the centre of the borough. Details of the population distribution of Bethnal



- Green can be found in J.H. Robb's Working Class Antisemite (London, 1954), 52.
144. ibid. and R. Glass and M. Frenkel, 'The Way They Live at Bethnal Green' in A.G. Weidenfeld and H. de C Hastings (ed.), Britain Between West and East (London, 1946), 40 comment on the decline in the Jewish population, especially in Blythe and Teesdale Streets.
145. The Roman Road area was notorious for B.U.F. support.
146. Hannen Swaffer in The People, 14 March 1943 gave the figure of five Jewish fatalities. This casts doubt on the coroners statement at the inquest that "Taking the names as a whole, they represent a cross-section of the people of East London", reported by the Daily Telegraph, 20 March 1943.
147. An unpublished letter to the News Chronicle, April 1943 in the NCCL archive 41/7.
148. Sidney Salomon of the Board of Deputies reported to Scotland Yard that "during the early days of the Blitz there were indeed several unpleasant incidents which necessitated the intervention of the authorities". Letter to Canning of the Yard, 10 March 1943 in B of D C6/10/29.
149. The phrase is Salomon's, op.cit.
150. Hannen Swaffer in The People, 14 March 1943 and the Daily Worker, 16 March 1943 point to the antisemitism in the shelter before the disaster, as did S. Alexander in The Circle vol. 10 no. 1 (April 1943). Both Swaffer and Salomon suggest that Jews used the more distant Liverpool Street shelter. However, Jane Levy, the administrator of Bethnal Green's shelter was not aware of any antisemitism in the tube. Interview with the author, 8 August 1985.
151. Bernard Kops, The World is a Wedding, 108. World's Press News vol. 29 no. 732 (11 March 1942) has details on Elsa Lazarus, a clerk at the Daily Mail whose father was killed in the disaster.
152. Home Intelligence report no. 127 (2-9 March 1943) in INF 1/292. Lena Barden who lived close to the shelter and Jane Levy who was in charge of Bethnal Green shelter were not aware of any local antisemitic rumours. Interview with the author, 20 August 1984 and 8 August 1985 respectively.
153. For local fascists spreading such rumours see the Daily Worker, 16 March 1943 and Salomon (see note 148) came across one sergeant in the Rescuing Department doing likewise.
154. Two fascists, Boxer and Corbett were killed in the disaster but this was pure accident. Interview with John Wills and Miss Levenson, 22 March 1943 in the Kingsley Martin papers 30/1. However according to the government's official report the idea that fascists were responsible "had some local ... circulation". L.R. Dunne, op.cit., 12. Two East End Jews, Ann Baron and Abby Levy still believe it is the true explanation. Interview with the author, 6 September 1984.



155. Percy Harris, M.P. for Bethnal Green South-West was told by the local settlement, Oxford House, that there was strong local feeling against the council. Harris diaries, 6 March 1943 in HAR 158/1/2. Jane Levy confirms this feeling. Interview with the author, 8 August 1985.
156. Berka Sokoloff, active in Stepney Communist Party recalls that the Jewish panic rumour took several days to percolate through to Stepney and that it got little attention because people knew it was not a Jewish area. Interview with the author, 1 November 1984. However Louis Behr of Stepney Green believed that there were "slight antisemitic repercussions" with the disaster. Interview with the author, 12 September 1983.
157. A Mass-Observer in West Ham, a retired housewife reported on 5 March 1943 that "everybody (is) talking about the Jews panic in (the) shelter". M-O A: Diarist 5321, March 1943.
158. Quoted by the Jewish Chronicle, 13 October 1944. The Mass-Observer quoted in note 157 commented in September 1941 that "no-one has a good word for them in spite of their terrible times abroad". M-O A: Diarist 5321, September 1941.
159. A report of this meeting can be found in B of D C15/3/17.
160. For details see Barbara Nixon, Raiders Overhead (London, 1943), 88-100.
161. Report by John Wills for 7 April 1943 in the Kingsley Martin papers 30/1.
162. Guy Clutton Brock letter to Elizabeth Allen of the NCCL, 28 May 1943 in NCCL archive 311/2.
163. This is confirmed by a then Jewish resident of Bethnal Green, Lena Barden. Interview with the author, 20 August 1984.
164. In Whitechapel a good majority of the shops were Jewish owned - confirmed by two long residents of Commercial Street, Abby Levy and Ann Baron, interview with the author 6 September 1984. However in Bethnal Green there were many Jewish shops in the main shopping area of Bethnal Green and Roman Roads yet there was no need said James Robb in 1948 "to shop in a Jewish shop". J. Robb, 52.
165. George Orwell in the Contemporary Jewish Record, April 1945 in an essay entitled "Antisemitism in Britain" pointed out that the concentration of Jews in trades such as food, clothes and furniture was bound to make them unpopular in war-time.
166. In 1943 an investigator found local antagonism to Jewish shopowners who were meant to serve all the Jews first before dealing with Gentiles. John Wills report, 13 April 1943 in Kingsley Martin papers 30/1. See note 48 for earlier examples.
167. The critic James Agate wrote to the Board of Deputies Sidney Salomon in November 1942 sarcastically remarking that "I shall deny that there is a single Jew among the West End souteneurs or the East End black marketeers" in B of D C6/9/1/3 F5. Barbara Nixon



- reported that in Post 13 in the East End there were complaints that "the Black Market's all Yids" Raiders Overhead, 89. Abby Levy and Ann Baron remember great local resentment from both sections of the community to those who abused the war shortages as did Louis Behr. Interviews with the author 6 September 1984 and 12 September 1983 respectively.
168. A Mass-Observation survey in April 1941 on the small shopkeeper found 23% of the population in favour of large shops and 62% for small shops and that there was general sympathy to the plight of the smaller concern. M-O A: FR 661.
169. Report by the East End Observer, 27 July 1940.
170. Pritchard was also a member of Stepney Food Control Committee and stated that the number of proceedings against the Jews was very small. Quoted by the East End Observer, 31 July 1942.
171. A Mrs Redman stated that it was "a shame" that these West End Jews "were spoiling the black market for local citizens". Quoted by John Wills, 14 April 1943 in the Kingsley Martin papers 30/1.
172. D.L. Munby, op.cit., 186 comments on themove out of the area. Of the clothing firms, 6 had moved to the West End, 6 to Bethnal Green, Hackney and Stamford Hill, 3 to Northampton, and 1 to Leicester and Hemel Hempstead.
173. H. Llewellyn Smith (ed.), The New Survey of London Life and Labour vol. 6 (London, 1934), 284 comments on the deconcentration of Jewish tailoring.
174. Thomas Loterys, in an interview of 16 May 1944, stated that they would have preferred non-Jews, as Jews were "a nuisance, tending to be communistic". Stepney Laundry in a similar interview of 17 July 1944 stated that "Jews did not like hard work". Callender, Davies and Ricks, 22 March 1945, a mantle firm employed mainly Jews due to a lack of alternative. The manager felt Jews were dirty and army dodgers. All in the Dennis Munby papers, Tower Hamlets Local History Archive, Box 5610 'Interviews with East End Employers'.
175. Quoted by a Jewish Chronicle editorial, 30 January 1941.
176. Town Mills, 12 August 1944 and D. Green (mantles), 12 August 1944 reported that they would stay specifically because of the Jewish labour. Munby papers, op.cit.
177. See the Catholic Herald, 25 October 1940 for an example of conflict in the tailoring industry.
178. The secretary of Town Mills, 12 August 1944 reported that the non-Jews "got on very well with the Jews" - Munby papers, op.cit., M.L. Richardson, op.cit., 150 comments on an Irish and Jewish girl as factory friends in Stepney. Mick Mundel, a leading force in the United Ladies Tailors Trade Union, remembers no conflict in the war, despite the large influx of non-Jews into the trade. In 1939 there were 3500 Jewish members in his union, by 1947 this number had gone up to 13,000, the new members being largely non-Jewish. Interview with the author, 6 August 1985.



179. Reported by the East End News, 1 January 1943.
180. This can be followed in the Council Minutes, vol. 43 p. 25 for 2 March 1943 at Tower Hamlets Local History Archive, or in the East London Advertiser, 6 March 1943.
181. East End News, 26 November 1943.
182. The Monthly Bulletin of the T.A.C. vol. 1 no. 10 (June - July 1941) has details of these claims, also see T.A.C. report for May 1941 in B of D C6/2/6 File 1. It concluded that "there is no discrimination exercised by the Stepney A.R.P."
183. Jane Levy, the club leader Sir Wyckham Deedes's secretary in the war, admits that the clubs were "intellectually biased" though this elitism did soften in the war. Interview with the author, 8 August 1985. Hymie Fagan remembers Toynbee catering for those "who wanted to better themselves". Unpublished 'Autobiography', 3.
184. A M-O Survey of organizations in the East End in September 1940 pointed out that Toynbee was "not very widely known". M-O A: FR 431. Abby Levy, a prominent individual within the Hall admits that if you went to Stepney Green (only a mile or so away) "the people probably did not know what Toynbee was". Interview with the author, 6 September 1984.
185. Alexander Hartog, Born to Sing (London, 1978), 44.
186. Sidney Bunt, Jewish Youth Work in Britain (London, 1976), 130-1 comments on the integration which was far from tokenism. In 1938 the Cambridge and Bethnal Green Jewish Boys Club had 320 Jewish members and 80 non-Jewish. Local MP Percy Harris found good relations in the club when he visited in May 1943 - Harris diaries, 6 May 1943, Harris 158/1/2. The harmony in the Hackney Jewish Boys Club was reported in the Jewish Chronicle, 29 March 1940 and the East London Advertiser, 30 March 1940. In 1944 a joint A.J.Y./Y.M.C.A. summer camp was organised, the climax of this integrative policy. See the A.J.Y. minutes Box 47, 5 January, 14 March, 19 April 1944 and the Jewish Chronicle, 24 August 1945.
187. Stepney Communist Party, A Stepney to be Proud Of: Plans and Prospects (London, 1944), 4-7.
188. Bertha Sokoloff, interview with the author, 1 November 1984.
189. Mick Mindel, active in the local Communist Party stated that "we didn't meet as Jews and non-Jews" and that "there were no barriers". Interview with the author, 6 August 1985. Joe Jacobs, Out of the Ghetto (London, 1978), 188 echoes these opinions stating "We in the C.P. were almost fully integrated".
190. Thus although a Piratin leaflet 'An Appeal to the Jewish Electors' was circulated", the major circular, a four page 'Mile End Election Special' appealed to both communities. It called upon "Catholics and Protestants, Gentile and Jew, Communist, Socialist and Trade Unionist to Unite" and stated



- "with the right sort of Government, Gentiles and Jews will be able to work together in the peace". Both documents in the Lazar Zaidman collection.
191. Figure quoted by Douglas Hyde, I Believed (London, 1951), 187.
192. In the height of the blitz Mass-Observation reported that although Jews and Gentiles lived in the same streets, they did so "without mixing socially". M-O A: FR no. 392. This seems to have continued throughout the war. Two women from well-established Jewish families in Bethnal Green pointed out the limits of mixing. Lena Barden's father had a shop and was well liked in the community, nevertheless few non-Jews ever entered their house. Mrs Jack Wolkind was also the daughter of a popular shop owner but yet again states that there was little social mixing. She remembers how one family sat 'shiva' for their daughter during the war, as she had become pregnant by a non-Jew. Interviews with the author - Lena Barden, 20 August 1984; Mrs Wolkind, 2 August 1984.
193. For a report of this incident see Sidney Salomon's letter to Canning of Scotland Yard, 13 October 1944 in B of D C6/10/29 or in the JDC report of 18 October 1944 in B of D C6/2/6.
194. Bernard Kops, The World is a Wedding, 36 comments on fights in the Commercial Road pictures in the late 1930's.
195. For example Kops, op.cit., 108 saw life in Bethnal Green as awful whilst Jane Levy, a fellow Jew saw it "as a happy period". Interview with the author, 8 August 1985. Whilst Kops was an anarchist-bohemian, Levy was a middle class settlement worker.
196. Kops, op.cit., 86-9 comments on the temporary nature of the communal blitz spirit.
197. Details can be found in A.B. Levy, op.cit., 63.
198. In 1945 the Jewish population of Stepney had declined to 25,000 - see Levy, op.cit., 98. Much of the Jewish East End like the Jewish Free Reading Room, the Russian Vapour Baths and the Beth Din were destroyed. However, as Levy points out, the East End still acted as a magnet for Jews, pulling many more than 25,000 towards their jobs.
199. Just under 1.5 million under the government schemes, and over 2 million privately. Figures quoted by R.M. Titmuss, op.cit., 101.
200. However, Titmuss, op.cit., 344 defends the evacuation scheme stating that it was successful as a safety valve mechanism, allowing the public to escape the intensity of the war if they needed to. Although over 200 contemporary studies were made of evacuation according to Robin Higham, ed., A Guide to the Sources of British Military History (London, 1972), 518 little serious work has been produced since the end of the war. B.S. Johnson, ed., The Evacuees (London, 1968) is anecdotal and it was not until 1985 with Carlton Jackson's Who Will Take Our Children: The Story of the



- Evacuation in Britain 1939-45 (London, 85) that a detailed account appeared.
201. Thus Titmuss comments "the indiscriminate handing round of evacuees in the billeting of 1939 inevitably resulted in every conceivable kind of social and psychological misfit. Conservative and Labour supporters, Roman Catholics and Presbyterians, lonely spinsters and loud-mouthed, boisterous mothers, the rich and the poor, city-bred Jews and agricultural labourers, the lazy and the hard-working, the sensitive and the tough", op.cit., 112.
202. Quoted from Action by C. Cross, The Fascists in Britain (London, 1961), 187. See also Empire Record vol. 23 no. 275 (January, 1939), for a B.U.F. account that it was impossible to leave London as the roads were so full of Jews. There was a panic at this point. Titmuss, op.cit., 31 stated that 150,000 went to Wales and that there was a continuous rush of cars from the capital, but there is no evidence that Jews predominated.
203. Action no. 186, 193 (23 September 1939) and (9 November 1939) attacked the "second exodus" of Jews, whilst the I.F.L.'s Weekly Angles no. 85 (2 September 1939) quipped that "Devon and Cornwall have fallen to the advancing Golders Green and Finchley armies, without firing a shot".
204. See an Economic League report of 1941 on B of D C6/10/16.
205. See for example M-0 A: DR 1345, 1329, 2487 for October 1940, the National Review no. 698 (April 1941), 'War Comes to Little Drollington' and its report of "terror-stricken mob of semi-aliens" running to New York and Home Intelligence reports INF 1/264 no. 33 (24 June 1940) and INF 1/292 reports nos. 1 and 2 (30 September - 7 October and 7 October - 14 October 1940).
206. A Mass-Observation report felt Jews left less than 'Cockneys' due to their stronger home and families ties - M-0 A: FR no. 392 and Sidney Salomon of the Board of Deputies confirmed this for a London as a whole, letter to Israel Cohen, 27 January 1944 in B of D C6/2/136.
207. See the Swiss Cottager no. 4 (November 1940) 'Tonight's Homework' and also the National Review no. 704 (October 1941).
208. Thus a United Synagogue memo on its nationwide membership, 6 June 1941 found 90 members in Bedfordshire, 456 in Buckinghamshire, 169 in Wales, 137 in Devon, 3 in Cumberland, 183 in Lancashire - United Synagogue archives.
209. Mass-Observer Nella Last was bemused to hear her son comment that Bownes in the Lake District "is stiff with Jews". Diary entry for 3 November 1940 in K. Broad and S. Fleming eds., Nella Lasts War: A Mother's Diary: 1939-45 (Bristol, 1981), 83. James Hodson, the commentator, suggested that "there is



- no doubt that Jews have sought sanctuary in West Coast towns to a remarkable degree". Diary entry for 17 May 1942 in Home Front, (London, 1944), 32. The Jewish Missionary Intelligence vol. 31 no. 12 (December, 1940) commented on how Jewish evacuees were picked upon more by locals and thus made more conspicuous.
210. Arthur Marwick, op.cit., 70. As early as 15 December 1939 the Jewish Chronicle was reporting this phenomenon - and this continued with the second evacuation - see the Jewish Chronicle, 27 September 1940 and also in the 1944 evacuation - M-0 A: FR 2189 on Reading.
211. A Mass-Observation survey of evacuation in the Home Counties, October 1940 commented on the difficulty of generalizing as the situation "almost certainly varies from place to place". M-0 A: FR 451.
212. Figures quoted by S.S. Levin in 'The Changing Pattern of Jewish Education' in his own A Century of Anglo-Jewish Life 1870-1970 (London, 1970), 69.
213. Titmuss, op.cit., 174 gives the figure of 34% still away in January 1940. This fits neatly with an estimate of the Jewish child population of 35% for the same time quoted by B. Steinberg 'Jewish Education in Great Britain During World War II' Jewish Social Studies vol. 29, 1967, 35. The 'discovery' "that in our island we have bred two races foreign to one another", that evacuation caused is commented on by E.E. Halton, Our Towns (London, 1943), 4.
214. Memo of the Jewish Defence Committee 1940, in B of D C6/2/6.
215. See the Jewish Chronicle, 15 September and 20 October 1939. Barnett Janner of the Board of Deputies warned the Central Jewish Committee for Problems of Evacuation of the potential danger of Jews living in the country. Minutes of 12 December 1939, C9/1/a. 1 in B of D archive
216. The Citizen of 23 April 1943 in Hertfordshire had details of a court case in Baldock where a local woman threw a shovel at a Jewish evacuee shouting, "I've just had enough of you foreigners". The News Chronicle, 1 April 1943 article by Ralph McCarthy 'Antisemitism is growing in Britain' refers to intimidation of a Jewish evacuee boy as does Michael Aspel in B.S. Johnston, op.cit., 30. However physical attacks on Jewish evacuees (specifically as Jews) appears to have been rare.
217. James Parkes, Voyage of Discoveries (London, 1969), 172-3 relates how he was sent by the Board of Deputies to discover whether there was any truth in these rumours.
218. Information from M-0 A: DR 2303 November 1939.
219. *ibid.*
220. Judith Grunfeld's Shefford: The Story of a Jewish School Community in Evacuation 1939-45 (Tiptree, Essex, 1980) covers this unique story. For the Bedfordshire County Council reactions to the school's arrival, see W/Ev/C2 in the Bedfordshire County Record Office.
221. Grunfeld, op.cit., 3.



222. For example food requirements created obvious difficulties, but their refusal to pull toilet chains on the Sabbath was one of the more subtle problems. Mark Moser, a music teacher with the Jewish Secondary School felt that initially the villagers were "mystified" at the children's behaviour. Interview with the author, 28 November 1984.
223. See Grunfeld, op.cit., 35-6 describes the conversion of the villagers to the children as a "miracle" and a "conquest". Mark Moser and headmaster Dr Levine acted as liason officers with the locals and helped the integration process - Judith Grunfeld, interview with the author, 17 July 1984 and interview with Mark Moser, op.cit., the official Jewish Community also helped to iron out the problems of the school. See the report of Mr Stern of February 1940 in B of D B4/JE27.
224. M-0 A: DR 1206 November 1939.
225. Bernard Steinberg, op.cit., 33 comments that of all the evacuated school experiences, Shefford was the one nearest to a success. Mark Moser teacher at Shefford believes that the Jews' Free School's problems came out of a lack of religious strictness on the part of its teachers. Interview with the author, 28 November 1984.
226. M. Burkill, a non-Jewish refugee who was involved in refugee work in Cambridge remembers that "We were overpowered with a Jewish immigration to East Anglia", Imperial War Museum, refugee tapes, no. 4588.
227. For example Dave Overs evacuated to Ely with the Jews' Free School recalls how the authorities found us "a banana nose" from somewhere to teach Hebrew which "wasn't too popular with us". Spitalfield Books Where's Your Horns? (London, 1979), 22.
228. Abby Levy recalls that her cousin was evacuated to Ely where she was forced to eat rabbit at her billet. She soon left the town. Interview with the author, 6 September 1984. For other Ely experiences, see Spitalfield Books, op.cit., 35 section by Michael Myers. Young Jewry, September 1944 the organ of the Joint Emergency Committee comments on the initial hostility in East Anglia to this school.
229. R.M. Titmuss, op.cit., 178-9.
230. This was told to Bernard Kops's mother, The World is a Wedding, 97. See also C.H. Warren, England is a Village (London, 1940) for an account of Norfolk insularity.
231. Margery Allingham, The Oaken Heart (London, 1941), 96.
232. Hugh Massingham, There's No Place Like Home (London, 1944), 77-8.
233. J.M. Middleton, 'Spoiling the Egyptians', The Adelphi vol. 16 no. 4 (January, 1940).
234. For details of the refugees see EBV 40 Director of Education letter, 1 March 1940 in Bedfordshire County Record Office. Arnold Harris estimated that 20% of Owens School were Jewish. Typewritten account of 'Refugee Child Work', 17 December 1964 in Arnold Harris private collection.



235. For an account of Harris House see the Bedfordshire Record and Circular, 29 July 1941 and 18 September 1941. Miriam Moses, one of the leading figures in Jewish youth work was very impressed by Harris House. See-A.J.Y. exec minutes, Box 47, 13 September 1944.
236. Harris Diaries, private collection, entry for 28 February 1940.
237. N. Solomon, former student at Owen's School. Interview with the author, 26 November 1984. Celia Rose, a young mother evacuated to Bedford also spoke highly of the Harris's. See her tape at the Imperial War Museum. Mr O. Mitchell, headmaster of Owen's praised the work of Harris in integrating his Jewish students "under the handicap of evacuation". Letter of 23 December 1946 in the Harris collection.
238. In a diary entry of 2 November 1939 Arnold Harris commented on how highly the local people spoke of the boys. The need to behave well was installed into the refugees and other Jewish boys, Harris told them that they were 'ambassadors'. Diary entry for 25 January 1940. It is possible that Mrs A. St Loe Strachey in her study of evacuation, Borrowed Children (London, 1940), 89-91 was referring to Bedford when she spoke of a London school of skilled working class origin with a high Jewish population. She referred to the good integration due to the good behaviour and mental agility of the Jewish pupils.
239. Celia Rose referred to the easy mixing of Jews and non-Jews in Bedford, interview with the author, 13 September 1983, as did Hans and Kate Freyhan, German Jewish refugees who came to Bedford in 1941. They specifically refer to the help of local Quakers in settling in the area. Interview with the author, 10 May 1984. See also the Bedfordshire Times, 25 April 1980. N. Solomon and Arnold Harris's son, Ansel both believe the nonconformed spirit was important for the tolerance to Jewish evacuees. Interviews with the author, 26 November 1984 and 5 April 1984 respectively.
240. Interview with Mrs Jack Wolkind, 2 August 1984.
241. See Spitalfield Books, op.cit., 35. Margaretta Burkill (see note 226) referred to one case in Ely where the hosts learnt to cook 'Kosher' and where "the boy was blissfully happy". IWM refugee tapes no. 4588.
242. For the Jews' horns myth see J. Grunfeld, Shefford, 3; Spitalfield Books, op.cit., 22; B.S. Johnson, op.cit., 89-94; Alexander Hartog, op.cit., 58; Bernard Kops, The World is a Wedding, 132 and Mrs Ruth Lesser 'Evacuation: an Impression' (Unpub. ms., 26 April 1984) in my possession.
243. Chaim Bermant, Coming Home (London, 1976), 66.
244. *ibid.*, 71.
245. In a letter to the author, 19 August 1984, Mrs K. Kaye stated that in her close relations with the family that 'adopted' her family in High Wycombe "the word Jew never came into it". See also her comments in Where's Your Horns?, 58. In the same book Michael



- Myers, evacuated to Ely and then Oxford had a good time though "thoughts about being Jewish never occurred to me". loc.sit; 35.
246. Even non-practising Jews would have some Jewish activities in their life span, such as marriages, and there ex-evacuee hosts could often be invited, helping to introduce non-Jews to the reality of the Jewish experience. Such examples have been supplied to me by Mrs L.A. Harris in a letter of 11 May 1984 and Judith Grunfeld said this was common with ex-Shefford students. Interview with the author, 17 July 1984.
247. See J. Grunfeld, Shefford, 36 and 59. Also the Harris diaries show similar respect, entries for 2 December 1939, 28 February 1940.
248. Thus in Shefford hosts were paid extra to cover any special needs of the Jewish pupils. Interview with Mark Moser, 28 November 1984.
249. C. Bermant, op.cit., 66. A memo by the J.D.C. in 1942 on 'The Internal Causes of Antisemitism' referred to the cases where Jewish children had been neglected by their community, much to the disapproval of the local population. This was particularly so of "fervent Christians who hold the Jew dear on account of their religion". See also M. Burkill's comments in I.W.M. ref. tapes no. 4588.
250. The Jews' Free School move to Ely showed these food problems. Some took keenly to the joys of bacon - see M-0 A: DR 2303 November 1939 for a local account. Others simply complied to keep the peace, whilst a significant number did so under duress. A refugee worker in Ely recalls that food "created endless quarrels" I.W.M. Ref. tapes no. 4588.
251. For example Ruth Lesser, see note 242 for details. The agony aunt Claire Rayner had a miserable war, made worse by her Jewish origins. See the Sheffield Morning Telegraph, 2 March 1985.
252. The Jewish Chronicle, 13 February 1942 refers to this tacit agreement of acceptance. See also Steinberg, op.cit., 53 who states that "in some cases it was found that children were under direct proselytizing influence of foster parents who claimed the price of conversion in return for their generous hospitality".
253. In Where's Your Horns, 52.
254. As the Joint Emergency Committee for Jewish Religious Education in Great Britain stated in Jewish Education, 1944 and After (London, 1944), 48 there were few cases of deliberate proselytization but "the natural effect of five or six years of a Christian environment leads to much the same result as active missionary work". The kidnapping escapades are outlined in M. Burkill's IWM refugee tape, no. 4588. For refugee examples of a drift into Christianity see K. Gershon, ed., We Came As Children (London, 1966), 65-6.
255. For a general background of the Jewish influx into Egham, which was 20 miles out of London see the Jewish Chronicle, 20 October 1939 and the News Chronicle for the week previous. Truth no. 3297 (17 November 1939) has a letter from 'R.G.' giving an antisemitic interpretation of this Jewish movement.



256. This was strongly suggested to me by Phil Piratin, who as a Stepney councillor was responsible for the evacuees in Egham. Interview with the author, 18 July 1984. See also the Jewish Chronicle and News Chronicle op.cit., for confirmation of the good reception of the Jewish children. Jane Levy was responsible for Dempsey Street School's evacuation to Egham where 90% of the children were Jewish. She remembers that they were well received except for a small minority who wanted "blue-eyed and fair haired children". Interview with the author, 8 August 1985.
257. N. Longmate, How We Lived Then (London, 1971), 55.
258. The Jewish Chronicle, 22 September 1939 makes this point.
259. Chaim Bermant, op.cit., 62.
260. F. Hallgarten, IWM refugee tape no. 4494.
261. Gloria Cigman in B.S. Johnston, op.cit., 39.
262. See for example the M-0 report on Windsor in October 1940 FR no. 451.
263. Thus the editor of the Buckingham Free Press could write to W.W. Simpson on 29 August 1941 that there were no problems as far as Jewish evacuees were concerned "after the initial adjustments about food" were made. In B of D C15/3/20 folder 1.
264. The problem of visiting parents spoiling host-evacuee relations was also a problem with non-Jews. See Carlton Jackson, op.cit., 25. Judith Grunfeld relates how the visit of some refugee children's parents caused the initial antagonism to the children to rise up again. See her Shefford, 43-4.
265. In the first week of the war, there were unfounded allegations that Jews were flooding Brighton and becoming a burden on the rates. See the Jewish Chronicle, 22 September 1939 and Action no. 186 (23 September 1939) for the same accusation. Colonel Wedgwood asked a question about this and was informed that only 3 Jews from outside the area had received relief in Brighton since the war, Hansard HC vol. col. 1480, 28 September 1939. In Bournemouth there was also antipathy to rich Jewish evacuees. See M-0 A: D5080 for hostile descriptions of Jewish newcomers. For Blackpool see J.L. Hodson, Towards the Morning (London, 1941), 167 entry for 28 February 1941 and B of D B5/3/6 report for 1942. Opposition in the North Wales resorts was reported by Dr Roberts of Presbyterian Church of Wales in June 1941. He particularly resented rich Jews buying up local property and spending money too freely. In the James Parkes papers, 07.006.005. There were similar complaints in the Peak District, report by the Economic League in 1941 in B of D C6/10/16 and also Sheffield Information Committee in Sheffield City Library, CA/43/2 report for 27 May 1941. The Lake District was said to be full of cowardly Jews running from the bombs, see M-0 A: DR 2487, October 1940 who "despised the Jews" for such alleged action. Finally for the West Country, see the debate in the Western Morning News, November 1940 and the same paper for 21 February 1944.



266. Western Morning News, 13 November 1940. This was reprinted with approval by the antisemitic Social Crediter vol. 5 no. 11 (23 November 1940).
267. Thus a Home Intelligence report for 16 January 1942 suggested that there were a few evacuee Jews causing difficulties but that "the problem is not extensive". In B of D Brotman papers, B 5/3/6.
268. Lady Janner recalls that the people billeted with her were under the impression that British Jews were exempted from fighting. Elsie Janner, Barnett Janner (Londoner, 1984), 74.
269. For Torquay accusation see the Jewish Chronicle, 10 October 1941 and for Blackpool, the comments of the editor of the Blackpool Evening Gazette who was hostile to the large number of Jewish evacuees, and who he claimed were not giving to the Spitfire fund. Reported by Sidney Salomon in a letter to Ivan Greenberg, 7 October 1940 in the Greenberg papers AJ 110/5.
270. The Anglo-Swiss Hotel, Bournemouth proudly advertised that they did not cater for members of the Semitic race. See question by Mr Noel-Baker, Hansard HC vol. 365, col. 1971-2, 7 November 1940. A similar discrimination operated in Margate, see the Daily Worker, 4 June 1945.
271. Titmuss, op.cit., 276-7 and 345.
272. In a report on the blitz evacuation Tom Harrisson felt there was overall a greater acceptance of the difficulties on all sides. M-O A: FR 482.
273. Report of 13 September 1940 in HO 199/316.
274. Jewish Chronicle, 27 September 1940.
275. M-O A: FR 482.
276. INF 1/292, no. 1 (30 September - 7 October 1940).
277. Titmuss, op.cit., 271.
278. M-O A: FR 412 on Oxford evacuees.
279. A letter in the Jewish Chronicle, 17 October 1941 claimed that the Jewish population of Oxford had increased from about 30 in 1939 to 2000 in 1941.
280. A point stressed by Carlton Jackson, op.cit., 44-5.
281. M-O A: DR 1578 October 1940.
282. See M-O A: FR 412 for 19 September 1940.
283. In a letter from Hartley, the editor, to W.W. Simpson in August 1941 in B of D C15/3/20. One Oxford resident Hilaire Belloc would not have been impressed with this argument. He wrote to JSN, 19 January 1941 "Oxford is crammed ... half the addition is due to an exodus of East End Jews who have heard that the Germans won't bomb Oxford". Quoted by A.N. Wilson, Hilaire Belloc (London, 1984), 366.
284. Quoted by M-O A: FR 1669L.
285. M-O A: DR 1329, October 1940.
286. Carlton Jackson, op.cit., 44-5 states that in Oxfordshire Jew and evacuee were synonymous terms. This was also the case in Reading, see M-O A: FR 2189.
287. For example a Mass-Observer in Taunton commented on an incident in a cafe in Taunton where 3 Jews entered. They complained of the dullness of country towns, creating a friction with the locals which then assumed an antisemitic tone. In M-O A: DR 2489, October 1940.



288. Tom Harrisson, talking of evacuees in general, pointed out that "actual observation showed that (East End Jews) behaved just as well as the Cockneys".  
M-O A: FR 482.
289. The editors of the Oxford Times, Bedfordshire Times and the Buckingham Free Press were asked to comment on relations between Jews and non-Jews in their counties. Only the Oxford Times editor was concerned about the growth of antisemitism. All three letters to W.W. Simpson, in August 1941 in C15/3/20.  
M-O A: FR 577.
290. M-O A: FR 577.
291. *ibid.*
292. Lena Barden, interview with the author, 20 August 1984.
293. For example Mass-Observation noted that there was antisemitism in Horsham as many East End Jews had moved in that direction. M-O A: FR 577. A report by the Central Jewish Committee for Problems of Evacuation in June 1941 stated that "feeling on the whole between Jew and non-Jew is good". In B of D C9/1/a.1.
294. See M-O A: FR 761 on Oxford clubs. The report of June 1941 stated that the Jewish clubs were the only ones where host and evacuee mixed.
295. The report was N. Morris in Young Jewry, September 1944. For liason work in and around Ely and Cambridge between the Jewish Community (represented by Rabbi Klein) and the local population see B of D B4/KL2.
296. The Jewish Chronicle, 10 October 1941 had a letter on queues in Oxford creating "antisemitism on a level of the continent". The same paper, 7 November 1941 reported on the antagonism in Egham because of Jews' queueing habits. See also M-O A: FR 1669L for Oxford. Home Intelligence reported that queues were 'hot-beds of antisemitism' and that Jews were said to be able to get all the fish they required. In INF 1/292 no. 42 (16-23 July 1941). The issue of fish created one of the few areas of conflict in Berkhemstead. Jewish evacuees, short of meat would queue early in the morning for fish, competing with upper middle class locals, who saw the best fish as their preserve. Interview with Lena Barden, 1 August 1984.
297. In High Wycombe a local councillor claimed Jews were taking the place of honest Englishmen - reported by the Jewish Chronicle, 22 November 1940. A similar complaint was made in Egham Food Committee, again without foundation. See NCCL archive 45/5 report of May 1944 and a similar complaint was made before by Staines Chamber of Commerce - Staines and Egham News, 8 October 1943. Near by Windsor was also the scene of antagonism to new Jewish shops - Wartime Social Survey in M-O A: FRX 565A.
298. For examples of later evacuation antisemitism see Society of Jews and Christians minutes, 13 March 1941 and 23 June 1942, 15.076 in the Parkes papers, or 27 November 1941 report on Letchworth in B of D C9/1/a.1.



299. In March 1944 the official evacuees under the government scheme were at the lowest levels, 319,400. By September over a million had left London. See N. Longmate, The Doodlebugs, (London, 1981), 211.
300. Mass-Observation Bulletin, Dec. 1944 - Jan. 1945. This was because it was smaller and smoother all round.
301. 'Report on Conditions in Reception Areas', 1944 in B of D, E2/64. The Jewish Defence Committee minutes 18 October 1944 stated that they had been informed by the Ministry of Information that there had been no increase in antisemitism with the evacuation. In B of D C6/2/6.
302. See Home Intelligence INF 1/292 no. 191 (23-31 May 1944), no. 197 (4-11 July 1944) and no. 199 (18-25 July 1944).
303. E2/64 cited in note 301.
304. *ibid.*
305. For the Lakes see Jewish Missionary Intelligence vol. 32 no. 2 (February 1941). For Blackpool, see B of D E2/64 report for 1944.
306. In a letter of 20 May 1943 to E. Allen of the NCCL, G.M. Myers wrote that he had heard on the front concerning food "we don't get much, the Jews get it all" and that it was rumoured that Jews controlled the Brighton food office. NCCL archive 311/1. A year later Norman Swallow in Tribune, 22 September 1944 reported that he had heard that "the Jews were buying up all the food, drinking all the beer, using all the petrol".
307. A letter to the NCCL, 16 June 1943 by a Miss Monkhouse in NCCL 311/1. In March 1943 the same was reported by a Mass-Observation who reported growing indignation against Jewish shops in Torquay M-O A: DR 3369, March 1943.
308. See for example the J.D.C. report of 28 April 1940 in B of D C6/9/1/3. Sidney Salomon reported that in Brighton 'there is a fair amount of antisemitism'.
309. J. Grunfeld, Shefford, 112 suggests that the villagers were broken hearted when the Jewish school left. This is confirmed in a letter to Judith Grunfeld from P.J. Bryan, 16 March 1979, the Air Raid Warden of Shefford, Bryan reported that he had fond memories of the evacuees and "we missed the children when they left". I am grateful to Mrs Grunfeld for showing me this letter.
310. See Grunfeld, Shefford, 100; Mrs R. Kaye, 'Harmony' in Where's Your Horns, 58. In a letter to the author, 11 May 1984, Mrs L.A. Harris, evacuated to Welwyn Garden City said that although the family she stayed with had not seen Jews before, "they were angels and a supreme influence in my future life" and she remained close friends afterwards.
311. Report of 1942, 'Internal Causes of Antisemitism' in B of D C6/9/1/3.



312. A report by a young soldier stationed in a small village where many had not seen real Jews before, quoted by B. Henriques, Fratres (London, 1951), 140.
313. Carlton Jackson, op.cit., 44-5 claims that there is still antagonism to the East End evacuees in Oxfordshire today.
314. See report of 17 September 1943 in Bedfordshire County Record Office W/EV/CWL 3.
315. Evacuations and Public Relations Work, April 1944 in B of D C9/4/5.
316. For such refusals see M-0 A: FR 451 and the Jewish Chronicle, 27 October and 22 November 1940 and 24 January and 12 December 1941. See also the New Statesman vol. 28 (12 August 1944).
317. In this account, the villagers rise up against a well-meaning but tactless Jewish evacuee and smash up his house. Hugh Massingham, The Harp and the Oak (London, 1945), 195-248.
318. Reported by M. Burkill, IWM refugee tapes, no. 4588.
319. The quote is from Ken Teacher, evacuated to Hitchin, Hertfordshire. In Ian Bald, The Jews in Britain (London, 1984), 28. Naomi Grunfeld, Judith's daughter also had a miserable time at school in Campton, Bedfordshire. She was bullied and attacked for "killing our Lord". Interview with the author, 17 July 1984.
320. S.S. Levin, op.cit., 69. Chaim Bermant, Troubled Eden (London, 1969), 128 suggests that despite "the miracles of improvisation" many young people maturing in the 1950's had no Jewish education at all.
321. See for example V.D. Lipman, Social History of the Jews in England 1850-1950 (London, 1954), 132 for a brief summary of the growth in population of towns such as Nottingham and Leicester due to evacuation. Such an increase was often permanent. For an indication of the direction of Jewish evacuation across Britain, see the United Synagogue membership list of June 1941, in the United Synagogue archive. The LCC archive has a similar list of the distribution of Jewish child evacuees from London in March 1940 - in EO/WAR/2/46.



## CHAPTER 4

Jews in British Society (1)The Jewish Question in Britain 1939 - 1945

In the first week of the war Tom Harrisson decided to terminate Mass-Observation's survey on antisemitism in Britain. Writing to the Board of Deputies he suggested that "all our work points to the present conflict as pointing away from antisemitism".<sup>1</sup> Harrisson's common sense belief that a war against the Jew-persecuting Nazis was bound to end domestic prejudice is one that still persists nearly half a century later.<sup>2</sup> However, as Mass-Observation were themselves to shortly find out, the reality was somewhat different. An observer in London, writing in October 1939, referred to an "almost universal anti-semitic feeling" in the capital.<sup>3</sup> It was soon apparent that the Jew-consciousness of the late 1930's was going to continue throughout the war.<sup>4</sup> Whilst rarely a total obsession, the 'Jewish Question' was one that was to recur frequently, albeit in many different forms, in the years between 1939 and 1945.

A brief examination of the quantity of contemporary debate on the Jewish issue will illustrate how widespread public concern was over the subject. Two anthologies were produced - Gentile and Jew and The Future of the Jews, both with wide-ranging ideas from many contributors.<sup>5</sup> In addition much of the contemporary press, from the News Chronicle to the Dundee Evening Telegraph, presented major debates on the subject.<sup>6</sup> Indeed no major periodical in Britain was free from heated arguments on the Jewish

Question.<sup>7</sup> George Orwell, who himself wrote regularly on antisemitism, commented that the issue was "discussed interminably in the press".<sup>8</sup> So great was the public interest in the area, that anyone daring to mention Jews in print, however indirectly, was besieged by a flood of letters.<sup>9</sup> Adding to this general fixation on matters Jewish, the war saw a proliferation of Jewish defence literature. Some of this was produced by Jewish organizations, but much of the defence material came from left-wing elements in British society. This anti-antisemitic literature will be dealt with separately, but it will be sufficient now to point out that it was just one of many elements that made up an atmosphere where 'Jews were news'.

The vast amount written and spoken on the Jewish Question in Britain during the war necessitates a clear analytical framework for its evaluation. Otherwise there is a danger of losing sight of the many heterogeneous attitudes that were present, but which could be lost in the sheer volume of material. It has been pointed out that it is important to differentiate between forms of anti-semitism,<sup>10</sup> and the constant presence of antisemitism in the war should not hide the fact that this antipathy took a wide variety of forms.<sup>11</sup>

Attempts to draw a clear political spectrum from right to left are always fraught with danger. The ideologies of both organized antisemitism and fascism illustrate this point. Although most readily identified with the extreme right, antisemitism has not been absent from liberal and socialist circles. Furthermore it is difficult to subsume



the antipathy to Jewish power from either the Chesterbelloc circle or the B.U.F. under the category of conservatism. To quote a virulently antisemitic follower of the former school: "What am I? Anything but Tory." <sup>12</sup> As Lord Rothermere and others were to find, Mosley's organization was not simply an anti-communist bulwark, but was a radical movement in itself. <sup>13</sup> However, if caution is employed, it is possible to divide attitudes to Jews into the three categories of right, left and centre. It is by no means the only way in which hostility towards Jews in British society can be compartmentalised nor is it a watertight model. However, as long as the other factors which cut across these subdivisions - such as class, sex, age, religion and locality - are taken into account then it is satisfactory to use it as a working model.

In the dogma of the extreme left, antisemitism was identified as a reactionary force, being an indirect attack on the workers and a "secret weapon of the Ruling Class". <sup>14</sup> As even the Daily Worker was to realise, antisemitism was not just a monopoly of the right, <sup>15</sup> but nevertheless it remains a fact that much of the most blatant attacks on Jews in the war could be identified with conservative sources. The grounds of the Right's attack on Jews were based on two central objections containing one essential ingredient - the ultimate loyalty of the Jews. Firstly Jews were identified with radical and revolutionary world forces, and secondly they were perceived as essentially unBritish.

As we have seen after 1918 the leading spirits of High Toryism - The Times, the Morning Post and The Spectator were quick to accuse Jews of being the central force behind Bolshevism and a generally malevolent world power.<sup>16</sup> After the discrediting of The Protocols in 1921, the identification became less respectable and by the outbreak of war both The Times and The Spectator were more liberal on Jewish matters, and the Morning Post had ceased to function. However not all conservative organs had forgotten the issue by 1939.

At the forefront of the campaign against the subversive Jewish influence was The Patriot. Although priding itself on its widespread presence in Conservative clubs, this weekly journal, which continued to peddle the argument of The Protocols throughout the war, cannot be seriously regarded as part of mainstream British society.<sup>17</sup> Slightly more respectable were the ultra-patriotic and reactionary British Empire Union (B.E.U.) and National Citizens Union (N.C.U.). Both had dabbled in Jewish conspiracy arguments in the late 1930's but by the outbreak of hostilities had generally stopped attacking Jews as international revolutionaries.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, the B.E.U.'s journal, Empire Record, whilst attacking German persecution of Jews, reminded its readers that "the great majority of the founders of Bolshevism in Russia were German Jews".<sup>19</sup> Similarly the National Review denounced Nazi antisemitism but suggested that history "will perhaps not hold a subversive Jewish element blameless - Communism has much to answer for".<sup>20</sup> Its long standing antagonism against German Jews continued



through the war, this respectable journal attacking "the Communism daily spoken to Germany in the rich Jewish voices of the men Hitler flung out six years ago".<sup>21</sup>

The only other major grouping that consistently blamed Jewry for Communism centred around the right-wing Catholic Herald. A long-standing thorn in the side of Anglo-Jewry, it did little to modify its attacks on Jewry in the war.<sup>22</sup> It dismissed the stories of Jewish persecution,<sup>23</sup> and preferred instead to open its columns to a lengthy debate over Jewish responsibility for the Russian Revolution.<sup>24</sup> In so doing, the paper revealed the strong interest on the subject from a sizeable proportion of the Catholic population and its intelligentsia.<sup>25</sup> Elsewhere social commentators such as Wickham Steed, Arthur Keith, Arthur Bryant and Douglas Reed revived the Jewish-Bolshevik myth, but generally speaking, outside the Tory diehard and right-wing Catholic worlds, the matter had ceased to be one of public concern.<sup>26</sup> Whilst Mass-Observation's numerous social surveys on Jews between 1939 and 1943 revealed widespread fears about Jewish power in society, not once did this include the Jewish Communist bogey.<sup>27</sup>

If Tory diehard thinking on the Bolshevik revolution was becoming anachronistic, it did not follow that Conservative antisemitic conspiracy thinking was also a thing of the past. In the war the Conservative Party was split in a similar manner to that of the 1980's, with a dominant nineteenth century individualist section, but with a significant social reform group in opposition.<sup>28</sup> It was within the former section that an influential grouping,

centred around the weekly Truth, and in opposition to the alleged Jewish influence in Britain, could be found. The Conservative Party had close financial connections to Truth, which were the subject of anti-fascist scrutiny in the war.<sup>29</sup> In addition there is evidence that the deputy editor of Truth, the ex-B.U.F. director A.K. Chesterton, was employed by the Conservatives in 1945.<sup>30</sup>

It was within Truth that right-wing opposition to any form of government planning was most clearly articulated. Its two leading contributors, Collin Brooks and Sir Ernest Benn, formed two pressure groups in the war - Aims of Industry and the Society of Individualists - both to preserve free enterprise.<sup>31</sup> The latter claimed 10,000 members in 1942<sup>32</sup> and George Orwell was not alone in believing Truth to be a dangerous and "distinctly influential paper".<sup>33</sup> Antisemitism had become prominent in the weekly from the late 1930's and throughout the war Truth "indulged lavishly in it".<sup>34</sup>

Its hostility to Jews was based on the belief that Jews were essentially foreigners and a dangerous force in society. These two elements were forged together in an article "Contrasts in Patriotism" where the war record of a group of Conservative peers was compared to that of three left-wing Jews - Gollancz, Laski and Strauss.<sup>35</sup> The resulting heavy libel fines did little to stop Truth's innuendos which suggested that the British were fighting so that alien Jews would gain at home.<sup>36</sup> Following in the path of the Chesterbelloc circle, Truth deemed that Jews, whether they had arrived in Britain recently or



several centuries ago, were essentially alien to British life. To Collin Brooks, its editor, the real Jewish question was whether an alien race should be allowed unlimited power and influence over society. It is revealing how in 1940 Truth saw the Hore-Belisha case in terms of the Dreyfus affair.<sup>37</sup> Again in Belloc's footsteps Brooks saw the solution in terms of a form of apartheid where Jews "would, metaphorically, wear the Star of Judah proudly ... and withdraw from the normal life of the nation".<sup>38</sup> If this was not carried out then the Jews would face an antisemitic backlash and be expelled from Britain again.

There is no doubt that Truth was widely regarded as "a reputable weekly periodical",<sup>39</sup> but in Jewish matters how far was it reflecting public opinion? Claude Claremont, an anti-Freudian, declared his conversion to Belloc's analysis in a major work in 1940,<sup>40</sup> but as a Mass-Observation survey in 1944 showed, his views were fairly isolated. Out of 155 people questioned, only 3 believed that Jewish activities should be circumscribed as they were a danger to the country.<sup>41</sup> Yet the same sample showed that up to 10% believed that Jews were a power in society.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, other similar surveys showed that Jews were seen as unBritish by a large proportion of the population. A Mass-Observation report on attitudes to foreigners in 1943 brought the response "I cannot understand the inclusion of Jews" from one man, but it was one of only two out of a sample of 68.<sup>43</sup>

It would thus seem that only a small minority of the population actually wanted laws against Jews in Britain.

Yet paradoxically, a similarly small percentage considered, as did one Mass-Observer, that Jews "were no different to other people" or that "British Jews" were "British".<sup>44</sup> In failing to differentiate between alien and Jew, Truth was in tune with the views of much of the population. In suggesting apartheid or expulsion it was satisfying the desires of only a fragment of the British public.

In its attitude to government social policy Truth found itself in a difficult dilemma. On the one hand it represented a strong segment of Tory opinion, on the other this feeling was swimming in the opposite direction to public opinion. Whilst Truth accused Beveridge of wanting "to force securities upon people whose sole desire is for risk and adventure",<sup>45</sup> 88% of the population disagreed.<sup>46</sup> In this area Truth represented what Home Intelligence saw as a small "hostile minority", compared to the general nationwide support for the Beveridge report.<sup>47</sup> Truth, in blaming P.E.P. for the success of planning in the war, and in suggesting as Sir Ernest Benn did that this organization was "sinister, semi-secret" with a pronouncedly "Jewish influence", was probably only preaching to a small, already converted minority.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, it succeeded in presenting Jewish conspiracy ideas and warnings about Jewish power to a large public in the war.<sup>49</sup>

Realising that there was little chance of getting the paper to change its policies, the Board of Deputies attempted to get the government to suppress Truth.<sup>50</sup> Herbert Morrison, the Home Secretary, whilst agreeing to keep a careful watch on the paper, decided that banning Truth would



be too great an interference with the liberty of the Press.<sup>51</sup> An attempt was made to get the Conservative Party to renounce Truth, because, in the Board of Deputies' words, "there is still a very strong feeling that the Central Office is interested in that paper".<sup>52</sup> No such repudiation came from the Conservatives. Indeed there is some evidence that the Conservative Party had encouraged Truth's antisemitic attack on Hore-Belisha in 1940. Moreover it has been suggested that the sacking of the Jewish War Minister was due to "Conservative Party unwillingness to resist antisemitism in the Foreign Office and among the army generals".<sup>53</sup> It is significant that the Tory Chairman, Sir Thomas Dugdale, told the editor of Truth in 1942 that "The (Conservative) Party had no press at all - either daily or periodical - Truth being nearest to a dependable organ".<sup>54</sup>

The Conservative Party was more troubled by the activities and imprisonment of one of its M.P.'s, Captain Ramsay. Although Ramsay was never disowned by the Conservatives, he was, even in terms of the Conservative antipathy towards Jews at the time, "clearly in a class of his own".<sup>55</sup> Ramsay by the end of the war was becoming an electoral embarrassment and his local Party had no qualms about replacing him.<sup>56</sup> Although Ramsay's constituents had rejected his conspiratorial antisemitism,<sup>57</sup> there is no evidence that other Conservative constituency parties were restraining social prejudice against Jews. For example in 1937 Daniel Lipson had been refused the candidature of the Conservative Party at Cheltenham due to his

Jewish background.<sup>58</sup> It has been suggested that throughout the 1930's and 40's as local constituency parties had more control over the selection of candidates (who had previously nominated themselves via personal finance), that the demise of the Jewish Conservative was ensured.<sup>59</sup> It is significant that in the 1945 election there were no Jewish Conservative M.P.'s elected at all.<sup>60</sup>

The problem of Conservative antisemitism was great enough even to stir the Board of Deputies into action. Despite its past reluctance to involve itself in Party politics (to the extent of refusing to attack the B.U.F.),<sup>61</sup> its President Selig Brodetsky approached R.A. Butler in 1943 on the issue. Butler, representing the more liberal element within the Party, told Brodetsky that he would consider getting the Conservatives to tell its members of the dangers of antisemitism.<sup>62</sup> It would appear however, that Butler's more progressive attitude was not typical of the Party as a whole. A group of Conservative M.P.'s, who claimed to be representative of the Party, wrote to the Prime Minister in February 1940, giving an indication of Conservative antipathy to the Jews in Britain. They wrote hoping that the refugees present in Britain would not be naturalized as it would "result in a permanent increase of our already over-large Jewish population. Most of us feel that we would rather hand down to posterity a slowly denuding number of people of British stock than provide new material for increasing the stock of Jewish or Jew-British population". The latter was already "a most unhealthy symptom in the body politic. The Jewish vote is



so strong in some constituencies that the Member has no freedom of action".<sup>63</sup>

With this sort of attitude, it is not surprising that the prominence of Harold Laski in the Labour Party, as Chairman of the Labour Party Conference in 1945, attracted right-wing antisemitic hostility. The National Review commented "anything less like the British working man than an international Jew could not well be imagined ... he has so much contempt for this country ... with no idea about the land he happened to be born in, save to make a revolution in it".<sup>64</sup> Lord Croft, the old man of Tory diehardism followed suit, writing in the popular press that Laski was "a fine representative of the old British working class".<sup>65</sup> This was the sort of language that had been used after the end of the First World War, but nevertheless a change had taken place in Conservative thinking on the subject. Churchill, who had been at the forefront of the attack against 'Jewish' Bolshevism after 1918,<sup>66</sup> now warned Croft to "be careful, whatever the temptation, not to be drawn into any campaign that might be represented as anti-semitic". It would appear that Churchill, although sympathetic to Croft's remarks, realised they were no longer respectable in a political climate that was discovering the Nazi concentration camps.<sup>67</sup>

In any evaluation of antisemitism along a political spectrum in the war, one must agree with Orwell, who wrote in 1945 that "antisemitism comes more naturally to people of Conservative tendency, who suspect Jews of weakening national morale and diluting the national culture".<sup>68</sup>

In the press world it was the Conservative Rothermere, Beaverbrook and Kemsley empires that showed the greatest hostility to Jews in the war, and, via Truth, respectable Toryism and antisemitic extremism were given a common platform.<sup>69</sup> Moreover just as the 1980's have seen a degree of entryism from National Front supporters into the Conservative Party, so in the 1945 election the latter received support from ex-B.U.F. members.<sup>70</sup>

Orwell's belief that antisemitism was mainly associated with the Right did not blind him from acknowledging that "People of Left opinions are not immune to it".<sup>71</sup> However, Orwell's self-critical stance on his fellow Socialists has not been one that has gained many followers. It has recently been written that "any attempt to raise even a discussion about the anti-semitic nature of ... socialist practice is almost invariably met with apoplexy and vilification. It is virtually a taboo subject".<sup>72</sup>

Whilst Orwell was happy to generalize that within the right-wing "neo-tories and political Catholics are always liable to succumb to antisemitism",<sup>73</sup> he was unsure why those on the left indulged in it, generally ascribing it to irrational personal prejudice.<sup>74</sup> There is some truth in this argument, James Robb, for example, in his post-war survey of antisemitism in Bethnal Green, found no difference between liberals, socialists or conservatives in regard to personal prejudice.<sup>75</sup> In the B.U.F. by-elections, Mass-Observation found that Labour supporters in Silvertown "were frequently strongly anti-Jewish"<sup>76</sup> and that in Leeds antisemitism was as common in Labour voters as "amongst the



general average".<sup>77</sup> In the former, 31% of the population were 'definitely' antisemitic, in the latter, 14%.<sup>78</sup> Nor was pathological prejudice a monopoly of the extreme right. Recently released Home Office papers have revealed that the Labour M.P. Richard Stokes was a member of Captain Ramsay's antisemitic Right Club,<sup>79</sup> and Labour Party archives disclose that a Labour supporter from Stoke was active in the equally extremist Militant Christian Patriots.<sup>80</sup>

It would thus seem that socialists were not immune from the prevailing antipathy in British society towards Jews, nor were certain individuals free from severe anti-Jewish complexes.<sup>81</sup> Can one go further, however, and suggest that there was a form of antisemitism specifically associated with the Left in Britain? I have already commented on the need for caution when discussing the possibility of a socialist antisemitic tradition in Britain.<sup>82</sup> Nevertheless the persistence of this strain of thought into the Second World War shows the necessity of taking the matter seriously. However, it is important to evaluate the nature and extent of this hostility, and then to see if it has any unique features.

In June 1939 the radical I.L.P. supporting journal, The Forward, attacked the "Jewish control of British foreign policy".<sup>83</sup> This onslaught on the alleged power of international Jewish finance bears a resemblance to the left-wing campaign at the time of the Boer War. Indeed it has been described as "striking a radical theme of earlier times".<sup>84</sup> However The Forward had not made up its own mind. In July 1939, when answering the question "Do Jews

Want War?", it suggested that even if they did "Jews are everywhere an unimportant and far from determining factor in such cardinal questions as war and peace".<sup>85</sup>

The journal's ambivalence continued throughout the war - attacking the international financiers - "the Shylock-in-waiting" for promoting war, the House of Rothschilds, and "the Hebrew leaders of the Money-lending business",<sup>86</sup> yet dismissing as "absurd" the idea that "our financial system being dominated by Jews".<sup>87</sup> The Forward was unable to give up a long-standing antipathy to the bogey of international Jewish finance. At the same time, however, it was incapable of putting this in the context of the Nazi persecution of Jews.

The attack on Jewish financiers was one not specifically linked to the left, indeed it was one of the most prominent aspects of the propaganda of the B.U.F. and other fascist and antisemitic groups in the 1930's and 40's. However, these latter organizations did not attack the Jewish financier in isolation, for it was seen as only part of the international Jewish power, which was directly linked to Jewish Communism. To all groups on the left to attack socialists such as Harold Laski and Manny Shinwell as international Jewish Bolsheviks was an anathema.<sup>88</sup> Despite this vital difference, left-wing groups such as the I.L.P. and the United Socialist Movement, which were hostile to the war could co-operate with quasi-fascists like the Duke of Bedford and John Beckett. Indeed in 1939 there was talk of a coalition between the I.L.P. and the B.U.F.<sup>89</sup>

In the words of the Duke of Bedford "adversity can make strange bedfellows"<sup>90</sup> and the major pacifist organization



the Peace Pledge Union (P.P.U.) saw the involvement of the extremes of Left and Right in the war. Although the P.P.U. had a strong connection to the I.L.P.,<sup>91</sup> it also received the attention of Nazi appeasement groups ranging from the antisemitic Link<sup>92</sup> and Nordic League<sup>93</sup> to the slightly more moderate British Council for Christian Settlement.<sup>94</sup> The conflict between Left and Right, between Socialist pacifists and those sympathetic to the Nazis threatened to split the P.P.U. The editor of Peace News, John Middleton Murry, wrote in 1942 that he was "astonished by the apparent intolerance displayed by pacifists towards one another".<sup>95</sup>

Nevertheless, although some socialists abhorred the linking of P.P.U. to individuals such as Bedford, others were willing to cooperate. As we have seen, prominent members of the I.L.P. supported the latter's peace mission to Ireland,<sup>96</sup> and John McGovern M.P. was active in getting the government to release Nazi sympathizers interned under 18B.<sup>97</sup> Bedford's links with Guy Aldred's United Socialist Movement were even stronger. Bedford was allowed to contribute financially to this socialist-anarchist organization. In addition he was permitted to attack Jewish financiers in its journal, The Word.<sup>98</sup> Stranger still were the contributions of Alexander Ratcliffe to The Word.<sup>99</sup> Ratcliffe's antisemitic anti-war Vanguard was circulated by the Anarchist Federation.<sup>100</sup> There was thus some peculiar contacts made between the extreme (but anti-Soviet) left wing and the antisemitic fascist appeasement movements in Britain.<sup>101</sup>

These connections could be dismissed as a result of the desire for peace at any price, but there was to an extent some ideological agreement. Whilst Peace News opened its columns to attacks on international Jewish finance from quasi-fascists such as Edward Godfrey and the Duke of Bedford,<sup>102</sup> there were similar sentiments expressed by Murry himself and the novelist Ethel Mannin, both of whom had I.L.P. connections.<sup>103</sup> Furthermore Murry's other journal, The Adelphi, a "Christian" Socialist pacifist review, engaged in what Orwell called "Jew-baiting of a mild kind".<sup>104</sup> It is important not to overstress the connections between the pacifist left and appeasement right over the Jewish Question - a significant socialist element in the P.P.U. were active in fighting antisemitism inside and outside the movement.<sup>105</sup> However to a prominent group within the peace movement there could be cooperation between the left and the right. To these individuals, attacks on international Jewish finance were perfectly acceptable.<sup>106</sup>

No such contact was ever considered in the more orthodox Marxist world of the Communist Party.<sup>107</sup> Even so rich Jew antisemitism did not disappear amongst its supporters. In 1940 Malcolm Muggeridge wrote that "when a Rothschild was spoiled of his possessions in Vienna, socialists must complain".<sup>108</sup> The Daily Worker did not seem to agree, launching bitter attacks on the Barons Maurice and Edouard de Rothschild when they arrived in Britain from Europe in 1940.<sup>109</sup> The fact that the European



Houses of Rothschild had been destroyed by the Nazis, and that they had arrived in Britain having lost most of their possessions (and nearly their lives) did not occur to the Communist Party's organ.<sup>110</sup> Instead, the Daily Worker attacked the support which other sections of the press gave for the Rothschilds. It saw this press sympathy as an indication of who the real enemies of Britain were. The Daily Worker believed this was not Germany, but those who wanted to set up fascism at home - the defenders of international finance.<sup>111</sup>

This crude 'social fascist' argument did not stop the Daily Worker from attacking antisemitism, which it had done consistently from the 1930's.<sup>112</sup> However until its suppression in 1941 it continued to attack Jewish finance. To the Daily Worker "bankers (were) bankers and business (was) business",<sup>113</sup> regardless of the Nazi persecution of all types of Jews. Even so, the Communist Party did find it necessary to warn its members that not all Jews were capitalists<sup>114</sup> and that Jews did not control international finance.<sup>115</sup>

Fears that Communists and fellow travellers harboured such views would appear to have been justified. Many left-wingers could simultaneously attack fascism and antisemitism yet show strong signs of rich-Jew antisemitism. One Mass-Observer wrote in 1940 that "as a Communist (I do) not like Jewish influence and activity in finance and industry ... I think the Jews as capitalists are a nuisance and require strict control".<sup>117</sup> Many other examples could be cited of Communists who were as "obsessed with 'Jewish

capitalism' as (was) Hilaire Belloc".<sup>118</sup> Some went further believing "Jews have too much power as so many of them control finance and finance ... controls us".<sup>119</sup> Others blamed international Jewish financiers for the war.<sup>120</sup>

Douglas Hyde, who was the anti-fascist correspondent for the Daily Worker, remarked after the war that "nowhere will one find a more cynical anti-semitism than in the (Communist) Party itself".<sup>121</sup> Hyde's remark needs to be put in the context of his bitter attack on his former employer, but it would seem to contain an element of truth.<sup>122</sup> The association of Jews with finance capitalism (despite the historical inaccuracy of this belief by the 1930's), would appear to have been deeply ingrained into the Communist mentality in war-time Britain. Nevertheless the Communist Party did change its attitude in the latter part of the war. Walter Holmes, who had earlier attacked the refugee Rothschilds in the Daily Worker, was now forced to admit that in Dachau concentration camp, rich Jews had been killed as well as their poorer brethren.<sup>123</sup> Within the Communist Party a section for sympathetic Jewish businessmen was set up, although not without strong opposition.<sup>124</sup> The Communist Party had begun to realise that Nazi antisemitism knew no class barriers and that Jews as a whole should be enlisted in the fight against reactionary forces.

However, it is important to stress that not all on the left-wing had come to realise that a simple class analysis could not explain antisemitism. To many, Jews were not victims but oppressors and thus they could not



suffer from Nazi attacks.<sup>125</sup> At worst only working class Jews would be victims. Thus some left-wing anti-war organs cast doubt on the accuracy of the atrocity reports. They suggested, when the news of the Nazi extermination programme first became public at the end of 1942, that "exaggerations can only harm Jews",<sup>126</sup> and that the reports were just propaganda justifying an imperialist war.<sup>127</sup> The Trotskyite Socialist Appeal showed its total failure to grasp the nature of Nazism when it claimed, after the liberation of Belsen, that the worst victims were the German working class.<sup>128</sup> Mass-Observation surveys confirm that left-wing distrust of Jewish atrocity stories was not uncommon - one correspondent suggesting that they were in fact organized by rich Jews.<sup>129</sup> Others believed that the Jews deserved the treatment they were getting because of their role in finance,<sup>130</sup> and that it was "a great pity that the opposition to the Jews in Germany has been so emphasised to the exclusion of socialists, anti-Nazis, liberals and anti-Nazi Christians";<sup>131</sup> the latter being examples of those who deserved genuine sympathy.

We must now return to the original question: how unique was socialist antisemitism and how extensive was it? With the first point we have seen how it was only the left that attacked international Jewish finance, not as an attack on world Jewry, but as an assault on the capitalist system. This socialist antisemitism was part of a general attack on the rich, but where Jewish capitalists were specifically singled out for being particularly vulgar and powerful.<sup>132</sup> Elsewhere socialist antisemitism was generally part of a wider hostility to Jews in British society.

In the war itself one Labour M.P. attacked Jews for their Communist activities,<sup>133</sup> and another prominent Labour official in a fit of xenophobia told his Jewish colleagues "to go back to Palestine".<sup>134</sup>

Turning to the extent of socialist antipathy it is vital to point out that the above instances were fairly isolated.<sup>135</sup> Whilst the Board of Deputies was forced to make a general appeal to the Conservative Party to try to control its antisemitism, it was only concerning specific instances that complaints were made to the Labour Party; ones that shocked the latter as much as the Jewish community.<sup>136</sup> Also although the identification of Jews with international finance was made across the Labour movement, it appears that it was only prominent amongst the extreme left-wing.<sup>137</sup> Journals such as The Forward, which regularly made this linkage were becoming rare, contrasting dramatically to the position in the left-wing press forty years earlier.<sup>138</sup> Finally, although we have been warned against drawing "a balance sheet with any form of racism" (that is subtracting anti-racist statements from the hostile in a movement),<sup>139</sup> it must not be forgotten that the left-wing movement was at the forefront of the battle against antisemitism in Britain. This will be dealt with in a separate chapter, but it is necessary to point out at this stage that if left-wing hostility to Jews is to be directly compared to that of the Right in the war, not only was Socialist antisemitism of a less intensive nature and also more sporadic, but Conservatives, with a few notable exceptions, played little part in fighting antisemitism.<sup>140</sup>



If for a significant section of the right-wing world the Jew could never be an Englishman (at best he would be Jew-British),<sup>141</sup> and was furthermore a diluter of the "Anglo-Saxon heritage"<sup>142</sup> the converse was believed by both liberals and socialists. To many Conservatives not only should Jews remain Jews but they should be recognizable as such. Changing a 'Jewish' name to an 'English' one was "an outrageous state of affairs".<sup>143</sup> Amongst more progressive forces in Britain the solution to the problem was seen in terms of not more, but less Jewishness.

It has been suggested that "the liberal compromise offered emancipation in the expectation that Jews would cease to be Jewish and move closer to British society".<sup>144</sup> Such an interpretation of emancipation was not accepted by all liberals,<sup>145</sup> nor by the established Jewish community itself. However it remained true for the nineteenth century (and also for the first half of the twentieth century) that those who wanted to be totally accepted in British society had to adopt Christianity.<sup>146</sup>

In the liberal creed there was theoretically neither room for antisemitism nor a distinctively Jewish population. In practice liberals have not been immune from various forms of antisemitism. In the Eastern Crisis of the 1870's, and the Boer War agitation at the turn of the century, liberals were prominent in attacking what was seen as the undue Jewish influence.<sup>147</sup> At a more local level, several Liberal constituencies discriminated against Jews.<sup>148</sup> Even as late as 1944 the Tottenham Liberal and Radical Working Mens' Club deemed it necessary to ask its members

if they were "of Jewish birth".<sup>149</sup> Indeed, there is no evidence that liberals were any less prone to personal prejudice against Jews than other sections of the British population,<sup>150</sup> despite the official Party line that "antisemitism was against the principles of Liberalism" and that the Party would "always denounce antisemitism".<sup>151</sup>

However, it is not on these more universal forms of hostility to Jews but on the more specific 'liberal' objections to Judaism that we must now concentrate. There is a paradox that the most extreme forms of antisemitism and the mildest attitudes to Jews have the same long-term goal - the ultimate removal of Jews from society.<sup>152</sup>

Whilst most liberals abhorred the Nazi extermination programme, there was simultaneously a macabre (though self-ashamed) satisfaction at Hitler's attempt to solve finally the Jewish question.<sup>153</sup> Most people repressed such thoughts and were genuinely moved by the suffering of European Jewry.<sup>154</sup> Nevertheless such feelings were often ambivalent and there was "a tendency", in the words of a liberal novelist, "to think serve them right before one can catch oneself up".<sup>155</sup>

Such attitudes came not so much from cold-heartedness but from the liberal critique of Jewishness. Implicit in this belief was the idea that antisemitism would only end when society started to tolerate Jews, and for the Jews to subsequently give up their religion. The corollary of which was that the survival of antisemitism in a tolerant society such as Britain was due to the Jews themselves. The premise that Jews, by refusing to fully integrate into society, were responsible for the hostility towards



themselves is an example of the 'well-earned' theory of antisemitism; part of what Bill Williams has recently called "the antisemitism of tolerance".<sup>156</sup>

From the social surveys, diaries, literature and even government records of the war years it appears that the most dominant feelings about Jews were not of their being an unassimilatable foreign body in British society, but of the reverse. Jews were attacked for refusing to integrate, for being clannish and for ultimately creating antisemitism. A survey carried out in April 1943 on "the means of overcoming antisemitism" found that all the replies amounted "to a statement that it was up to the Jews themselves to combat antisemitism".<sup>157</sup> Most of the suggestions to the Jewish community were that they should "mix freely with the inhabitants of the country of their adoption".<sup>158</sup>

In the attacks on Jewish exclusivity, the ideas of H.G. Wells were often cited. In Well's world-view the idea of any 'chosen people' was an anathema, and his works, right up to his death, reveal a deep antipathy primarily towards Catholicism but also towards Judaism.<sup>159</sup> Wells had no time for Nazi antisemitism, but then regarded it in such books as The Fate of Homo Sapiens<sup>160</sup> and All Aboard for Ararat,<sup>161</sup> as a response to the Jews' claim to be the Chosen race. Although Wells's influence as a socialist was on the wane by the Second World War, his attitude to Jews appears to have gained popular support.<sup>162</sup> Furthermore, when General Sikorski quoted Wells in support of his belief that it would be playing the Nazi game in treating Jews as a separate nationality, both Ministry of Information and

Foreign Office officials were in full agreement. <sup>163</sup>

Other 'liberal' socialists, such as George Bernard Shaw and George Orwell, were united with Wells in his opposition to Jewish exclusivity, the former remarking on several occasions in the war that Nazi antisemitism was a natural development from Mosaic Law. <sup>164</sup> Wells went further than simply attacking the exclusive tendencies of Judaism, to him it was the only factor that kept an essentially anachronistic people together. <sup>165</sup> Again the public would seem to have agreed. That Judaism had nothing worthwhile to offer as a religious creed after the arrival of Christianity was an assumption that most of the public shared. A small minority of the population had a genuine interest and admiration for Jewish religious customs, <sup>166</sup> but more typical was the reaction of novelist Hamilton Fyfe, who admonished Jews to "give up their Kosher meat and their worship of a bloodthirsty, revengeful, anthropomorphic deity ... (Your) troubles are due to (your) exclusiveness". <sup>167</sup> At the end of an anthology on the Jewish question, the editor, Chaim Newman, despairingly made a plea for a solution "in which the Jew can face the world with pride, confidence, peace of mind and remain a Jew". <sup>168</sup> In this symposium of over twenty replies, only two contributors made it clear that the Jewish religion had a legitimate future. <sup>169</sup> The rest adhered in varying degrees to a strict interpretation of the emancipation doctrine, that is the ultimate disappearance of Jewishness. <sup>170</sup> Attempting to counter this, Newman suggested that "there must be ... toleration which does not expect rigidity". <sup>171</sup>



Although these attitudes to the Jewish religion show the important difference between tolerance and acceptance, it must not be forgotten that the former still operated as an effective barrier against attacks on Jewish religious freedom. As will be shown later, the Government bent over backwards to make sure that the hardships imposed by war did not hit the Jewish community unduly.<sup>172</sup> Moreover, the general disdain of the public against Judaism in no way affected the rights of British Jews to practice their religion. In only one sphere, over Jewish ritual slaughter, or shechita, was there anything like an organized campaign against Jewish religious practice.

The subject of minorities and their religious slaughter of animals is one that has produced an emotional public reaction in the 1980's, a reaction that shows certain similarities to the opposition to shechita in the late 1930's and the Second World War.<sup>173</sup> Then, as now, animal rights enthusiasts have been accused of racism,<sup>174</sup> a matter made more complicated due to the involvement of antisemitic and fascist groups in the general campaign.<sup>175</sup> Both have occurred in an atmosphere of general race tension and in each case the attacks on ritual slaughter have suffered from serious distortion.<sup>176</sup>

In the recent debate the potential accusation of anti-semitism has been a source of embarrassment, and, to an extent, a stumbling block to animal welfare organizations.<sup>177</sup> In the 1930's - 40's this was not the case, indeed such groups used the fear of creating antisemitism as a weapon against shechita. Writing to the Board of Deputies in June 1939, the chairman of the RSPCA claimed that in "the last

couple of years there (has been) growing up a very strong feeling of antagonism towards the continuation of the Jewish method of slaughter in this country".<sup>178</sup> At a meeting in June 1939 a mini-emancipation contract was proposed by the RSPCA, who claimed that if the Jews voluntarily gave up shechita it would improve Jewish relations with the wider society.<sup>179</sup>

Part of the "very strong feeling of antagonism" that the RSPCA had referred to had been deliberately stirred up by antisemitic organisations. At the forefront of this campaign was the Nordic League who were distributing a German antisemitic anti-shechita film in public meetings.<sup>180</sup> Adding to the emotional atmosphere a speaker referred to "Jewish Ritual Slaughter, or call it Ritual murder if you like: it is one and the same thing" carried out by "sadistic, armenoid, mongroid aliens".<sup>181</sup> Links were made via such activities between respectable animal rights groups and the extremist Nordic League. As a result antisemitism entered the shechita debate quite freely.<sup>182</sup> In a 1944 pamphlet M. Dudley Ward, who had connections with the RSPCA and the Animal Defence Society, could write in language inspired by The Protocols concerning ritual slaughter. Suggesting that most Jews would be against shechita "but they (were) dupes of a crafty and obdurate rabbinical ring and mass hypnotism", she believed that "there is money in Kosher - oodles of it! Plenty of plums; itching palms; ferocious vested interests".<sup>183</sup>

The war itself created negative and positive factors as regards the maintenance of shechita. On the one hand,



the RSPCA decided to delay any attempt at banning religious slaughter until the end of the hostilities; <sup>184</sup> on the other the dispersion of the Jewish population with evacuation brought shechita into prominence in new areas. It was particularly in the Home Counties that shechita became a major issue, with arguments raging in both the Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire press. <sup>185</sup> In the latter a heated debate continued for four months, giving some insight into how far antisemitism was a factor in the anti-shechita camp. <sup>186</sup> Not surprisingly, the latter denied any such intent, <sup>187</sup> yet several correspondents enlarged their attack on shechita to a general assault on Judaism. It was indicated that the Jewish religion was as outdated as shechita, and, as the latter was barbaric, it should be outlawed. <sup>188</sup> As was the case with the RSPCA, the emancipation contract was indirectly cited. To quote one correspondent: "Jews have sanctuary and protection in this country and they should therefore be compelled to toe the line, and to adopt British methods of slaughter," <sup>189</sup> or else in the words of another "a general feeling of resentment is likely to arise against any body of alien who ... do not ... conform to the standard of public opinion". <sup>190</sup>

The Board of Deputies was in little doubt that opposition to shechita was strong in war-time Britain. Two defence leaflets on the subject were produced and its concern would appear to have been justified. <sup>191</sup> A News Chronicle debate on antisemitism in 1943 found that many of the 'reasoned' antisemitic letters were based on a hostility to shechita. <sup>192</sup> The shechita debate itself

reveals the limitations of liberal attitudes to Jews. For although liberalism was opposed to antisemitism, due to its intolerance and the threat it posed to democracy, the threat of antisemitism could also be used to control the freedom of the Jewish community. This ambivalent approach in some ways offered the greatest threat to Britain's Jewish minority, for although it ensured that the State would be opposed to violent manifestation of antisemitism from the far right, it also suggested that a form of appeasement would operate to forces hostile to Jewish activities in Britain. The government wanted to make sure that amorphous antisemitism did not become an organized threat to liberal democracy. We will see later that such thinking operated in government circles in regard to such issues as the black market, Sunday Trading, domestic antisemitism, internment of aliens and policy to European Jews. 193

Most people in Britain theoretically wanted Jews to stop being separate. Was it possible for Jews to have assimilated if they had wanted? In other words, it is important to analyse the strength of the barriers to the entry of Jews into the social and economic life of Britain. This is an attempt to ask: was the emancipation contract honoured from the non-Jewish side?

So far we have concentrated on attitudes and hostilities associated with specific political standpoints. However, when social attitudes to Jews are examined such categorization is impossible to maintain. The sentiments of Lady Mosley's blunt statement to the Advisory Committee in 1940 that she was "not fond of Jews" <sup>194</sup> were shared by many on the Left. Mass-Observation found that many Communists "nevertheless



confess a secret contempt or dislike" of Jews. In the more moderate Labour world, Hugh Dalton could describe Barnett Janner as "a malodorous Jewish solicitor".<sup>195</sup> It could be argued that although Dalton and Lady Mosley were on opposite sides of the political spectrum, they shared the same upper middle-class background, where it has been claimed "anti-semitism was very common".<sup>196</sup> Indeed Mollie Panter-Downes, the London correspondent of the New Yorker, wrote at the start of 1940 that antisemitism was strong in Britain, "especially in the upper-classes".<sup>197</sup> However, it must be pointed out that Panter-Downes moved predominantly in such circles, and observers had a tendency of locating antisemitism in groups with which they were most familiar. Thus George Orwell believed the working-class or more specifically Irish labourers to be the most anti-semitic, whereas Cyril Connolly confined it to the middle classes.<sup>198</sup> Mass-Observation went as far as concluding that personal dislike of Jews could be found equally among "working class, middle class and upper class Observers, for all ages, sexes, areas, occupations, political views, educational standards".<sup>199</sup> Nevertheless, it has been shown that in some districts of the working class East End, relations between Jews and non-Jews were very amicable. One had often to go to upper class preserves to find blatant social discrimination against Jews.<sup>200</sup>

A.J.P. Taylor has commented that many were "annoyed at having to repudiate the antisemitism which they had secretly cherished" because of Nazi persecution of Jews.<sup>201</sup> Taylor was referring to the "quiet" antisemitism of the golf club or the public school, yet there is no evidence that

any such change took place either in the 1930's or the war itself. Clubs such as Les Ambassadeurs in Mayfair refused Jewish members as late as 1943.<sup>202</sup> Many golf clubs followed a similar policy and a numerous clausus operated in some private schools.<sup>203</sup> The fact of the persecution of European Jewry was not one that was likely to remove deeply ingrained social snobbery, especially in an age where the notion of privilege was under serious attack. However discrimination could also be found lower down the social scale particularly in middle class preserves such as medical schools.<sup>204</sup> Indeed a case could be made that the most serious antisemitism was located amongst the lower middle classes, who felt threatened by the increasingly mobile Jewish population in the professions and in occupations such as shop-keeping, taxi driving and clerical positions.<sup>205</sup>

It is difficult to quantify the exact impact job discrimination had on Anglo-Jewish development in the period around the war.<sup>206</sup> A refusal to employ Jews occurred in many sections of the economy. Indeed such discrimination was probably increasing during and after the war.<sup>207</sup> It would seem this had a net effect of both slowing down the entry of the descendants of the East European Jews into the professions, and of encouraging Jews to continue a tradition of economic independence.<sup>208</sup> In the housing sphere, blatant discrimination against Jews ensured that the movement from primary or secondary settlement areas would follow an explicitly Jewish pattern.<sup>209</sup>



Arcas such as Golders Green, Didsbury in Manchester and Moortown in Leeds thus became in some ways "gilded ghettos", anglicized but not totally integrated into the wider society.<sup>210</sup> This pattern can be expanded to cover Anglo-Jewry as a whole in the war. The hostilities opened up social and economic opportunities, but continuing hostility to Jews meant that the Anglo-Jewish population would remain in many ways separate, though nevertheless more equal, members of British society.

We have thus seen that although antisemitism cut across class barriers there were still unique features in social prejudice. For example, working class social snobbery against Jews was not necessarily the same as the middle class variety.<sup>211</sup> However, two other factors need now to be taken into consideration in qualifying the nature of social prejudice in Britain. The first is one that has been emphasised before - that it is vital to take into account ambivalence both regarding attitudes and behaviour to Jews.<sup>212</sup> Social surveys on Jews in the war found that only one in a hundred people could be said to be totally pro-Jewish, and the same could be equally said of the reverse.<sup>213</sup> A study of Mass-Observation's war diaries reveals that only one diarist out of 500 showed constant negative attitudes to Jews.<sup>214</sup> Indeed other surveys carried out by this social survey group suggest that up to 50% of the population were as philosemitic as they were antisemitic.<sup>215</sup> The reply that whilst some Jews were "nice" but that "there (were) others that even I would liquidate" was typical of many.<sup>216</sup> Comparisons between cultured intelligent Jews like Freud, and "fat, greasy

assertive second hand Jews" <sup>217</sup> were also common. Another favourite dichotomy was to show sympathy to European Jews whilst attacking the alleged malpractices of those in Britain. <sup>218</sup>

Adding confusion to this picture was the fact that many people who admitted their antisemitism still mixed intimately with Jews. <sup>219</sup> Some were consistent, their private hostility reflected in their exclusively non-Jewish company, or in an unsympathetic attitude to persecuted Jews, typified by the army exploits of Evelyn Waugh. <sup>220</sup> Others, like Harold Nicolson, warned publicly against the dangers of antisemitism at any level, yet privately hated the very presence of Jews. <sup>221</sup> Thus no clear equation can be drawn between thought, speech and behaviour patterns, which was probably to the advantage of the Jewish community itself. Purely 'private' hostility to Jews was widespread, if the alarming findings of Mass-Observation are to be believed (with over 55% of the population feeling in some way antagonistic to Jews). However this antipathy does not seem to be reflected as far as public behaviour to Jews was concerned. <sup>222</sup> A restraining factor was often at work, typified by the actions of a Scottish novelist and her friends who attacked Jewish refugees in private "so that one can get it off one's chest and not say (it) in public". <sup>223</sup>

This same author also revealed another aspect of attitudes to Jews when she added that "I try never to feel anti-Semite". <sup>224</sup> This indicates the second qualification that needs to be made as regards social antisemitism in the war - its dynamic element. Whilst Nazi antisemitism



succeeded in making Britain more Jew-conscious (and possibly actually increased domestic prejudice in some people), <sup>225</sup> it also made a significant part of the population rethink its attitudes to Jews. It has been written that "it was the Second World War ... which really precipitated Orwell's critical reappraisal of his attitudes to Jews", <sup>226</sup> yet Orwell was not alone in this, for a large number of Mass-Observers showed similar tendencies. Like Orwell they were not always totally successful in overcoming their prejudices, <sup>227</sup> but as a report in 1943 indicated, although "many people dislike Jews ... the majority ... feel uncomfortable and ashamed of feelings that they recognise as having little basis". <sup>228</sup> Thus although philosemitism changed little between surveys carried out in 1940 and 1943, unfavourable attitudes to Jews declined by half, and were replaced in the latter year by a greater ambivalence. <sup>229</sup> To some people the impact of the news of Nazi extermination of Jews in December 1942 lasted only a couple of hours, <sup>230</sup> to many others it was part of a slow realisation that antisemitism was a dangerous problem and that efforts should be made not only to attack its political, but also its personal manifestations. It is significant that individuals such as T.S. Eliot, Lord Alfred Douglas and John Buchan, who were at the forefront of British antisemitism in the 1920's, had repudiated such sentiments by the Second World War. <sup>231</sup>

There was thus a private form of censorship as regards antisemitic sentiments in the war, but how far was anti-semitism unacceptable in society as a whole? There is no doubt that some change had taken place in the respectability

of antisemitism in Britain by the war compared to a generation earlier. In Oxford University before 1914 overt antisemitism was almost the norm amongst students, whereas in 1939 an undergraduate at Cambridge could write that whilst many were still privately disdainful of Jews "it is almost blasphemy in the University to be openly anti-semitic".<sup>232</sup> However it is easy to be too optimistic as regards society's intolerance of antisemitism, for as Angus Calder has written about the Second World War "the connection between Nazism-Fascism and antisemitism was not widely grasped in Britain".<sup>233</sup>

The career of Douglas Reed illustrates the need for caution when evaluating the unrespectability of antisemitism in the war. We have seen in the case of John Hooper Harvey how it was possible for an extreme antisemite to successfully move from the world of fringe fascism to wider society.<sup>234</sup> In the case of Douglas Reed the reverse process is observable, yet not until well after the war was this popular author dropped by his publisher, Jonathon Cape.<sup>235</sup> Cape's reluctance to dispose of Reed in some ways is not surprising, for his Insanity Fair of 1938, which predicted the Anschluss, was one that gained tremendous public interest, with up to 100 reprintings before the war.<sup>236</sup> Yet Reed's work was also marked by a blatant antisemitism, one that pervaded throughout even his early books for Cape.<sup>237</sup> His publishers were well aware of his hostility to Jews, and in Disgrace Abounding, published in 1939, Reed had been told to rewrite certain sections of the book because of its antisemitism. Cape were satisfied with Reed's revisions which seems surprising in view of the final product.<sup>238</sup> As in Insanity Fair, Reed warned that Jews



were trying to take over London as they had Berlin, he cast doubt on the authenticity of German antisemitism and suggested that the public should be more worried about the power of Jews in England.<sup>239</sup>

In the war itself Reed's work became even more obsessed with the Jewish peril. Influenced it would seem by extremist social credit ideas, Reed became convinced that the Protocols were being enacted, "the evidence becomes too strong to ignore".<sup>240</sup> The idea of a combined Jewish-Fascist-Bolshevik conspiracy appeared in his work, justifying his belief that antisemitism was a total sham, and that atrocity stories were a plot to gain sympathy for the Jewish cause.<sup>241</sup> All this was mixed in with an infantile gutter antisemitism with Jews being accused of panic, cowardice, the cultural degeneration of Britain and of controlling the black market.<sup>242</sup> Reed was the source of much anger and alarm in the Jewish community, but there was little they could do to stem the flow of Reed's antisemitism.<sup>243</sup> By the middle of the war, Reed had become a convinced antisemite and it is doubtful whether he would have responded to attempts to curb his hostility.<sup>244</sup> However, there is no evidence to suggest that Cape even tried to restrain Reed.<sup>245</sup> Indeed, in their journal Now and Then, Reed was still being warmly promoted by his publishers.<sup>246</sup>

Turning to the impact of Reed, a Jewish Chronicle editorial commented that his war-books had "gained praise from unexpected quarters".<sup>247</sup> It is true that many reviewers took Reed to task for his antisemitism,<sup>248</sup> but others were either silent or supportive of his views on the Jews.<sup>249</sup> As far as the public was concerned, Reed himself commented that "the only antiracism

(my books) met was directed against the parts of them which deal with the Jewish Question".<sup>250</sup> However Reed also gained much support on this issue. Predictably the extreme antisemitic world became increasingly impressed by Reed,<sup>251</sup> but he was also quoted by many respectable commentators such as the Reverends Bulman and Huxley-Williams (of Cricklewood and Brondesbury) in their campaign against aliens in North-West London.<sup>252</sup> To some, Reed merely confirmed their belief that Jewish atrocity stories were false and that "the Jewish menace will continue to grow",<sup>253</sup> but his writings also shaped attitudes. A Mass-Observér in 1943 commented that he had no opinion on Jews at all until reading Reed and that "I now have decided views about them ... In short I don't like Jews".<sup>254</sup>

By the end of the war Reed was, like John Hooper Harvey, working in several milieux, being Foreign editor of Kemsley newspapers, yet at the same time forging links with fringe antisemitic organisations.<sup>255</sup> On some occasions he only hinted at the existence of the Jewish conspiracy,<sup>256</sup> at others he used his reputation as an able journalist to give explicit warnings about Jewish power to a wide audience.<sup>257</sup> Reed's continued success, and the refusal of his not unprogressive publishers to remove him, suggests strongly that Nazi persecution of Jews had not made manifestations of antisemitism necessarily beyond the pale in war-time Britain.

Cape were not alone in giving a public forum to an antisemite in the war. In February 1943 the Daily Dispatch opened its letter columns to J.B. Rothwell, who accused



Jews of controlling the black market and all the war rackets, refusing to join the fighting forces and warned of an anti-Jewish backlash in Britain.<sup>258</sup> The letter, according to Mass-Observation, gained some support although it also led to mass protest meetings in Manchester.<sup>259</sup> The editor of the paper defended his decision to publish the letter, urging that it was necessary to give "full expression ... to both sides of a case".<sup>260</sup> This reason was given by several editors who felt the 'Jewish Question' was one that could be legitimately aired, and that it was only fair to give a platform to the antisemitic side of the argument.<sup>261</sup> Characteristic of this approach was a review of Reed's Lest We Regret in The Spectator by D.W. Brogan. Brogan attacked the antisemitism of the book, but believed this was no reason to silence Reed, who should be allowed to have his say.<sup>262</sup> The campaign by the Communist Party and the NCCL to make antisemitism a libel offence appears to have been similarly unpopular with the public, who wanted the right to remain antisemitic, regardless of what was happening in Europe.<sup>263</sup> Illustrating this attitude, when Blanche Dugdale went to see the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Oliver Stanley, concerning antisemitic remarks made by the High Commissioner for Palestine, Lord Gort, Stanley remarked "Not everybody likes Jews".<sup>264</sup> Thus even in government circles social antisemitism was no reason for being refused office, even when one was directly concerned with Jewish matters.<sup>265</sup>

It is thus unwise to conclude that "Hitler ... put an end to the casual, innocent (!) antisemitism of the club-man".<sup>266</sup> Nazi persecution of Jews at best made an element

of the British population rethink its attitude to Jews, but it did not put an end to social antisemitism or make (non-fascist) hostility to Jews unacceptable. Those publishers that removed antisemitism from books,<sup>267</sup> those individuals such as E.M. Forster that refused to have any social contact with antisemites,<sup>268</sup> and those actors that portrayed Shylock in a sympathetic manner,<sup>269</sup> were still in a minority in Britain at war-- despite the prevailing anti-fascist spirit.

Antisemitism in Britain cannot be measured therefore simply by looking at the success (or lack of success) of organized fascist and antisemitic groups during the war. It is still necessary, however, to evaluate the strength of hostility to Jews and to see how near domestic antisemitism was to being a serious problem. Measuring antisemitism, whether on an individual or a societal level is always fraught with danger.<sup>270</sup> To talk of levels of antisemitism in British society also ignores the fact that there were many types of hostility to Jews in the six years of the war - that associated with the Jews' War accusation, with the blitz and evacuation, with the refugees, with the black market and army dodging, with literary and social forms of prejudice, with the various political antipathies to Jews, as well as with unique events such as the Bethnal Green tube disaster and the assassination of Lord Moyne. All were in some way related, but many were such distant cousins that direct comparison makes little sense.<sup>271</sup>

However if caution is applied a tentative chronological map of war antisemitism can be drawn. At first the nervous



tensions of the war, with the anticipation of what was to come, added to the nuisance of restrictions such as the blackout, seem to have created antisemitism. Jews were blamed for the problems of the 'phoney war' period it would seem because they were seen to be also somehow responsible for the war itself.<sup>272</sup> This was the time when 'morale' was probably at its lowest in Britain.<sup>273</sup> It was largely for this reason that Leslie Hore-Belisha was not offered the Ministry of Information, in case his appointment would give any support to the defeatist Jews' War line.<sup>274</sup> Defeatist antisemitism was also one of the reasons for the government's suppression of the B.U.F., although it needed the threat of invasion to make the Cabinet act on the matter.<sup>275</sup> Nevertheless in the first six months of the war, although antisemitism had certainly not decreased compared to the pre-war period, it was not a serious problem for the Jewish community.<sup>276</sup>

However, in the months from April to August 1940 the fifth column panic threw Jews, and particularly alien Jews, into the spotlight, the general xenophobia affected the whole Jewish community.<sup>277</sup> Government fears of riots against alien Jews at this time were possibly exaggerated, although attacks on Italians in June 1940 show the need to take such a possibility seriously.<sup>278</sup> The period was also notable for the disintegration of liberal forces within British society. This hostility to aliens continued during the blitz in the autumn of 1940, and maintained its earlier antisemitic character.<sup>279</sup> It has been shown that before the blitz it was thought that intensive bombing might lead

to an antisemitic reaction, but although it did create a general feeling of hostility to Jews in London (with accusations that Jews were crowding the shelters), the East End remained calm.<sup>280</sup> The evacuation associated with the blitz was a more important factor in creating a higher level of antisemitism in Britain, but its dispersed nature limited its potential as an organized feeling.<sup>281</sup>

Throughout 1941 food and other shortages created growing bitterness amongst the British public, and in turn a scapegoat figure was sought out.<sup>282</sup> As with the initial problems of the war, Jews were blamed, but this antisemitism was essentially sporadic until the following year.<sup>283</sup> The year 1942 saw the crystallization of the concept of the black market, public hostility to this being encouraged by the government.<sup>284</sup> Before long Jews were being strongly identified with the black market, a linkage that was to be the dominant factor determining the strength of antisemitic sentiment in Britain for the rest of the war. The ogre of a black market in itself acted as a safety valve mechanism, releasing the tension caused by rationing.<sup>285</sup> Within this feeling Jews, and particularly alien Jews, became a hate figure, enabling a 'foreign' scapegoat to be blamed for all shortages.<sup>286</sup>

In suggesting that the antisemitism associated with the black market was due to a scapegoat mechanism does not imply that there was no Jewish involvement in it, for as will be shown later, this was substantial.<sup>287</sup> However after 1943, when the black market ceased to be of public concern, antisemitism seems to have generally declined,



yet there is no evidence that Jewish black marketeers became any less prominent.<sup>288</sup> It was thus in the periods when the black market was at its most unpopular - in the spring of 1942 and in the winter of 1942, that antisemitism was most commonly reported to be at its highest level.<sup>289</sup> In the latter period, the news of the extermination of European Jewry appears to have increased Jew-consciousness in Britain, creating on the one hand sympathy, but on the other, increased hostility especially aimed at Jewish black marketeers.<sup>290</sup> This ambivalence would explain the apparent contradiction found by B.I.P.O. in January 1943. At this point, according to B.I.P.O., 25% of the population believed antisemitism was increasing, whilst 16% thought it was on the decrease - the highest levels for both categories throughout the war.<sup>291</sup>

It was in early 1943 that the Jewish community became most concerned about the dangers of domestic antisemitism.<sup>292</sup> However, with the military progress of the Allies throughout the rest of the year, the attention of the public moved away from the domestic problems and more to worrying about the post-war world.<sup>293</sup> Antisemitism thus seems to have tailed off by the end of 1943 and to have become sporadic by the following year.<sup>294</sup> Only in 1943 did it appear to have become dangerous and it would probably have needed a large military disaster to make it very serious. As it was, the Bethnal Green Tube disaster led to widespread accusations against the Jews, but this heated reaction never became physical.<sup>295</sup> Similarly the assassination of Lord Moyne in November 1944 brought antisemitic comment

back into prominence, but again there were no violent disturbances in Britain such as those which followed the Hanging Sergeants incident in 1947. <sup>296</sup>

With hindsight, one can see that the government's fear, which operated throughout the war, of an organized antisemitic feeling in Britain gaining strength, was a long way off happening on a national scale. <sup>297</sup> However was there a possibility of a local reaction? Late in 1943 a Foreign Office official reported Home Secretary Morrison's concern of "the growth of antisemitic feeling in certain towns". <sup>298</sup> The most obvious centres for this would be the cities of Jewish concentration such as London, Manchester, Leeds and to a lesser extent, Glasgow. However, it has been noted that the strength of antisemitic sentiment does not necessarily correspond directly to the number, or concentration, of Jews in a particular locality. <sup>299</sup> Whilst all three of these provincial towns witnessed some antisemitism, especially against Jews who were trying to advance economically and socially, nothing like an organised movement came into existence. <sup>300</sup> Only in North-West London, at the end of the war, did this take place. Here the 'Hampstead petition movement' aimed at removing the 'aliens' from this area of London, and a strong degree of antisemitism was linked to this popular organization. <sup>301</sup>

It would appear that antisemitism was actually higher in towns with a small Jewish population such as Sheffield, Liverpool or Oxford. <sup>302</sup> The lack of familiarity with Jews could create the opportunities for serious misunderstandings. In Sheffield, Jews were accused of evading



fire watching duties and of profiteering in blitzed property, both of which allegations were totally without foundation.<sup>303</sup> Criticism of Jews appears to have been a regular occurrence, although there were only 2200 Jews in the city.<sup>304</sup> Nevertheless despite personal insults and social ostracism, the local Jewish representatives could report that "overt anti-semitism in Sheffield is not particularly troublesome".<sup>305</sup> Again, even on a localised level there was a limit to how far hostility to Jews could be channelled. However the Hampstead movement (admittedly in unique circumstances) shows that Morrison's fear was not totally without foundation.

The relative lack of violence should not lead us to believe that antisemitism was of no consequence in war-time Britain. The Jewish Question was to the fore in this period, yet the solutions that were offered were contradictory and left Jews in an impossible dilemma. An element of the population told the Jew to remain separate, a more powerful section urged him to stop being exclusive.<sup>306</sup> Yet Jews who attempted to move freely in British society found that there were still substantial barriers in their way. Faced with a hostile atmosphere in the war, Jews were told that antisemitism was their own fault.<sup>307</sup> Not surprisingly a degree of neuroticism, verging on self-hatred could develop in the Anglo-Jewish community. Thus Nathan Laski was pleased that Hore-Belisha was sacked, as it removed a potential target for antisemites,<sup>308</sup> Lord Rothschild could refrain from sending his children to America lest "the world should

say that seven million Jews are cowards" <sup>309</sup> and Lewis Namier would "hope to God the fellow is not a Jew" when reading a black market report. <sup>310</sup>

Nevertheless Nazi antisemitism had some impact on British attitudes to Jews. On an individual level, more progressive people were rethinking their opinions on the issue, and even some Conservatives were beginning to realise that open antisemitism was unacceptable by 1945. At the other extreme, the Communist Party was also reassessing its attitude to Jews, and, with the setting up of its National Jewish Committee in 1943, it started to reject a totally assimilationist approach to the subject. <sup>311</sup> Yet one can overplay the impact of the Nazi factor. Many actually doubted the authenticity of Jewish persecution, <sup>312</sup> and fears about Jewish power persisted throughout the war. As late as 1944 a survey showed that 9% of the British population felt threatened by Jews. <sup>313</sup> Antisemitic stereotypes thus had a strong degree of persistence and it is necessary now to see how the Jewish image as a whole changed in British society during the war.



## FOOTNOTES : Chapter 4

1. Harrisson to Neville Laski, 6 September 1939 in B of D C6/10/26.
2. Thus Alan Brien was shocked to find his "cherished beliefs about a Britain united in detestation of Nazi racialism" proved wrong when discovering an antisemitic spy thriller published in Britain in 1940. See New Statesman, 13 July 1984. Recent controversy surrounding Channel 4's 'The Dunera Boys' has produced heated replies denying that the British could have been antisemitic in the war - comments in Right to Reply, Channel 4, 11 and 18 October 1985.
3. O. Smith, 'Antisemitism in the London Area at the Start of War' in M-O A: TC Antisemitism Box 1 File G.
4. See INF 1/264 and INF 1/292 for reports of antisemitism throughout the war.
5. Chaim Newman (ed.), Gentile and Jew: A Symposium on the Future of the Jewish People (London, 1945) and J.J. Lynx (ed.), The Future of the Jews (London, 1945).
6. The News Chronicle debate 1 - 5 April 1943 was the most prominent discussion of the Jewish question in the war. See also the Manchester Guardian, 9, 24 and 26 May 1943, Daily Dispatch 20 February 1943. For the provincial and local press see Dundee Evening Telegraph, 17 February 1944, Hackney Gazette 3 and 10 March 1943, Willesden Chronicle, 26 May 1944 for example.
7. In New Statesman, February and March 1943; The Spectator January and February 1942 and April 1943; Tribune, March and April 1942; Time and Tide, November and December 1941 and April, May 1943; in the Hibbert Journal, April-July 1944 and finally in Truth throughout the war.
8. Orwell in Partisan Review, January-April 1943.
9. See Orwell's comments in Tribune, 19 May 1944.
10. See the introduction, p.1,12.
11. Aaron Goldman, 'The Resurgence of Antisemitism in Britain During World War II', Jewish Social Studies vol. XLVI no. 1 (Winter 1984), 37-50 does not attempt to categorise the various manifestations of anti-semitism. Thus his brief account is of little use in evaluating the strength of such prejudice in British society at war.
12. As its title would indicate K. Lunn and R. Thurlow's British Fascism: Essays on the Radical Right in Inter-war Britain (London, 1980) treat the dynamic element of both British fascism and organised anti-semitism seriously. For the quote see M-O A: D5296, 16 March 1945.
13. Although Rothermere was disappointed in Mosley's use of violence he did not totally give up his support of the B.U.F. after 1934. See Stephen Koss, The Rise and Fall of the Political Press in Britain: vol. 2 The Twentieth Century (London, 1984), 556-7.
14. The title of an article in the Daily Worker, 14 October 1940.



15. See for example Walter Holmes attack on a progressive paper, the Railway Review, in the Daily Worker, 22 April 1943.
16. Leon Poliakov, The History of Anti-Semitism vol.IV. Suicidal Europe 1870-1933 (Oxford, 1985), 196-216 covers the Bolshevnik-Jew identification in these papers before the famous Times article. He also suggests that the latter was vital in giving The Protocols world-wide respectability that even the forgery rebuttal of 1921 did not overcome. In the 1930s, in a letter to Douglas Reed, 1 March 1938, The Times told Reed to give his articles more balance on the Jewish question as "they seem to come down heavily on the antisemitic side of the scale". Letter from Deakin in the Times Archive quoted by R. Thurlow, 'Anti-Nazi Antisemite: the Case of Douglas Reed' Patterns of Prejudice, vol.18 no.1 (1984), 29. Those in the Morning Post blamed its demise in 1937 to the Jewish influence. See K.M. Wilson, 'The Protocols and the Morning Post 1919-20', Patterns of Prejudice, vol.19 no.3 (July 1985), 5.
17. The Patriot claimed it was well received in such outlets, quoting the secretary of a Yorkshire club who stated that it was "very much appreciated and read by our members" - The Patriot no.994 (27 February 1941). For further information on The Patriot see chapter 2, p.166, 183.
18. C. Holmes, Anti-Semitism in British Society, 1876 - 1939 (London, 1979), 201-2 comments how the National Citizens Union was briefly converted to The Protocols in 1937. In 1938 and 9 the British Empire Union was similarly involved in Captain Ramsay's antisemitic crusade but it fell out with the Tory M.P. over his attitude to Nazi Germany. Also, as with the NCU, the Board of Deputies used its power to reform the BEU. See B of D C6/6/5 correspondence and Empire Record no.292 (June 1940) for an explanation of its change of heart over Ramsay.
19. See James Little's article in Empire Record no.277 (March 1939) and 'Historicus's' comments in no.301 (July-August 1941).
20. Review of G. Warburg's Six Years of Hitler in the National Review no.680 (October 1939).
21. Editorial in no.700 (June 1941), and similarly in no. 703 (September 1941). The National Review was by the 1940's a long-established and well-known organ. The East End Observer, 7 June 1941 was shocked to find antisemitism in such a respectable journal.
22. Holmes, op.cit., 212. See also the Herald's correspondence with the Board of Deputies in B of D B4/CAR11.
23. See the Catholic Herald, 24 December 1942, 1 January 1943, 14 July 1944 for doubts about atrocity stories.
24. In the issues of 25 October 1940, 29 November 1940 and 3 January 1941 it was suggested that most Communists in Britain were Jews. From October 1944 - March 1945 a debate raged on The Protocols in the Catholic Herald, concentrating on the issue of whether American Jews financed the Russian Revolution.



25. The editor commented on the large interest in the subject on 16 March 1945. For further Catholic writings on the Jewish responsibility for Bolshevism see Stanley B. James, A Catholic Angle on the Jewish Problem (London, 1944), and Michael de la Bedoyere, No Dreamers Week (London, 1945), 45, 105-110.
26. Wickham Steed, That Bad Man (London, 1942), 54, 58, 144 and 162; Arthur Keith, The Causes of the War (London, 1940), 123 and Arthur Bryant, Unfinished Victory (London, 1940), 102-6. For Reed see his All Our Tomorrows (London, 1942), 86 and Lest We Regret (London, 1943), 250-60.
27. See for example M-0 A: FR A 12 and Directives of October 1940 and March 1943.
28. The struggle within the Conservative Party is excellently dealt with by Hartmut Kopsch, 'The Approach of the Conservative Party to Social Policy During World War II' (PhD, University of London, 1970). See also Paul Addison, The Road to 1945 (London, 1977), 229-231.
29. See Horace Samuel's letters in Time and Tide vol. 22 no. 7, (22 November 1941) and vol. 23 no. 2 (10 January 1942) and Kingsley Martin papers Box 25 File 5. D.N. Pritt M.P. wrote to K.J. Spector in 1944 stating that if more information was found on Truth "we should establish that it is definitely an agency of the most hard-faced section of the Tory Central Office". I am grateful to Mr Spector for showing me this letter.
30. In an intelligence report of 20 October 1945 on the National Front, a Mr Girvan claimed that Chesterton had informed him "of his decision to take up a part-time job, as propagandist, with the Conservative Central Office". In the Ivan Greenberg papers 110/5. However the Conservative Research Department can find no record of this. Letter to the author, 29 May 1984.
31. See Addison, op.cit., 231 for details of these groups. Deryck Abel, Ernest Benn, Counsel for Liberty (London, 1960), 114 and 122-3 comments on the clash over Regulation 18B between Brooks and Benn.
32. A. Calder, The People's War (London, 1969), 295 has figures.
33. Orwell in Partisan Review, March-April 1942. See also Tribune, 1 October 1943 and 29 December 1944.
34. Calder, op.cit., 499.
35. Truth no. 3334 (2 August 1940).
36. For the court ruling see the Jewish Chronicle, 22 August 1941. For further Truth attacks see no. 3547 (1 September 1944) and no. 3570 (9 February 1945).
37. Brooks's 'Anti-Semitism and Treachery' in Truth no. 3430 (5 June 1942). This was published as a pamphlet by the British National Party. For Truth and Hore-Belisha see no. 3305 and 6 (12 and 19 January 1940).
38. Brooks's 'The Problem in Britain' in C. Newman (ed.), Gentile and Jew, op.cit., 42-7.
39. The description was by Sir H. Morris-Jones M.P. in his Doctor in the Whips' Room (Bungay, Suffolk, 1955), 114-5.



40. Claude Claremont, The Innumerable Instincts of Man (London, 1940), 164.
41. M-O A: FR 1993 'Post-Mosley'.
42. ibid:
43. M-O A: DR 3257 March 1943.
44. M-O A: DR 1052 October 1940 which brought a similar response as the later survey.
45. Truth no. 3454 (20 November 1942). See Kopsch, 'The Approach of the Conservative Party', 122 for further comment on Conservative attitudes to Beveridge and also the position of Truth in regard to this.
46. A BIPO survey in 1943 quoted by Addison, op.cit., 218.
47. INF 1/292 no. 114 (1-8 December 1942).
48. Truth, no. 3404 (5 December 1941). For similar comments by Benn, see issues no. 3384 (18 July 1941), no. 3388 (15 August 1941) and no. 3402 (21 November 1941).
49. An editorial in no. 3309 (9 February 1940) suggested that the Jewish control of British press was "enormous". It suggested that the Board of Deputies TAC was a "racial Sanhedrin", using language of The Protocols to describe its activities - Truth no. 3356 and 3417 (3 January 1941 and 1 March 1942). Its contributors included Cuthbert Reavely, A.K. Chesterton and Douglas Reed, all obsessed by the Jewish conspiracy argument.
50. In a memo on Truth, 20 February 1940 Sidney Salomon believed that contacting the editor of Truth who was at that point Henry Newnham, would have been useless as he was "a convinced anti-semite". However Salomon did approach Brooks in a letter of 9 June 1942. Brooks's reply of 11 June 1942 showed that such an approach was useless. All in B of D C15/3/33.
51. Colonel Wedgwood asked questions about Truth in the Commons on several occasions. See Hansard HC vol. 374 col. 1108 and 1454-62, 9 October and 15 October 1941. Morrison wrote to Neville Laski, 11 April 1942 giving his reasons for refusing to suppress the paper. See B of D C15/3/33.
52. Memorandum by Sidney Salomon, 9 June 1942 in B of D C15/3/33.
53. The analysis is by G. Alderman, The Jewish Community in British Politics (Oxford, 1983), 119. For the suggestion that Conservative Central Office had engineered the Truth articles see W. Armstrong (ed.), Cecil King: With Malice Toward None: A War Diary (London, 1970), 19 entry for 31 January 1940.
54. Quoted by Collin Brooks in his diary, 12 March 1942 in Stephen Koss, op.cit., 611.
55. The quote is Alderman's, op.cit., 120.
56. The Hawick Express, 29 September 1944 quoted the Chairman of Peebles Unionist Association as saying that they had asked Ramsay to resign in 1941 and that "So far as we are concerned, Captain Ramsay has no longer anything to do with us".
57. A public meeting in 1939 had asked Ramsay to give details on the conspiracy which he did not do, according to a JDC report of June 1941. B of D Rogues gallery: 'Captain Ramsay' in C6/9/3/2. A Mass-Observation report from Edinburgh in 1939



- suggested that attitudes to Ramsay's antisemitism "have proved that opinion is overwhelmingly pro-Jewish" and his outbursts "were causing concern in the Unionist Party" - M-O A: FR A12.
58. Alderman, op.cit., 120-1.
  59. The convincing argument is that of W.D. Rubinstein, 'Jews Among Top British Wealth Holders, 1857-1969: Decline of the Golden Age' Jewish Social Studies vol. 24 (January 1972), 80-1.
  60. Alderman, op.cit.
  61. S. Rawnsley, 'Fascism and Fascists in Britain in the 1930's' (PhD, University of Bradford, 1981), 261-316 is the fullest and frankest account of the Board's behaviour in the 1930's. See also chapter 7, p.548.
  62. Notes of a conversation between R.A. Butler and S. Brodetsky, 13 September 1943 in B of D, E2/32.
  63. Letter to Neville Chamberlain from Charles Ponsonby M.P. on behalf of Captain James M.P. and Conservative M.P.'s 21 February 1940 in HO 213/44 E409.
  64. National Review no. 743 (January 1945). See the same journal no. 713 (July 1942) for similar comments on Laski.
  65. Quoted by Addison, 266. Calder, op.cit., 579 comments that "Barely veiled anti-semitism crept into their assault".
  66. See his article 'Zionism versus Bolshevism', Illustrated Sunday Herald, 8 February 1920.
  67. Addison, op.cit., 266. Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart, a more liberal Conservative, commented on the proposal to send Laski to be Ambassador in America: "You could not send a Jew to Washington. In any case no one would ever know what to believe in his reports." Diary entry, 1 August 1945 in K. Young (ed.), The Diaries of Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart 1939-65 (London, 1980), 477.
  68. George Orwell, 'Notes on Nationalism', (May 1945) in Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus (eds.), The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell: vol.3 As I Please (London, 1968), 375-6.
  69. The leader of the pro-Nazi Link, Barry Domville wrote in his diary, 16 February 1940 "Truth gets better and better" - DOM 56. The antisemitic Social Crediter vol. 7 no. 16 (18 October 194 ) called Truth "our esteemed contemporary" and it was sold at the quasi-fascist People's Common Law Parliament - JDC report of 15 November 1942, in B of D C6/2/13c.
  70. For comment on right-wing entryism see The Guardian, 10 October 1983 - editorial. I have already commented on A.K. Chesterton's links to the Conservative Party, in addition the Jewish Chronicle, 22 June 1945 reported that ex-B.U.F. members were working for the Conservative Party in Bethnal Green in the 1945 election. See also the Daily Mirror, 28 June 1945.
  71. Orwell, op.cit., 375-6.
  72. By Steve Cohen in his That's Funny You Don't Look Anti-semitic: An anti-racist analysis of Left anti-semitism (Leeds, 1984), 9.



73. Orwell, op.cit., 375-6.
74. See for example his comments in Tribune, 11 February 1940 and in his war-time diary, 25 October 1940 in The Collected Essays vol. 2, 378.
75. James Robb, Working-Class Antisemite (London, 1954), 93. Nevertheless Conservatives were prominent towards the extremely hostile end of the scale.
76. M-O A: FR 39.
77. M-O A: FR 61.
78. See notes 76 and 77.
79. Reported in Home Office minutes 24 July 1941 in HO 144/22454/114-5.
80. Letter from Stoke Central Labour Party to J.B. Middleton, the Labour Party Secretary, 10 April 1940. In Labour Party Archives JSM/ACP/18.
81. A.J. La Bern was being perhaps a little optimistic when he wrote "one does not have to attempt to check antisemitism among the readers of Tribune" - Tribune, 3 April 1942.
82. See chapter 1, p.34 .
83. The Forward, no. 22 vol. 33 (3 June 1939).
84. Robert Skidelsky, Oswald Mosley (London, 1975), 439.
85. The Forward, no. 29 vol. 33 (22 July 1939).
86. ibid; no. 31 vol. 33 (5 August 1939) and no. 4 vol. 39 (27 January 1945) - "Usury and Justice".
87. The Forward no. 5 vol. 39 (3 February 1945) "What About The Jews? Socialist Answer to Anti-semitic Propaganda", and similarly Sid Goldberg, What of the Jews? (London, 1944).
88. See the Daily Worker, 12 January 1945 for an attack on the National Review's description of Laski and The Forward no. 26 vol. 39 (30 June 1945) for a spoof article "Laski will get you" aimed at the Daily Express. The article finished with the ironic conclusion "Aha, the Hidden Hand again".
89. Skidelsky, op.cit., 440.
90. In Peace News, 10 November 1939.
91. Mary Adams director of the government's Home Intelligence organisation commented that there "was much I.L.P. support for P.P.U.". Letter to Macadam, 6 December 1940, Adams papers M-O A: Box 1 File C.
92. Stuart Morris, chairman of P.P.U. was a member of The Link. See Peace News, 18 August 1939.
93. An MI5 report of October 1939 stated that nearly all the Nordic League had joined P.P.U. In HO 144/22454/86
94. In 1942 Bedford was elected on to the National Council of the P.P.U. See the Jewish Chronicle, 14 May 1943. However P.P.U. refused to directly support the British Council, or other fringe fascist linked groups such as P.C.I.P., and the British National Party. See the Executive Committee minutes of P.P.U., 1 March 1940, 15 March 1940 and 7 and 8 November 1942.
95. Peace News, 27 November 1942. Martin Ceadel, Pacifism in Britain 1914-1945 (London, 1980), 295 comments that the war heightened tensions between appeasers and what he calls "apologetic pacifists".
96. See chapter 2, p.114.



97. For example Barry Domvile believed McGovern "was largely instrumental in obtaining my release". Domvile Diaries, DOM56 entry of 13 August 1943.
98. Bedford's war publications were printed by Aldred's Strickland Press and he also contributed to The Word. See for example the January 1942 issue for an attack on international finance. Aldred met Bedford on an I.L.P. anti-war platform in Glasgow at the start of the war, and a friendship then blossomed. See J.T. Caldwell's account in Black Star no. 2 (February, 1984).
99. J.T. Caldwell has suggested in a letter to me (5 May 1984) that Ratcliffe had no formal connections to Aldred. However a Home Office report, H045/25398/20-37 of 2 May 1942 states that Ratcliffe was contributing to The Word and Vanguard no. 274 (August 1940) praised Aldred's journal.
100. Home Office minute, 24 January 1944 in H045/25398/40-100. Whether Aldred was connected to this is unknown.
101. I.L.P. supporters were present at a Parliament Christian meeting in November 1942 - see Parliament Christian no. 9 vol. 2 (December 1942). The former group also advertised in the organ of the fascist revival organisation the British National Party - British National News no. 1 (17 August 1942).
102. Bedford commented in an appeal to Hitler "If I Were Premier" that Jews were prominent in International Finance "which has long enslaved the civilized world" - Peace News, 30 October 1942. Godfrey wrote similarly suggesting that such an attack was not antisemitic "because some Jews are international" - Peace News, 25 December 1942.
103. Mannin had attacked "Jewish racial feeling and Jewish interests in Big Business and the Press" for fermenting hatred of Germany in Peace News, 4 August 1939. She was supported in the same paper, 15 September 1939 because "Jews largely control international finance". Murry's belief that Jews controlled international usury can be found in The Adelphi, January vol. 16 no. 4 (January, 1940) "Spoiling the Egyptians". F.E. Lea, John Middleton Murry (London, 1959), 196 comments on his I.L.P. link and Ceadel, op.cit., 229 on Mannin's.
104. Orwell in Partisan Review, March-April 1942. See particularly The Adelphi vol. 16 no. 6 (March, 1940) for Murry's belief that antisemitism was due mainly to Jewish behaviour.
105. See comments made to the Jewish Chronicle, 15 March 1940 and 24 March 1944. The Executive Committee minutes comment on a Peace News pamphlet attacking antisemitism by Charles Raven, 17 August 1943 and James Parkes, A Problem for the Gentiles (London, 1945) was also published by P.P.U.
106. The fullest account of these linkages is made in K.J. Spector's "Peace Pledge Disunion" in the Spector documents, Wiener Library.
107. Although against the war from October 1939 the invasion of Russia in June 1941, the Communist Party did its utmost to differentiate itself from the Mosley and Bedford peace movement. See the Daily Worker, 19 December 1939 and 21 February 1940.



108. Malcolm Muggeridge, The Thirties: 1930-40 in Great Britain (London, 1940), 23.
109. See the articles by Walter Holmes in the Daily Worker, 8 July 1940, 11 July 1940 and 13 July 1940.
110. F. Morton, The Rothschilds: A Family Portrait (London, 1962), 227-9 covers this disastrous period in the families fortune.
111. See particularly Holmes's comments in the Daily Worker, 13 July 1940 where he describes Fleet Street as "the enemies within our gates".
112. In the Daily Worker, 12 August 1939, 5 October 1939, 10 November 1939, 8 January 1940, 29 March 1940 and 14 October 1940 various manifestations of antisemitism were attacked. C.C. Aronsfeld commented in 1947 that this paper "boasts, by no means idly, of having been the first to expose antisemitic activities". 'Communists in British Jewry', Jewish Monthly no. 8 (November 1947), 30.
113. Daily Worker, 15 February 1934.
114. Daily Worker, 14 October 1940.
115. World News and Views, 1 March 1941.
116. Zelma Katin remarked that in Sheffield "one or two left wingers were want to denounce, in the same breath, pro-fascism and Jews together" - 'Clippie': The Autobiography of a War Time Conductress (London, 1944), 72.
117. M-O A: DR 1235, October 1940.
118. Quoted by Austin Stevens, The Dispossessed: German Refugees in Britain (London, 1975), 271-2. - another example of Sheffield Communist antisemitism. This latter C.P. member excused the German-Soviet pact because "Stalin knew that Hitler was being backed by the fucking Jewish capitalists". Mass-Observation surveys provide other examples - M-O A: DR 3127 "International Finance ... knows no frontiers and Jewry must be held largely responsible" and DR 3119 on Jews who "literally hold International Finance together", both in the March 1943 directive.
119. M-O A DR: 2886 March 1943.
120. M-O A: DR 2139, October 1940. See also similar sentiments in M-O A: FR 523B.
121. Douglas Hyde, I Believed (London, 1951), 187.
122. In an interview with the author, 17 September 1983 Hyde suggested that his comment was partly in response to the refusal of the Communist Party to condemn antisemitism in the Eastern bloc, and that much of the antisemitism within the Party was "in-jokes" and "would never be repeated outside the C.P." It was also partly from East End members who disliked Jewish businessmen. Joe Jacobs, Out of the Ghetto (London, 1978), 173 remembered Communists "who were not free of antisemitic feelings".
123. Daily Worker, 1 May 1945.
124. For a brief mention of this group, see Hyde, op.cit., 136. Berka Sokoloff, secretary of Stepney Communist Party suggested that many members were unhappy with the idea of having links to any businessmen. Interview with the author, 1 November 1984.



125. In a perceptive letter to the New Statesman, 5 July 1985 Dr N. Dale points out that "the Left has frequently failed to explain why certain (scapegoat minority) groups are selected, or to take their vulnerability seriously, as was the case with the Jews under Nazi Germany ... (who) crossed all class boundaries ...".
126. Socialist Appeal vol. 5 no. 4 (January 1943).
127. This is the sentiment of the above and also of the I.L.P.'s New Leader vol. 34 no. 41 (December 19 1942) which excused the German masses from any crimes, defended working class Jews and attacked "money-grabbing Jews". For critical comment on both New Leader and Socialist Appeal see World News and Views, 16 January 1943. Peace News also doubted Jewish atrocity stories for similar reasons, seeing them as an attempt to increase hatred for Germany and prolong the war. See the issues of 18 December 1942 and 1 January 1943.
128. Socialist Appeal vol. 7 no. 4 and no. 6 (Mid April and Mid May 1945).
129. M-O A: FR 1393 March 1943. See also DR 2925, 2564 March 1943.
130. M-O A: DR 2090, 2142, 1372, 2886 and 1534, March 1943.
131. M-O A: DR 2402 October 1940.
132. For example an article in the Daily Worker, 14 October 1940 commented how the Jews love of art and colour "in the rich capitalist Jew is perverted to vulgarity and ostentation ... Jewish capitalists are certainly vulgar and conspicuous for the most part". In the I.L.P.'s New Leader vol. 34 no. 4 (19 December 1942) Fenner Brockway talked of those "money grabbing Jews ... who exploit the black market". Even the great anti-fascist journalist Hannen Swaffer found it necessary to object to the Jewish sojourners of the West End who were "better dressed than their Gentile competitors" and "think only in terms of money". In C. Newman, op.cit., 279-80. Cohen, op.cit., 16 suggests that the "anti-semitism of the left is essentially identical to ... that of society at large".
133. Fred Montague M.P. attacked the number of Jews active in the People's Convention in a speech at Cambridge University in March 1941. See correspondence in B of D B4/COM2.
134. Made at the Labour Party Conference in May 1940 by McGuirk, Chairman of the Lancashire and Cheshire Miners.
135. Another example was at a Labour meeting with George Strauss, where comments were heard "why the man is a b- Jew, he never ought to be in Parliament". M-O A: D 5150, 4 March 1943.
136. J.S. Middleton, the Secretary of the Labour Party, when told of support for Nazi antisemitism from a Labour politician in 1933 replied that "this is the first instance to my recollection that any such sentiments have been expressed regarding the Jewish community from a Labour platform". Letter to N. Laski, Middleton papers 210/106 and 109. When the account



- of the antisemitic outburst in the 1940 conference was reported, Middleton replied that he was "considerably astonished ... and realised the dangers that would accrue if there was any serious attempt at antisemitism in our movement". Letter to B. Longstaffe, 22 May 1940 in Middleton papers, JSM/210/173.
137. Nevertheless it could be found in the more moderate Labour movement. The Daily Worker, 17 April 1943 reported how the Railway Review had recently remarked that most Jews were rich and the Birmingham Cooperative Party Bulletin, September 1943 commented how many Labour people accepted without question the fact that Jews controlled finance.
138. For earlier hostility see chapter 1, p.34-7. For an assessment of The Forward's antipathy to Jewish financiers, see Joseph Gorney, The British Labour Movement and Zionism 1917-18 (London, 1983), 153-9.
139. Steve Cohen, op.cit., 16.
140. For example Commander Locker-Lampson M.P. for Handsworth was active in fighting antisemitism and helping the Jewish refugees. See B. Wasserstein, Britain and the Jews of Europe 1939-1945 (Oxford, 1979), 186.
141. See this chapter, p.313 for the origins of this phrase. The letter quoted also contained a significant phrase that the threat of antisemitism was "felt by resident Jews as well as by Englishmen". HO 213/44 E409.
142. According to H. Crichton-Miller a member of The Athenaeum in a letter to The Spectator vol. 172 (4 February 1944). It is doubtful whether most Conservative thinking on Jews was as explicitly genetic as Crichton-Millers, who warned about neglecting "the august and precarious stewardship of the clean blood of the race". Objections were usually less specific such as on 'national' grounds. Even the right-wing Empire Record no. 283 (September 1939) on the subject of 'Jew and Gentile' debunked the idea of "pure race".
143. Major Alastair Menzies in the Sunday Telegraph, 21 May 1944. The Sunday Dispatch, 15 August 1943 was of the same view commenting that "the habit of strange people suddenly acquiring such names as 'Percival Selby Lowndes' or 'Henry York' must be stopped if British unity and fairness of mind" were to be safeguarded. A.K. Chesterton took this approach even further calling for "more Jewishness and more Englishness" in The Tragedy of Anti-Semitism (London, 1948), 73.
144. C. Holmes, op.cit., 104.
145. By 'Liberal' I am not necessarily indicating a direct link to the Liberal Party.
146. See for example Todd Endelman, The Jews of Georgian England 1714-1830 (Philadelphia, 1979), 257.
147. See Holmes, op.cit., 30-1. In the Boer War the then radical journal Truth attacked Jewish financial involvement in South Africa. See C. Hirschfield,



- 'The British Left and the 'Jewish Conspiracy' : A Case Study of Modern Antisemitism' Jewish Social Studies XLIII no. 2 (Spring 1981).
148. Both St Georges and Wapping, and Bethnal Green Liberal and Radical Clubs rejected candidates because of their Jewish origin at the turn of the century. At the same time Central Ward Leeds Liberal Club refused Jews to play billiards in its rooms. See John Garrard, The English and Immigration 1880-1910 (Oxford, 1971), 134-6.
149. Reported by the Board of Deputies in its minute books vol. 1932, Executive Report, 23 April 1944. See also News Chronicle, 20 April 1944.
150. Robb, op.cit., 93 found this in Bethnal Green after the war. James Hodson, a war commentator was surprised in 1944 when two friends "whom I'd always found liberal-minded and civilised came out with a violent burst of antisemitism". See his The Son and the Land (London, 1945), 269.
151. Reported by W.R. Davies in News Chronicle, 21 April 1944.
152. Stephen Wilson, Ideology and Experience: Antisemitism in France at the Time of the Dreyfus Affair (East Brunswick, New Jersey, 1982), 671 comments on this paradox in regard to the attitudes shown to Jews in France at the time of the Dreyfus Affair.
153. J.J. Lynx, op.cit., 7-8 commented himself that a cynic had said to him "there is at least no need to bother about the Jewish question on the Continent after the war. There will scarcely be any Jews left in Europe to form a serious problem". Several Mass-Observers, by no means reactionary, suggested that there were "no other solutions but extermination" - M-O A: DR 2485 March 1943 and similarly DR 2090 and DR 2886 in the same directive.
154. See M-O A: DR 2685, 3127, 2703, 2925, 2564, 2567 in March 1943 Directive. This feeling was clearly shown in a BIPO poll in February 1943 where 78% of the sample stated they wanted the government to help Jewish refugees who could get away. The major reason given was an abhorrence of Nazi treatment of its enemies. See News Chronicle, 26 March 1943 for details.
155. M-O A: DR 1534, March 1943. For similar arguments that the Jews had provoked the Germans see M-O A: FR 3163, 'W.E.R.' and 1372. See also the Jewish Chronicle, 17 October 1941 for a report of a Christian minister's similar belief.
156. In Robert N. Kidd (ed.), City, Class and Culture (Manchester, 1985), 74.
157. M-O A: FR 1669 L .
158. *ibid.* An editor of a symposium on Jews concluded that most of the correspondents had blamed Jews for their own misfortunes. He reminded his readers that Jews "are human". See Gentile and Jew op.cit., p.320.
159. For a brief summary of H.G. Wells and the Jews see Lionel Kochan's article in the Jewish Monthly vol. 6 no. 6 (September 1950), 361-9.
160. H.G. Wells, The Fate of Homo Sapiens (London, 1939).
161. H.G. Wells, All Aboard for Ararat (London, 1940).



162. See M-0 DR 2356, 2514, 2502 October 1940 and DR 3163, 1108, 1176, 3090, 1362, 1632, 2457, 1372. Even the I.F.L.'s The Fascist no. 124 (September 1939) praised Wells because of his anti-zionism and opposition to the chosen people. Wells unsuccessfully attempted to get the radical '1941 Committee' to pass a resolution calling for "a vigorous revision and expansion of education throughout the world upon modern lines, unencumbered by Christian, Shinto, Jewish or other assumptions". See the Catholic Herald, 28 March 1941. Other examples of support for Wells's position can be found in the East End News, 24 September 1943 in an article by J.W. Poynter; the Porth Gazette, 13 January 1940; G.C. Coulton's 'Antisemitism' in the Hibbert Journal, April 1944; and P.E. Longley in News Chronicle, 5 April 1943.
163. See the comments of Geoffrey Lias of the Ministry of Information, 30 August 1942 and D. Allen of the Foreign Office, 13 September 1942 in FO 371/30917 C7839.
164. For Shaw's comments see the Jewish Chronicle, 16 October 1942 and 17 March 1944. For Orwell, his review of 'The Clue to History' in The Adelphi, February 1939. On the far left, the Daily Worker appeared to agree, commenting in the issue of 30 June 1944 that the idea of the Chosen race "smacks horribly of Nazi ideology".
165. See Wells's You Can't Be Too Careful: A Sample of Life 1950-1 (London, 1941), 237-8. The most famous proponent of this point of view was Arnold Toynbee. See his Christianity and Civilisation (London, 1940), 29, 39-41.
166. Out of over a hundred respondents only three Mass-Observers showed any respect for the Jewish religion in 1943. See M-0 A: DR 3365, 2677 and 1644.
167. In C. Newman, op.cit., 102. Professor A.V. Hill, although a great worker on behalf of Jewish refugees suggested that Jews "should become wholly absorbed" loc.sit; 134. James Walsh, editor of the Catholic Times, explicitly suggested that the pride of being the Chosen people had "brought persecution on the Jews" and that they had perverted their mission by not listening to Jesus - loc.sit; 286-9.
168. *ibid*; 304-5 and 340.
169. The two were W.W. Simpson and James Parkes, progressive Christians and founders of the Society of Jews and Christians.
170. See comments of H.J. Fleure (p. 92); H. Fyfe (p. 102); A.V. Hill (p. 133-4); Quentin Hogg (p. 138-9); E.V. Knox (p. 162); John Murray (p. 203); Hannen Swaffer (p. 279-80).
171. *ibid*; 321.
172. See chapter 6, p.462-5.
173. See the correspondence in The Times, 31 July 1985 - 17 August 1985; The Guardian, 30 July, 6 August and 20 August 1985 and the Jewish Chronicle, July - November 1985.
174. See The Times, 31 July 1985 comments of the General Secretary of the Union of Muslim Organisations who stated that the report "was motivated by prejudice against religious minorities".



175. The National Front have tried to make the most of the issue of shechita. See the Jewish Chronicle, 21 September 1984 for its march in Brighton.
176. For example in a radio debate on shechita on Radio 4 on 3 October 1985, 11 am - 'You the Jury' Mr Hocksby of the Farm Animal Welfare Council referred to the 5 million Jews in the British public. For comment on the debate see the Jewish Chronicle, 11 October 1985.
177. Mr Hocksby in the above debate tried to calm the 'juries' fear that any antisemitic intent could be found in case and later stated that he was conscious of the "trickiness" of the subject because of its Jewish link.
178. Letter of 17 June 1939 in B of D E3/53.
179. Meeting between RSPCA, Sir Thomas Moore, Miss Ward and the Board of Deputies June (?) 1939, in B of D E3/53.
180. See the Board of Deputies and Special Branch reports on the Nordic League meetings, May and June 1939 in HO 144/22454/24-40. Other antisemites involved in this campaign were Arnold Leese - see his The Legalised Cruelty of Shechita: The Jewish Method of Cattle-Slaughter (Guildford, Surrey 1940); comments in Action no. 194 (16 November 1939); The Vanguard no. 310 (July 1943); The Patriot no. 951 (2 May 1940) and an anonymous pamphlet Jewish Cruelty (Leeds, 1945) in NCCL 45/2.
181. S. Skeels introducing Leese at a Nordic League meeting in June 1939. N. Laski report, 16 June 1939 in HO 144/22454/80-90. The impact of the film and speeches was effective. Admiral Domville remarking "I gave 10 shillings toward a fund to stop ritual killing of kosher meat. I had no idea such ghastly cruelty existed". Domville papers DOM 56 diary entry, 22 May 1939. Special Branch in a report of 2 June 1939 commented how the women were advised to leave and those members who stayed shouted "Bastards, P.J., Heil Hitler". In HO 144/22454/35-40.
182. M. Dudley Ward was the main link. She appears to have influenced an animal rights group in Leeds, the IVPA. See NCCL 45/2 - letter to E. Allen from D. Drisdale, May 1945. Ward was influenced by the Nazi film commenting in her Jewish 'kosher' Should it be Permitted to Survive in a New Britain (Ilfracombe, North Devon, 1944), 10 that this "Kosher film" was "a nightmare stamped indelibly on the memory". The film was actually being shown by the Ministry of Information in 1944 - see the Minutes of the Law and Parliamentary Committee of the Board of Deputies, 4 October 1944 and 7 November 1944, B of D C13/1/13.
183. For Ward's connections to the RSPCA see B of D E3/53 and Jewish 'Kosher', 10. For the quotation see loc. cit; 38-42. Not surprisingly antisemites nodded approval - see The Vanguard no. 326, November 1944 and Talking Picture News no. 1304 (22 December 1944).
184. See the correspondence between the Board of Deputies and P. MacGunn during 1940 in E3/53.

185. Robert Henriques commented how in evacuation areas "requests for the detailed observance of Kashrut seemed at best trivial, and at worst barbaric", in his Sir Robert Waley Cohen: 1877-1952 (London, 1966), 20. For local press see the Northamptonshire Chronicle and Echo; 23 December 1944 and 3 January 1945; Northampton Evening Telegraph; 14 March 1943 (in regard to a Rotary Club meeting on the subject), and finally the Oxfordshire Times, October 1943-January 1944.
186. For comment on the Oxfordshire Times debate see Minutes of Law and Parliamentary Committee, 4 January 1944 B of D C13/1/13.
187. See 'Anti-Kosher' in the Oxfordshire Times, 24 December 1943 and 'Hereford Steer' in loc.cit; 7 January 1944.
188. 'Hereford Steer' in ibid; 19 November 1943 and 'A Lover of Animals' 10 December 1943.
189. Fred French in the Northamptonshire Chronicle and Echo, 3 January 1945. For similar comments see H. Clark in the Oxfordshire Times, 5 November 1943 who asked "why are (Jews) allowed to evade the laws of this country, or is there a special law for them?"
190. 'Anti-Kosher' in the Oxfordshire Times, 24 December 1943.
191. These were Lord Horder, The Jewish Method of Slaughtering Animals for Food (London, 1940) and H. Zeitlyn, The Jewish Method of Slaying Animals for Food (London, 1943(?)). For the background of the former see memo of 9 July 1940 in B of D E3/53 and the latter in B of D C15/2/4.
192. Analysis of Kews Chronicle debate, April 1943 in KCCL 41/7.
193. See chapter 6 passim.
194. HO 144/21995/21.
195. See M-O A: PK A12. For Dalton's comments see Dalton Diaries vol. 1 no. 27, 3 November 1942. For other examples of social antisemitism in the President of the Board of Trade's diaries see vol. 1 no. 26, 26 May 1942; vol. 1 no. 28, 18 March 1943; vol. 1 no. 29, 26 August 1943. Beatrice Webb showed a similar upper middle class contempt. See her diaries vol. 57, 5 March 1943 for comments on Herbert Samuel.
196. Ben Pinlott, Hugh Dalton (London, 1985). The quote is from Christopher Sykes, Nancy: The Life of Lady Astor (London, 1972), 145.
197. Hollie Panter-Downes, London War Notes 1939-40 (London, 1972), 41 diary entry for 12 January 1940.
198. For Orwell see Partisan Review, July-August 1943; for Connolly New Statesman vol. 25 (20 March 1943).
- 199, 200. M-O A: PK A 15.  
See chapter 3, p.229 for the East End. Panter-Downes contrasted upper class attitudes to that of a Cockney, and believed that More-Belisha had been sacked simply because "his nose happened to be the wrong shape" - London War Notes, 41.



201. A.J.P. Taylor, English History 1914-1945 (Oxford, 1965), 419.
202. See the correspondence with Mr I.W. Baum, 19 November 1943 in NCCL 45/5. For other examples of exclusion in 'Ciro's' and 'The Bagatelle' see NCCL 45/2: 'Synopsis of Recent Evidence'.
203. For golf club discrimination see the South London Press, 11 February 1944 and the Jewish Chronicle, 1 June 1945. A memo of 8 November 1944 in B of D C15/3/20 commented on a 3% numerous clausus in Queenswood School, Hertfordshire.
204. See the Sunday Telegraph, 28 May 1944 - letter from 'Still A-Berg'; The Lancet, 18 July 1942 advert for locum tenens; and B of D C6/4/2/16 and 24 for reports of discrimination in Leeds and Glasgow medical schools. Professor A.V. Hill although a tireless worker on behalf of the refugees called for an unofficial numerous clausus in the professions. Letter to the Board of Deputies, June 1942 in C15/3/21.
205. A Home Intelligence report in 1942 suggested that "a considerable amount of anti-Semitism on the part of small traders is due to the desire to eliminate competition in order to increase personal profit" - 16 January 1942 in B of D B5/3/6. For clerical worker antisemitism see the comments of Nella Last's tax inspector son in R. Broad and S. Fleming (eds.), Nella Last's War: A Mother's Diary 1939-1945 (Bristol, 1981), 83 diary entry 3 November 1940. For 'cabbie' antisemitism see the incident reported in 1944 in MEPO 2/3127. A Board of Deputies report of 1940 suggested that there was a fair amount of antisemitism in the Cabbies section of the T and GWU - B of D C6/9/1/3F4. Bruce Lockhart gave another reason for antisemitism among "the little man". As Jews were prominent in hire purchase furniture, food and clothing industries, antisemitism was likely to follow. Diary entry 4 January 1946 in K. Young, op.cit., 515-6.
206. The historian of Anglo-Jewish economic development poses, but does not answer, the question of what impact discrimination had. See H. Pollins, Economic History of the Jews in England (London, 1982), 190.
207. The Board of Deputies Trades Advisory Council, partly formed to counter such antisemitism, suggested in its annual report in 1942 that although discrimination from Insurance Companies was decreasing, that in employment was growing - in B of D C6/10/43/2 File 1. For examples of discrimination in nursing see the Jewish Chronicle, 16 and 23 August 1940; teaching Sunday Telegraph, 28 May 1944; staff agencies TAC report March 1941 in B of D C6/2/6; hardressing - the Daily Worker, 8 May 1944 and against even Jewish ex-servicemen see the Jewish Chronicle, 31 March 1944 and Reynold's News, 30 April 1944.
208. H. Pollins, op.cit; 208 comments that few Jews of Eastern European origin had entered the professions before 1940. He also suggests that post-war Anglo-Jewry still retains a large degree of self-employment - loc.sit; 217. Barry Kosmin in Sandra Wallman (ed.),



- Ethnicity at Work (London, 1977), 59 suggests that the unofficial quotas of teaching hospitals meant that Jews avoided the profession as they were "not willing to expose themselves to this discrimination".
209. For the numerous examples of housing discrimination see the Daily Worker, 2 December 1940, 11 January 1943, 6 February 1944. The Jewish Chronicle, 20 November 1942 and 13 September 1940. For support of such discrimination see Truth no. 377 (30 May 1941) and the Hackney Gazette, 3 March 1943.
210. For North West London see Howard Brotz 'The Outlines of Jewish Society in London' in M. Freedman (ed.), A Minority in Britain (London, 1955), 137-188. For Leeds see R. O'Brien, 'The Establishment of a Jewish Minority in Leeds (PhD, Bristol, 1975), 242-315 and J. Connell 'The Gilded Ghetto' in the Bloomsbury Geographer (1970), 50-4. Finally for Manchester see the comments on 'Yidsbury' in Howard Spring's Shabby Tiger (London, 1970, originally 1934), 77-8, "the district was as Jewish as the one (Cheetham Hill) she had left". Nella Last's son comments on how in Manchester many new home deeds were not to be let or sold to Jews - R. Broad and S. Fleming op.cit., 83. For other examples of Manchester housing discrimination see the Daily Worker, 29 March 1940; Manchester Guardian, 17 July 1942 where Neville Laski suggested the refusal to allow Jews was due to the hostility of the neighbours, not the landlord, and finally the Manchester Evening News, 17 July 1945.
211. G.G. Field, 'Antisemitism with the Boots Off', Wiener Library Bulletin (special issue, 1982), 32-3 comments that the middle and upper classes were united in a disdain for the parvenu Jew. A different type of hostility could be found in the lower classes, partly chauvinistic but partly out of superstition against Jews as a whole. See Guy Aldred's autobiography, No Traitors Gate (Glasgow, 1957), 323 for his mother's reaction to Rose Witkop - "get that bloody Russian Jewess out of my house". My wife relates how one of her Glasgow relatives refused totally to see an ill Jewish friend out of sheer fright of going into a Jewish bedroom. Information given to the author from Mrs M. Kushner, 20 November 1985.
212. See the introduction p.6-7; and Chapter 3 p.229-30.
213. M-O A: FR A12 comment on the 1939 report.
214. Many others were generally hostile to Jews but only in the case of diarist no. 5296, a Durham housewife was this a regular (indeed obsessive) feature. See for example, diary entries of 9 January 1940; 19 December 1942; 22 January 1943; 5 February 1943; 19 February 1943; 29 March 1943; 21 May 1945; 1 June 1945 and the revealing reply in DR 5296 October 1940.
215. M-O A: FR 1648, March 1943 where 50% of the population having "half and half" attitudes to the Jews.
216. M-O A: DR 3330, March 1943. See also DR 2708 who liked individual Jews but admitted "a certain repugnance to Jews as a whole", and DR 2829 and 2874.
217. *ibid*; DR 2683, 3005, 3250, 3119, 3431.



218. *ibid*; 2684, 2685, 3127, 3163, 3052, 1372, 1014, 1534, 3323. Home Intelligence found that paradoxically the news of the persecution of European Jewry actually increased domestic antisemitism because it made people more aware of the Jews in Britain - INF 1/292 no. 198 (29 December 1942 - 5 January 1943). Austin Stevens comments on this ambivalence as far as the press was concerned who reported on the slaughter of European Jews on one page and then attacked Jewish refugees on another. See Stevens, *op.cit.*, 246. A classic example of this was the Porth Gazette, 19 December 1942 which used the "crucifixion of Israel" as an excuse to attack Jewish black marketeers. See also the Jewish Chronicle, 19 February 1942 for a similar occurrence at a Sheffield meeting on refugees.
219. See M-O A: DR 3052, 2864, 2874, 1534, 2908 (who commented "I am definitely antisemitic yet I have several Jewish friends ... I enjoy their company immensely"), 3431. Belloc, although obsessed with Jews, could write in the war "As for me, I get on famously with them" - quoted by A.N. Wilson, Hilaire Belloc (London, 1984), 188. Many other examples can be given of those who could be privately and indeed publicly antisemitic yet enjoy the company of Jews - see Andrew Boyle, Poor, Dear, Brendan. The Quest for Brendan Bracken (London, 1974), 339 and Peter Alexander, Roy Campbell: A Critical Biography (Oxford, 1982), 198-9 for an account of this antisemitic poet's friendship with Jews in the war. George Orwell was a classic example of a man, who in Malcolm Muggeridge's words was "at heart strongly anti-Semitic" yet who attracted many Jewish friends. Quoted by T.R. Fyvel, George Orwell: A Personal Memoir (London, 1984), 178.
220. An antisemitic Mass-Observer, DR 1036 remarked that "I have been fortunate in not meeting very many of them" - Directive October 1940, and similarly M-O A: DR 3360, DR 1056 (who refused Jews as tenants) and DR 1313 in March 1943. For Waugh's antipathy to Jews see Michael Davics (ed.), The Diaries of Evelyn Waugh (London, 1976), 486 (11 November 1940), 447 (23 October 1939) and 523 (26 May 1942). His attitudes would appear to have affected his behaviour in the war. Stationed in Yugoslavia he refused to help the Jews of Croatia, preferring to support their persecutors, the Catholic clergy - even though some were fascist collaborators. See diary entry for 24 October 1944, p. 586 and comments of Christopher Sykes, Evelyn Waugh: A Biography (Glasgow, 1975), 275.
221. I have already commented on Nicolson's ambivalence, see the introduction, p. 3. Nicolson regularly warned against the dangers of antisemitism see his column in The Spectator vol. 168 (16 January 1942); vol. 163 (27 October 1939); vol. 170 (28 May 1943) yet he had to make a special effort to be nice to a Jewish soldier after the Commons announcement on the destruction of Polish Jewry. See Nigel Nicolson (ed.), Harold Nicolson: Diaries and Letters vol. 2 1939-1945 (London, 1967), 268 diary entry of 20 December 1942. For comment on Nicolson's attitudes to Jews see the introduction by Nigel Nicolson in *loc. cit*; vol. 1 1930-39 (London, 1966), 24-5.



222. A Mass-Observation survey in October 1940 found 27% of the sample describing Jews in unfavourable terms, with a further 29% showed "half and half attitudes". - M-O A: FR 523B. This was also their finding in Silvertown with 31% "definitely antisemitic" and a further 26% ambivalent - FR no. 78 - February 1940, and in March 1943 Mass-Observation found 12% of the sample strongly in disfavour of Jews, 18% slightly disfavourable and 28% mixed, making 54% in total.
223. M-O A: DR 1534, March 1943. The critic James Agate showed similar restraint threatening to write that "I now agree that the hordes of well-fed, fat and oily young Jews to be seen in Piccadilly every evening after seven o'clock are engaged in war-work of one kind or another. I agree that the vigorous young Yids blowing for hours on end into the Saxophones of dance bands are in the last stages of consumption. I agree that the decks of our battle-ships and merchant vessels are swarming with Jews ..." in his published diaries Ego 6. However this threat delivered to Sidney Salomon was not carried out. See B of D, C6/9/1/3 FS letter of 30 November 1942 for the whole version of Agate's private vindictive. Holmes, op.cit., 217-8 comments on the social restraints operating on public expression of anti-semitism.
224. M-O A: DR 1534, March 1943. This contrasts with her statement in October 1940 that "I have felt rather anti-semite (sic) for some time". - DR 1534, October 1940.
225. For example those listening to broadcasts from Germany were found to be more likely to believe that the Jews would benefit from the war - 21% compared to the 17% who never listened to Hamburg radio. BBC written archives, Listener Research, 8 March 1940 in R9/13/5/1. Many contemporaries felt that Nazi propaganda was making Britain antisemitic - see J.J. McCall in the Glasgow Daily Record, 28 May 1943; Time and Tide vol. 22 no. 48 (29 November 1941); the Jewish Chronicle, 12 January 1940 and Harold Nicolson in The Spectator, vol. 164 (2 February 1940). One Mass-Observation was certainly impressed by the broadcasts commenting in June 1945 "If they try Haw-Haw because of his anti-Jewish and anti-vested interests they ought to try me and 1000's of others in this land" - M-O A: D 5296, 1 June 1945. A Jewish worker from the Rolls Royce factory in Hillington told the NCCL that his fellow workers "repeated German wireless utterances without thinking". NCCL 311/1, 1943.
226. David Walton, 'George Orwell and Antisemitism', Patterns of Prejudice vol. 16 no. 1 (January 1982), 24.
227. Bernard Crick in his George Orwell: A Life (London, 1980), 307 is simplifying when he claims Orwell's review articles in the Observer, 30 January 1944 and Tribune, 11 February 1944 "show him fully purged of the mild and conventional, but none the less clear, anti-semitism which appeared early in Down and Out in Paris and London and lingered in his 'War-Time Diaries'". Walton, op.cit; 34 concludes that while Orwell made a large effort to remove his own prejudices "his efforts at self-awareness was not



altogether successful". T.R. Fyvel, op.cit., 140 comments on an example of Orwell's late war anti-semitism and also suggests that Orwell "always liked retaining his thoughts in the identical words" - loc.cit; 182.

228. M-O A: FR 1648. For example from the March 1943 directive, DR 2685 "I must admit to slight anti-semitism of which I am ashamed. I don't know why, I look at horror at Nazi persecution ... yet ... I am rather apt to make rude jokes about Jews"; DR 3437 "I find it difficult to like the Jews for which I am ashamed"; DR 3052 "I must admit that I have a certain repugnance to Jews as a whole" yet "it is pure prejudice"; DR 2930 "I cannot conceal from myself that I do not like Jews"; DR 2874 "It is astonishing to find that I am unfortunately antisemitic when I think of Jews in the mass" and DR 2905 "Collectively I dislike them (though) my intellect tells me this is absurd, my instinct can feel no other way".
229. M-O A: FR 1648 compares feeling between 1943 and 1940. The report suggested that in 1943 replies "frequently show how irritated people are with their own feelings and prejudices on the subject".
230. Henry 'Chips' Channon M.P. was greatly moved by Eden's declaration on the extermination of the Jews and the minute's silence that followed. He wrote in his diary "It was a fine moment and my back tingled". Later in the day the effect seems to have worn off, with Channon's main concern at a cocktail party of whether he was being socially accepted, R.R. James (ed.), Chips: The Diary of Sir Henry Channon (London, 1967), 347 entry for 17 December 1942.
231. For T.S. Eliot see J.A. Morris, 'T.S. Eliot and Anti-Semitism', Journal of European Studies 11 (1972), 172-82 and Bernard Bergonzi, T.S. Eliot (New York, 1972), 123-6. Bergonzi claims that Eliot is "tactfully silent on the position of 'free-thinking Jews'" in The Idea of a Christian Society (London, 1939) and in the Christian News Letter, 3 September 1941 he attacked the Vichy government's enactment of antisemitic laws. It could also be suggested that Eliot was a restraining influence on antisemitism in the social credit, New English Weekly of which he was connected in the war. See the editorial attacking antisemitism in issue vol. 16 no. 18 (22 February 1940). Lord Alfred Douglas's change of heart can be followed in his Autobiography (London, 1931), 302 and his statement in the war itself that he was prejudiced when he wrote in Plain English in the 1920's but was not now. In C. Newman, op.cit., 84. His biographer concludes "in his last years he regretted that he had ever soiled his hands with (antisemitism), loathing Nazism with a hearty and verbose hatred that comes out in his letters". - Rupert Croft-Cooke, Bosie: The Story of Lord Alfred Douglas: His Friends and Enemies (London, 1963), 293 Gertrude Himmelfarb, 'John Buchan: An Untimely Appreciation', Encounter



- vol. XV no. 3, (September 1960), 46-53 concludes that Buchan had changed his views on Jews after the Nazis had come to power and that Sick Heart River, his last book published in 1940 had no references to Jews despite its large number of financiers. Roy Campbell appears to have maintained his anti-semitism whilst actually fighting for the Allied cause. Campbell had earlier supported Franco. See Peter Alexander, op.cit., and for his anti-semitism, The Collected Poems of Roy Campbell vol. 2 (London, 1957), 74-5; 67-70; 76-83.
232. See A.N. Wilson, op.cit., 82 for a description of this antisemitic atmosphere in Oxford and M-O A: FR A12 for the later Cambridge comments.
233. A. Calder, op.cit., 498. Norman Longmate also suggests that although the British people were "violently anti-Nazi" this did not necessarily imply an anti-antisemitism. See his If Britain Had Fallen (London, 1972), 201-2.
234. See chapter 1, p.180-1.
235. Jonathan Cape's files on Reed, now deposited at the University of Reading Library, suggest that Cape stopped publishing Reed because his later books did not sell well. There is no evidence that Cape and Reed ever fell out.
236. Cape themselves commented on "the incredible enthusiasm for Insanity Fair ... all through the Crisis and the slump in the book market, it continued to be a best-seller, in England and abroad". - Now and Then no. 62 (Spring 1939). See also Michael Howard, Jonathan Cape, Publisher (London, 1971), 170 and 189.
237. R. Thurlow, 'Anti-Nazi Antisemite', op.cit., 29 has commented that "in both Insanity Fair and Disgrace Abounding his chapters on the Jews seem totally out of context with the rest of the argument". I would disagree slightly with this for although the anti-semitism in these books was concentrated in these chapters - 'No Jews is Good Jews' and 'How Odd of God to chose the Jews' respectively, one can find consistent antisemitism elsewhere. Thus in Insanity Fair (London, 1938), 83 and 415 Reed accuses Jews of controlling Berlin and Vienna and on page 217 there is an antisemitic description of Brighton. In Disgrace Abounding (London, 1939), 200, 263, 278-9 there are attacks on Jewish power.
238. See Guy Chapman's autobiography, A Kind of Survivor (London, 1975), 174-76 for an account of his mission to Prague to get Reed to rewrite. Reed, in Chapman's words, "proved to be sensible and amenable". Howard, op.cit., 172-3 for a less explicit account.
239. Insanity Fair, 232-3 Reed warned that anti-gentilism came before antisemitism and that "while people in England are lamenting the fate of the Jews in Germany, they do not notice that the Jews in England are becoming more powerful than ever before" - loc.cit;263. The obituary in The Times, 23 September 1976 commented that "the pertinent and salutary things the author had to say were still more markedly beset by prejudice".



240. Reed in Lest We Regret (London, 1943), 85. Reed did not directly quote Social Credit ideas but he was in touch with some of the most obscure and extremist social credit journals. See his comments in the Social Crediter vol. 10 no. 3 (27 March 1943). For other social credit approval of Reed see the same journal vol. 5 no. 19 (18 January 1941); vol. 6 no. 8 (3 May 1941); vol. 7 no. 2 (20 September 1941); vol. 8 no. 19 (18 July 1942); vol. 10 no. 1 (13 March 1943); and Reality no. 282 (22 September 1944) and no. 295 (22 December 1944).
241. See All Our Tomorrows (London, 1942), 336 and Lest We Regret, 261. This idea seems to have appealed to Roy Campbell as well. In his poem 'Jungle Eclogue' (1945?) Campbell states "Between the Jewish Fascism of Russia, and Gentile Bolshevism farmed on Prussia, I see no difference save in their salutes". Collected Poems vol. 2, 83.
242. In A Prophet At Home (London, 1941), 48 Reed talked of "the alienization of English life (having) reached its highest point in the picture-theatre, the theatre and the radio". In the same book he accused Jews of army dodging - loc.cit., 120 and cowardice - p. 321. In All Our Tomorrows similar attacks were made with an additional attack on vulgar Jewish evacuees (p. 39) and the Black Market (p. 148). Lest We Regret was dedicated to a more conspiratorial antisemitism, see particularly pp. 239-279.
243. At the start of the war, the Jewish Chronicle, 22 September 1939 warned against "Douglas Reedism", that is anti-Nazi antisemitism. See also the Jewish Chronicle, 7 August 1942 for Sidney Salomon's comment that "All Our Tomorrows was worrying all Jews". Reed was regarded as a "very dangerous personality" by the Board of Deputies, memo of 2 February 1945 to F. Weiss in B of D C6/2/13p. Attempts were made to "flush him out" and link him to pro-Nazis in Britain, but these were unsuccessful. See letter of Sidney Salomon to Ivan Greenberg 5 December 1944 in C15/3/33.
244. It must be suggested that Reed underwent a personality crisis in the war. As he himself admitted in A Prophet At Home, 48 "I felt myself so alien in England". His mind became totally conspiratorial - in 1939 he had rejected the idea of a Jewish plot - see Disgrace Abounding, 247 but by 1943 "I had perceived the master moves behind the fighting war". - in his autobiographical From Smoke to Smother (London, 1948), 110. His Times obituary commented that his war books, "exhibited, unfortunately, a progressive unreason and testiness". Francis Weiss in his Insanity ... abounding: Reply to a Prophet not quite at Home (London, 194?) attacked Reed's ideas, but as Sidney Salomon suggested, such a work would have limited effect because Reed's antisemitic mind was not receptive to reason.
245. Veronica Wedgwood who was the reader for Cape in the war, can recall little about Reed - letter to the



- author, 21 November 1985. The Reed file in the Cape archive does not suggest that any censorship of Reed took place. However Barry Domvile in his diary, 18 February 1944 stated that in the new edition of Lest We Regret the main antisemitic chapter, 'The Children of Israel' was to be omitted. - Domvile Diaries, 18 February 1944, DOM 56. However a 1946 edition of the work still contained the offending chapter.
246. See Now and Then, no. 71 (Spring 1942); no. 72 (August 1942); no. 73 (New Year 1943); and no. 75 (Winter 1943). In this last reference Now and Then, commented that Lest We Regret (which was extremely antisemitic) was an answer to his critics: "and a smashing answer it is."
247. Jewish Chronicle, 31 December 1943.
248. See for example Tribune, 4 September 1942 on All Our Tomorrows; Time and Tide vol. 23 no. 29 (18 July 1942) for the same book; New English Weekly vol. 17 no. 22 (19 September 1940) for Nemesis.
249. National Review no. 693 (November 1940) praised Reed's "remarkable book Nemesis". In the New Statesman vol. 24 (15 August 1942) the reviewer claimed that despite its antisemitism "one can't help liking All Our Tomorrows". The Tablet no. 5211, 23 March 1940 felt that Reed's Nemesis - the story of Otto Strasser was a good book and their shared attitude to Jews was that of Hilaire Belloc's - James Agate in the Daily Express praised A Prophet At Home because of "its sincerity, its sense of reality and its urgency" - see the cover of All Our Tomorrows.
250. Reed in Lest We Regret, 308.
251. See E. Wrench, Francis Yeats-Brown 1886-1944 (London, 1948), 246-7 and 259 and The Patriot no. 948 (11 April, 1940) no. 950 (25 April 1940); no. 1074 (10 September 1942) and no. 1082 (5 November 1942).
252. See the Kilburn Times, 12 May 1944, 26 May 1944 and 9 June 1944. In the last letter to this paper, the two clergymen advocated a policy of apartheid. Reed was also quoted by another priest, H.A. Wilson in Death over Haggerston (London, 1941), 63-4.
253. M-O A: DR 2804, March 1943. In the same directive DR 2485 praised Reed's All Our Tomorrows and advocated extermination as the solution to the Jewish problem.
254. M-O A: DR 3293. See also an account from a barrister in 1943 in MCCL 310/5. This casts some doubts on the comments in The Times obituary of Reed which stated that his reader "was inclined ... to shake his head over Reed's virulent antisemitism".
255. An editorial in Tribune, 9 February 1945 commented on the fact that Reed was now working for the Kemsley Press despite its former appeasement policy. It concluded that Reed had allowed "success to run to his liver". Reed was associated with the Never Again Association, a breakaway group from the Vansittart movement. Its contributors included A.K. Chesterton and M. Sturdy-Smith, a leading antisemitic social creditor. See its publication Sovereignty (Bromley,



- Kent, 1944), 5-11. Reed commented that he had settled on the NeVer Again Association after looking round many fringe organisations. Reed and Chesterton were to cooperate after the war in London Tidings, published from 1946 which dealt in conspiratorial antisemitism. See the memo on Reed in B of D C6/9/3/1.
256. As in a letter to The Author vol. LV no. 2 (Winter, 1944), the Daily Telegraph, 7 September 1944 and Daily Mail, 30 August 1943 where Reed commented on the death of Boris of Bulgaria and the sinister secret power behind it - "the international forces which desire confusion in Europe".
257. See his letters to Truth no. 3512 (1 December 1944) and no. 3563 (22 December 1944) where Reed referred to the "hidden hand", with Jewish fascists "urging war on us". He wrote similarly to the Catholic Herald, 15 December 1944 and 12 January 1945.
258. In the Daily Dispatch, 6 February 1943. Rothwell claimed he was "not a fascist or Communist but a British working man doing his utmost to win the war". In fact he was a pre-war B.U.F. leader in Stockport.
259. M-O A: FR 1648 found that the letter was widely discussed and that remarks that "there's a lot of truth in what he said" and "there's no doubt they have got too much power in England" were "frequently heard". Nevertheless a public meeting of 1200 at the Holdsworth Hall in Manchester was arranged by the NCCJ to protest against the letter. See Civil Liberty vol. 3 no. 9 (March 1943). The Manchester and Salford Council of Jews rejected this approach, preferring a futile meeting with the paper's editor. See their minute book, vol. 3, 14 and 18 February 1943.
260. The Daily Dispatch, 9 February 1943. The Jewish Chronicle, 19 February 1942 attacked this approach.
261. See the Sunday Pictorial, 13 October 1940; Catholic Herald, 5 January 1945; Kilburn Times, 16 June 1944; Southport Visitor, 2 March 1943; Hackney Gazette, 3 March 1943 and The Spectator, vol. 169 (13 February 1942).
262. The Spectator, vol. 171 (24 December 1943).
263. This campaign will be dealt with in chapter 7, p.560. Only 1 out of 155 people interviewed by Mass-Observation in January 1944 wanted to 'ban' antisemitism - M-O A: FR 1993. Truth was at the forefront of the campaign against the ban, see Brook's 'Anti-semitism and Treachery' no. 3430 (5 June 1942). L.V. Akhurst asked why "Britons should be penalised by a special law to be passed at the behest of Jewry in the Hornsey Journal, 29 December 1944 and W.H. Bush of the Birmingham Gazette summarised the opinion of many, that Britons had the right to be antisemitic as much as anti-antisemitic. In the NUJ conference in 1943. (quoted by the Jewish Chronicle, 9 July 1943).
264. H.A. Kose (ed.), Buffy: The Diaries of Blanche Durdale 1937-1947 (London, 1973), 215-6 diary entry of 1 August 1944.



265. Another example of this in government circles was the appointment of Lord Winterton as head of the British delegation to the Evian conference in 1938 and his continued importance in refugee matters in the war. Winterton had claimed in 1936 that racial or religious prejudice would always exist, and he was notorious for his antisemitic remarks. See G. Lebzelter, Political Antisemitism in England 1918 - 1939 (London, 1978), 131 and A.J. Sherman, Island Refuge: Britain and Refugees from the Third Reich 1933 - 39 (London, 1973), 107, 157, 258. For examples of his antisemitism see the Daily Telegraph, 30 November 1945; Jewish Chronicle, 27 December 1946 and Daily Worker, 24 October 1947.
266. G. Himmelfarb, op.cit., 50.
267. Thomas Nelson removed an antisemitic Mother Goose story in 1943 - see J.D.C. minutes, 20 August 1943 in B of D C6/2/6. The poem had been in Loey Chisholm's Nursery Rhymes and Fables (London, 1940), 1-3 "Jack sold his gold egg to a rascally Jew, etc.". In 1945 Macleans Printing Works decided to remove some offensive passages about Jews in London from Michael Andizzone's Hear Not My Steps - see B of D report 28 August 1945 in C6/2/13L. Such successes were rare - see the report of Elizabeth Allen in 1944 concerning the failure of the N.C.C.L's anti-antisemitic literary campaign. In N.C.C.L. 45/2.
268. In 1944 E.M. Forster refused to see Gerald Hamilton because "he was violently anti-Semite" - letter to Christopher Isherwood, 28 February 1944 in Mary Lags and P.N. Furbank (eds.), Selected Letters of E.M. Forster, vol.2, 1921 - 1970 (London, 1985), 205-6. Forster added that "I am false to myself in not doing so. I ought to examine his depths for myself, since I got amusement of his shallowness in the continental days". It would thus seem that Forster, as well as people such as Orwell, had re-examined his earlier attitude to Jews. Alan Bold in his biography of Hugh MacDiarmid - The Terrible Crystal (London, 1985), 32 tells us that he fell out with F.G. Scott over his antisemitism. However, MacDiarmid was also friendly with Pound, Eliot and Major Douglas. Belloc's antisemitism may have annoyed some of his friends, but it never was a matter of disowning him totally, according to A.N. Wilson, op.cit., 258. His friends either laughed or shouted him down.
269. Robert Atkin played Shylock in a humane manner at The Westminster Theatre in 1942. The Spectator's Basil Wright objected to "this somewhat gentle Shylock" - vol. 169 (2 October 1942). A few months later Mr. Valk played Shylock as the villain of the piece at the New Theatre and The Spectator's James Redfern approved, saying it was only right to be able to refer to bad Jews, despite "the wholesale persecution of Jews in our time" - vol.170 (26 February 1943).
270. See Lucy Dawidowicz, 'Can Anti-Semitism Be Measured?' Commentary L (July 1970), 36-43.



271. It is still necessary to weigh the importance of 'non-theoretical' antisemitism. G.G. Field's 'Anti-semitism with the Boots Off' lapses once or twice in this respect, with the author talking of "vague expression(s) of national and class fears" (pp.32 and 39), without evaluating how strong these were.
272. We have seen that Mass-Observation reported "an almost universal antisemitic feeling" in London - note 3. Jews were meant to be rushing into the shelters, moaning about the war and getting more than their fair share of goods. Murial Box also believed that "it was prevalent at that critical period" - Odd Woman Out (London, 1974), 156. Sidney Salomon, writing to Israel Cohen in January 1944, stated that "when we declared war on Germany it was fondly imagined that antisemitism would cease, for was this not the weapon so largely used by Hitler", but this was soon dispelled with Jews being blamed for the black-out, profiteering and the war as a whole. Letter in B of D C6/2/13b. See also a Home Intelligence report quoted by E.W. Holderness to Sir N. Kendal in HO 144/21429/39-45, September 1939. The Mass-Observation reporter in the East End commented on "a definite tendency to emphasise distinction" - M-OA: TC Air Raids Box 9 File T.
273. P. Addison, op.cit., 121 comments on the problems of defining morale, as does Ian McLaine, Ministry of Morale - Home Front Morale and the Ministry of Information in World War II (London, 1979), 8-9. McLaine concludes that in the phoney war period "morale appears to have been lower when the impact of the conflict was relatively slight, than at any other time during the war". Loc.cit., 34. Orwell, as a contemporary, shared this analysis, commenting in Partisan Review, March - April 1941, that after four months of bombing "morale is far better than a year ago when the war was stagnant".
274. See the introduction p.4-7. Austin Stevens, op.cit., 248 comments on this motive as regards Hore-Belisha. The need to avoid the charge of a 'Jews' War' also affected government policy to European Jews. This will be dealt with later; however, see M.N. Penkower, The Jews Were Expendable: Free World Diplomacy and the Holocaust (Chicago, 1983), 295 for a strong argument for this case.
275. Sir Normal Kendal of Scotland Yard wrote to A.Maxwell, 26 September 1939, commenting that the B.U.F's anti-war antisemitism had "done a lot of damage" - HO 144/21429/39-45. In the same file, Maxwell wrote to Somervill, the public prosecutioner, warning that if Mosley's antiwar activities persisted he could be prosecuted under Regulation 39B. When the Home Office Advisory Committee put forward its reasons for detaining Mosley under 18B, Mosley's "bitter campaign against the Jews" was cited regularly - see HO 283/1/1-14.
276. Fascist street violence was at a low ebb and it was only the Jews' War line that particularly threatened the Jewish community. The Jewish Chronicle, sensitive to any hostile developments, could write on 3 November



- 1939 that there was "no perceptible growth of anti-semitism".
277. Mass-Observation reported in late April 1940 that "there seems to be no very large increase in antisemitism, (but) there has been a considerable increase of antagonism against recently arrived Jews and refugees in general" - in M-OA: FR 79 'Feeling about Aliens', 25 April 1940. Three weeks later Mass-Observation reported that after the news from Holland it was now "quite the done thing" to be openly antisemitic and anti-alien - M-OA: FR 107. Home Intelligence in late April reported that anti-alien feeling was growing and "that in Manchester and Liverpool particularly it is becoming identified with antisemitism - Mary Adams papers, Box 1 (B), 24 April 1940.
278. See Churchill's comments in Hansard HC vol.361 col. 798, 4 June 1940 and Anderson's in HC vol.364 col. 1543-7, 22 August 1940 on the need for internment "to prevent civil disturbance", and in the Cabinet - "such persons would be in great danger if at liberty" - CAB 65/7 WM (40) 123 15 May 1940. See M-OA: FR 184 for the riots in Soho and D.Sheridan (ed.), Among You Taking Notes...The Wartime Diary of Naomi Mitchison (London, 1985), 65 entry for 11 June 1940 for the riots in Campbletown.
279. See M-OA: FR 107 and chapter 6 p.478 for accounts of the decline of liberal attitudes. See M-OA: FR 486, 8 November 1940 for feeling on aliens and the statement that "antisemitism continues unabated".
280. See chapter 3 p.236, 243.
281. Home Intelligence suggested in late September that antisemitism was generally up because of evacuation, but by late October this had to an extent declined. See INF 1/264 no.108 (24 September 1940) and INF 1/292 no.4 (21-8 Oct 1940) and no.5 (28 Oct - 4 Nov 1940).
282. Home Intelligence reported in June 1941 that talk of the black markets was just an outlet - "they are a scapegoat for difficulties in obtaining goods" - INF 1/292 no.37 (18 June - 25 June 1941). R.J. Hammond, Food: The Growth of Policy (London, 1951) comments on the development of rationing.
283. Home Intelligence talked of "a slight increase in antisemitic feeling associated with the present increase in food difficulties - INF 1/292 no.42 (16 - 23 July 1941). The Daily Mirror's 'Cassandra' had recently attacked Jewish profiteers - 17 June 1941.
284. Lord Woolton, the Minister of Food, launched his attack on food profiteers in a broadcast on the B.B.C. in June 1941 - see Woolton papers, Woolton 12. In March 1942 a government campaign against the black market was implemented - see Woolton Diary, 4 March 1942 in Woolton 2.
285. Mass-Observation commented in 1943 that "Belief in the existence of an extensive black market acts as an emotional outlet for difficulties in obtaining goods" - M-OA: FR 1781.
286. *ibid.*, which suggested that the population "have tended to fix the blame on 'unpatriotic' minority groups".



- Tom Harrisson saw the same feeling operating against greyhound punters, seeing it as "minority hating at home": M-OA: FR 1149.
287. See chapter 5 p.403-4. Also my paper at the Economic History Society Conference, York, March 1985, 'Another Enemy Within? Jews and the Black Market in Britain During the Second World War'.
288. See INF 1/292 no.151 (17 - 24 August 1943) and those following. Brendan Bracken, the Minister of Information, believed the decline of the black market was responsible for the parallel decline in antisemitism in the second half of 1943. In a meeting with the Board of Deputies, 10 December 1943 in B of D C6/10/27.
289. Mass-Observation found that in March 1942, 14% of the population listed the black market as their main war grumble. By May this had declined to 5% but it rose in November 1942 to 14% again. In M-OA: FR 1781. Home Intelligence felt that antisemitism was at its highest level at the end of 1942 until Spring 1943. See reports no. 115 - 129 - 8 December 1942 - 23 March 1943 all in INF 1/292. Mass-Observation also felt early 1943 was a high point of antisemitism - M-OA: FR 1648. Orwell, who in January 1943 had felt it was not growing, changed his mind a few months later, writing in May 1943 that antisemitism had "reached the stature of a problem" - Partisan Review, July - August 1943.
290. Home Intelligence reported that as "a result of the publicity (on German anti-Jewish atrocities), people are more conscious of the Jews they do not like here". INF 1/292 no.198 (29 Dec 1942 - 5 Jan 1943).
291. Quoted in Hadley Cantril (ed.), Public Opinion: 1935 - 1946 (Princeton, New Jersey, 1951), 381.
292. On the 8 March 1943 the J.D.C. held a special meeting to discuss the rise in antisemitism - in B of D C6/2/6. The Jewish Chronicle, 26 February 1943 warned in an editorial that the extension of an anti-Jewish campaign cannot be doubted. A week later the editor referred to a correspondence on Jewish matters in the New Statesman, which produced a crop of 'well-earned' antisemitic letters. In a fit of despair, the Jewish Chronicle asked "if the progressives, the liberals, the advanced intellectuals, produce their own particular version of Jew-hatred, what hope is there from the sum total of popular opinion?" See also the editorial in the Jewish Chronicle, 26 March 1943.
293. See McLaine, op.cit., 178-80.
294. Home Intelligence referred to intermittent antisemitism in early 1944 - INF 1/292 no.177 (15 - 22 Feb 1944). However, later that year two observers believed antisemitism was on the increase because of war-tiredness - see J.L. Hodson, The Sea and the Land (London, 1945) 269 entry for 8 December 1944 and Norman Swallow in Tribune, 22 September 1944. Mass-Observation had found that antisemitism had declined from March 1943 to March 1944 - see details of their surveys in the Sydney



- Jewish News, 27 October 1944.
295. See chapter 3 p.248-50 and chapter 5 p.407-8. Home Intelligence reported that the Jews' Panic explanation "is reported from all parts of London" - INF 1/292 no.194 (2 - 9 March 1943).
296. For the antisemitism associated with the Moyne assassination - see INF 1/292 no.215 (7 - 14 November 1944), an increase in such feeling being reported in six regions. The press, apart from The Times showed, in the words of the Council of Christians and Jews' press review (November 1944), "considerable restraint" - Parkes papers, 15.022. Colin Holmes, 'Antisemitism in Britain', Jewish Chronicle, 14 September 1979 refers to the impact of the 'hanging sergeants' incident as does David Leitch in M. Sissons and P. French (ed.), Age of Austerity 1945 - 1951 (London, 1963), 57-70. See also the conclusion p.627-8.
297. For this fear see Herbert Morrison's comments in the Committee on the Reception and Accommodation of Jewish Refugees CAB 95/15 JR (43), 31 December 1942 and *ibid.* JR (45). Morrison had earlier warned a deputation on 28 October 1942 that there was "a body of opinion which was potentially antisemitic" in FO 371/32681 W14673. Morrison's attitude to Jews will be discussed in chapter 6 p.497-8.
298. Reported by A.G.W. Randell in a draft letter of 17 December 1943 in FO 371/36672 W17585.
299. Mass-Observation's comments on Leeds antisemitism concluded that "other researches of ours have shown that frequently a high degree of anti-semitism goes with a small local Jewish population...and vice versa". M-OA: FR 61, March 1940. J.H. Robb, *op.cit.*, 103, and S. Wilson, *op.cit.*, 666, comment that much anti-semitism does not come directly out of direct experience of Jews.
300. For Manchester see a Home Intelligence report prepared for the Board of Deputies, 29 January 1942 in B of D B5/3/6. Although it warned that "the position should be watched carefully", it added "actual physical persecution is non-existent". See also the minutes of the Manchester Information Committee, 1 February 1943 - M 77/4/1/5.

For Leeds see the report from their Jewish representative council in B of D C6/4/2/22 which suggested a fairly happy relationship. However, there was anti-semitism which attempted to spoil the chances of a Jew being chosen as Lord Mayor in 1941, and rich Jew anti-semitism when he was chosen. See the Brodetsky papers AJ 13, letter from F.K. Sandelson, 4 September 1942.

In Glasgow the war brought a general atmosphere of antisemitism, according to the Rev. T.B.S. Thomson in the Glasgow Herald, 21 May 1942, and also the occasional physical attack - see the Jewish Echo, 6 October 1944. However, apart from the activities of Alexander Ratcliffe, the main concern of the local Jewish Representative Council was social and school discrimination and antisemitism against Jews moving to the more prosperous South Side. See B of D C6/4/2/6, report of 15 February 1945.



301. Over 2,000 people signed a petition to remove 'aliens' from Hampstead. See the Hampstead and Highgate Express, 12 October 1945. The Mayor, S.A. Boyd, signed the petition - *ibid.*, 2 November 1945, and extremists became involved in the movement such as Eleonara Tennant and Jeffrey Hamm. However, the council as a whole rejected the petition movement, passing a motion condemning the agitation "as an attempt to exploit the serious housing shortage for the purpose of fostering inhuman racial hatred". Hampstead Borough Council Minutes, vol.84-5, 25 October 1945. For the denial of antisemitism see letters to the New Statesman, vol. 30 (20 October 1945 and 3 November 1945). See report of 30 November 1945 in B of D C6/3/2/6 for the contrary.
302. For Liverpool see the Economic League report on Merseyside, 11 February 1941 in B of D C6/10/16 and INF 1/292 no.36, 3 June - 10 June 1941 where "anti-Jewish feeling is said to be growing", with a restaurant refusing to serve Jewish customers.
- Oxford has been dealt with as far as evacuation is concerned - see chapter 3 p.270-1. However, it is interesting that canards were made about Jews speculating in bombed property in Oxford - as they were meant to be in Sheffield. See minutes of the Board of Deputies 17 June 1941 report by the J.D.C., vol.31.
- In Northern Ireland Jews numbered only 1,400 out of 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  millions and Home Intelligence reported that "So long as Protestants and Roman Catholics are so deeply concerned with their own quarrels and antipathies anti-Semitism is unlikely to thrive" - in B of D B5/3/6. However, the Jewish Chronicle, 16 July 1943 reported that in both sections of the community there was a limited amount of antisemitism.
303. The allegations were reported in a report by Sheffield Information Committee, 27 May 1941 in CA 43/2. These were disproved by an investigation, see B of D C6/2/6 'Jews and Bombed Properties' 1941.
304. See Zelma Kutin, *op.cit.*, 72 and the report from D. Brown 29 January 1945 to M.J. Roston on "the frequent remarks heard in the trams and buses" in B of D C6/4/2/52.
305. *ibid.*, and similarly letter of 3 May 1946.
306. C. Newman, *op.cit.*, 328 pointed out these contradictory approaches, exclaiming "Poor Jew, if he heeded either!"
307. A classic example of this was in a letter from Penguin's Allan Lane to James Parkes, 27 January 1944. Lane was concerned at "the increasingly serious menace of anti-semitism" yet "in our (the Penguin Editorial Committee) view one of the reasons why there is much talk of the kind which we deplore is because numbers of the race behave in a way which doesn't fit in with our own ideas of good behaviour". Parkes papers, 07.006.005.
308. Interview with Neville and Nathan Laski, 8 January 1940 in the W.P. Crozier papers, John Rylands Library, University of Manchester.
309. Quoted by F. Morton, *op.cit.*, 20.
310. Lewis Namier, Conflicts (London, 1942), 131. Namier commented that deep down most British Jews knew they could not afford to slip - *loc.cit.*, 122-3. At times

- the impact of British antisemitism was not so subtle. Alex Hartog claims there was so much antisemitism in the army that "in the end I had to ask to be released". See his Born to Sing (London, 1978), 52.
311. See chapter 7 p.558 on the N.J.C. and Hyman Levy's essay on 'The Problem of Assimilation' in J.J. Lynx, op.cit., 58-66.
312. Right-wing Catholics, Truth, pacifists, Douglas Reed, social crediters, Trotskyites and sections of the government and the public at large had difficulty in believing the atrocity stories. This is examined further in chapter 4 p.308,322 and chapter 6 p.504.
313. Report of January 1944 in M-OA: FR 1993.