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The importance of conspiracy theory in extremist ideology and propaganda

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Chapter 8: The Revolution of 1905 and the Judeo-Masonic Conspiracy Theory

*Poor Russian people! It was hard for you to once carry the Tatar yoke; but it is much easier than the yoke of the Jew, and this yoke will inevitably fall on your shoulders with all gravity, if you obey the sweet speeches of the various "liberators"!*¹-

Pamphlet published by the monastery Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius, Russia, 1910

This chapter will chart the adoption of the conspiracy theory expounded in the *Protocols* as the semi-official ideology of the supporters of the Tsar during and after the Revolution of 1905 and show some of its political effects. This chapter is one of the most important in the thesis because while it covers a relatively short span of history when compared to the preceding ones, it contains two excellent examples for both parts of the thesis: the use of the Grand Conspiracy Theory in propaganda against liberalism and representative government, and violence inspired by the ideas carried by this propaganda. Specifically, this chapter will examine the content of the pro-autocracy anti-Jewish Grand Conspiracy Theory propaganda subsidized by the Tsar's government and also detail the strain of violent extremism found in one of the main organizations that spread this propaganda. This organization was the Union of the Russian People, which is discussed at length in this chapter. While this organization may be relatively unknown today, this chapter and subsequent chapters reveal that it is the first in a line of violent extremist organizations that have lashed out at their imaginary enemies who they believe are controlling or about to control the world, the imaginary enemies at the center of the Grand Conspiracy Theory.

The two men most identified with the creation of the *Protocols* and discussed in the last chapter, Grigori Butmi-De-Katzman and Pavel Krushevan and their organization the Russian Assembly play important roles in this chapter, though they were all superseded as the ideas they created were taken up by more powerful people and organizations. This chapter is, in a way, about how Butmi and Krushevan's ideas were "weaponized" by the Russian state and used on a massive scale in propaganda.

This chapter will also be relevant in framing several subsequent chapters that deal with the various offshoots of the version of the Grand Conspiracy Theory expounded in the *Protocols*, as this chapter explains how the *Protocols* and the conspiracy theory associated with it were popularized in the Russian Empire and became associated with an influential political faction. In a way, the anti-revolutionary propaganda campaign discussed in this chapter is a much grander-scale repeat of the Austrian anti-revolutionary propaganda campaign discussed

¹ *Простыя беседы с простыми людьми. Беседа вторая, о томъ, Кому Нужно "освободительное движеніе"?* (Simple Conversation with Simple People. Part two. Subject: Who needs the 'liberation movement?') Trinity People's Conversation, book 36, (Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius monastery, 1910), p. 15.

in chapter 3, which was the main origin many variants of the Grand Conspiracy Theory discussed in other chapters. The difference in scale between the Austrian/German propaganda campaign discussed in chapter 3 and the Russian one discussed in this chapter will be discussed later, but we should note here that there is more and more varied material available today from this campaign. This is partly the result of changes in technology which allowed information to be printed and disseminated more cheaply and surely partly also because this Russian propaganda campaign happened relatively recently, just over a century ago. As they were printed on cheap paper many of the propaganda newspapers used as sources in this chapter are disintegrating, and one suspects that unless they are preserved many will not last another few decades. Perhaps other materials from earlier propaganda campaigns have met this fate. This chapter will offer a few visual examples of the use of the Grand Conspiracy Theory in propaganda, as well as a few examples from literature meant to be consumed by the common man, perhaps read aloud. One of them is in fact a sermon.

The Grand Conspiracy Theory and the Russian autocracy in crisis

At the turn of the 20th century some supporters of the Tsarist autocracy created anti-Jewish/anti-Banker conspiratorial propaganda in response to increasing demands for self-government and a budding of new revolutionary terrorist groups in the Russian empire. The *Protocols* were written during this time. By the end of 1904 the Russian Empire was obviously in a serious crisis. There had been growing discontent in the non-Russian border areas against the Empire's policy of Russification.² Terrorist groups had continued to sprout. This violence was not entirely of an internationalist socialist/revolutionary nature, many of the most active groups were nationalist - more rebellions of subject nations against an oppressive empire than part of a global revolution. For example, in the Caucasus the violent Armenian revolutionary group Dashnaktsutin, having earlier enjoyed the support of the Russian government in campaigns against the Turkish Empire, turned on its erstwhile ally after the Russian government seized all Armenian church property in 1903. Recruiting among networks of Armenian refugees from Turkey who had been resettled in the Russian empire, the group organized numerous active fighting groups all throughout the Caucasus. Other rebellious groups also sprang up on the edges of the empire, Georgian, Muslim, and Polish. In Poland a powerful revolutionary organization called the Polish Socialist Party focused its attacks on Russian officials and sympathizers of the autocracy, and not on the bourgeoisie except when they were directly linked to the Russian police or military. Between 1905 and 1906 Polish rebels killed 790 Russian soldiers, gendarme, and policemen and wounded 864 more.³

The demands for self-government grew louder and the opposition was organizing. Russian liberals and Socialist Revolutionaries along with Finnish and Polish nationalists resolved in late 1904 at a Paris conference to work together against the autocracy.⁴ The political crisis became acute in February 1904 when the Japanese launched a surprise attack on the Russian base at Port Arthur in China, starting the Russo-Japanese war. The Japanese laid siege to this base and began to attack other points of the poorly-defended Russian positions in

² Harcave, pp. 44-45.

³ Geifman, pp. 23-28

⁴ Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution*, (Vintage, 2011), Kindle Edition, Location 847.

Manchuria. To the great surprise of the Russians and many other Europeans, the Japanese won victory after victory.⁵ As reports of Russian defeats came back from the front, enthusiasm for the war waned, especially among the peasantry. The military embarrassments were compounded by economic crisis. The Empire was still recovering from the depression of 1900-1903, and the war put more pressure on the economy as reservists were taken out of the labor force and sent to war. Not only did this turn a lot of consumers and producers into soldiers, but wages did not go up - and going on strike was illegal.⁶

Leaders in various *zemstvos* (Russian organs of local self-government) tried to form an all-*zemstvo* organization to care for the sick and wounded and the families of the war dead. National *zemstvo* meetings that dealt with politics had been banned in 1902, probably for fear of facilitating a nationwide self-government movement. The Minister of the Interior demanded that he personally approve everyone involved in this project. When he was ignored, he refused to confirm the election of a new *zemstvo* chairmen. The relationship between the *zemstvos* and the government deteriorated, with the government suspicious that the liberals were trying to use the war to increase their power.⁷

The Russian naval base at Port Arthur surrendered in December 1904, further embarrassing the Imperial government.⁸ Relations between workers and factory owners also deteriorated. The crisis got dramatically worse after Russian troops fired on several columns of peaceful petitioners and an unorganized crowd in front of the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg in January 1905. The petitioners, led by an Orthodox Priest named Grigori Gaupon, had asked Tsar Nicholas II to call for a constituent assembly, legalize organized labor, end the war, and decree an eight-hour work day, among several other requests. According to the official government figures, the day of protest claimed 130 dead and 299 wounded. The real number of dead and wounded was probably higher. One group of journalists claimed they could account for a total of 4,600 dead and wounded.⁹

This event shocked the Russian public and protests and strikes took place all over the Empire against "Bloody Sunday" as this event was named. After Bloody Sunday, St. Petersburg newspapers demanded an elected national assembly. In Poland the protests took a nationalist tinge as Poles demanded an end to Russian-only language instruction. Some of the protests turned violent.¹⁰ Pressure mounted on the Tsar to make serious reforms, including introducing some kind of national elections. In February the Tsar issued a decree reiterating that his subjects had the right to petition the government and calling for a consultative body to be formed, elected by the people, "to undertake the preliminary examination and consideration of legislative measures."¹¹ This was a major concession for the Tsar that he hoped would calm the growing unrest. Instead his concession emboldened the protesters.¹²

⁵ Simon Montefiore, *The Romanovs: 1613-1918*, (Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2016) Kindle Edition, p. 517.

⁶ Harcave, p. 42.

⁷ Harcave, pp. 32-33, 44.

⁸ Harcave, p. 67.

⁹ Harcave, pp 80-93.

¹⁰ Harcave, pp. 103-109.

¹¹ Harcave, p. 130.

¹² Harcave, pp. 130-133.

Pro-Tsarist conspiracy theorists like Grigori Butmi-de-Katzman could easily see these compounding problems - the strikes, the protests, the massacre of Bloody Sunday, the concession of February - not as signs of political and economic crises and a loss of confidence in the Tsar's government, but as parts of a Jewish conspiracy to further enervate the power and unity of the Russian government. A January 1905 article originally published in the Russian journal *Море и его жизнь* - "the Sea and its Life" - explained revolution in this way, summarizing the anti-Illuminati/Freemason conspiracy theory through an abridgement of a French pamphlet by an anti-Masonic novelist named Maurice Talmeyr.¹³ The article cites Barruel as a source, among other European sources. The Russian article was signed only with the initials "N. L." possibly identifiable as a member of the Russian Assembly named Nikolai Lvovich Mordvinov and/or the director of the Chancellery of the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs.^{14 15} (If these are one and the same person, the use of "N. L." would perhaps make sense for a high government official not wishing to open himself up to criticism for writing articles about politics in the popular press.) The article concluded with an obvious reference to the growing trouble and revolutionary ferment in Russia, slightly modifying the French original:

"And so does the revolution, which is not to be confused with evolution, represent a great social movement, inevitable and beneficial, naturally brought about by deep causes, interests and needs, as many honest people believe ... But then where does our moral malaise come from, our worries and troubles increase, instead of diminishing as revolutionary ideas succeed and grow? What explains this?

Or ... revolution is nothing but a giant, artificially created fraud, directed against Christianity and statehood by their sworn enemies! And then our troubles, strife, and confusion are explained."¹⁶

This was a full importation of the conspiracy theories spread by Hoffman and the Austrian government during the French Revolution, used once again to defend an autocracy by explaining revolution as the work of a gang of usurping Freemasons.

Wherever the Anti-Freemason/Illuminati conspiracy theory goes, the Judeo-Masonic conspiracy theory will not be far behind, especially in a country already full of anti-Jewish ideas. The *Protocols* had been published years earlier, and believers in an international Jewish

¹³ Maurice Talmeyr, *La Franc-Maçonnerie et la Révolution Française*, (Paris: Perrin and Co., 1904)

¹⁴ Notes to letter of Stolypin to Prince PD. Svyatopolk-Mirsky, 15 March 1903: Archives of the Russian Federation. F. 1729. Op. 1. D. 1371. L. 5-7., "Mordvinov Nikolai Lvovich - 1902-1908. Director of the Chancellery of the Ministry of Internal Affairs for the affairs of the nobility. Available at http://www.hrono.ru/libris/stolypin/stpn_mirski.html, Accessed Mar 27 2018.

¹⁵ A well-connected attendee of Alexandra Viktorovna Bogdanovich's conservative St Petersburg salon was named N. L. Mordvinov. He appears to have been a believer in some more outlandish ideas about Jewish conspiracies. The entry in her diary for 19 April 1906 that "Mordvinov also said that he had received news from England from a special agent that the Bund (a Jewish socialist group) had decided to cut off communication between St. Petersburg and Tsarskoe Selo, kidnap the Tsar and the heir, and take them to Finland." Available at http://az.lib.ru/b/bogdanowich_a_w/text_0010.shtml. Accessed March 27, 2018.

¹⁶ Н. Л. (N. L.) and Г. Бутми (G. Butmi), *Фран Масонство и Государственная Измена* (Freemasonry and State Treason), St. Petersburg 1905, (from the article "Масонство и Французская Революция" (Masonry and the French Revolution), in *Море и Его Жизнь* (The Sea and its life), From January 1905), p. 33.

conspiracy could very easily adapt the ructions of the Revolution of 1905 to their narrative. An example of the kind of thinking present in some conservative Russian circles during this time can be found in an article by Mikhail Menshikov, the same journalist who first mentioned the existence of the *Protocols* in 1902. In an April 1905 article, a few months after Bloody Sunday, Menshikov reports on a speech he claimed to have heard from the mouth of Ivan Theodotich, a member of the Russian Assembly. In it one finds some major themes similar to those in the *Protocols*: that liberalism is a ruse of a grand illiberal plot, the theme of a Jewish plot to start a revolution in Russia in order to soften up the autocracy and manipulate the Russian government (In this case, the speaker assumes their goal is the end of the Pale of Settlement - restrictions on where Jews were allowed to live - in order to oppress Christians elsewhere in the Russian Empire.) Also present is the idea of an inherent Jewish conservatism that oppresses Christians and some Jews (related to the Kahal conspiracy theory of Brafman). According to Ivan Theodotich, cries against the oppression of the Jews in the Russian Empire were a ruse to hide a Jewish political offensive:

"The side on the offensive - the Jews - pretend to be on the defensive and pretend so skillfully that unsophisticated Russians believe them... they cry...that in the name of humanity and the covenants of Christ, the Pale of Settlement should be removed and the Jews should have equal rights... this attitude towards Jewry has become a criterion not only of liberalism, but even of Christianity itself... I have never come across a more foolish looking fish on a line, a sharp hook hidden inside tasty bait. Liberalism, Humanism, Christianity! Inside all these sacred words sits the hook of the predator, snagging his victim... Who is protected by the Pale of Settlement? It does not protect the Jews from an invasion of Christians but the Christians from an invasion of Jews... if there is a persecuted tribe in this matter, it is us, not them... It was on Jewry that the stinking Russian liberalism allowed itself to be fooled the most... The liberals do not see that it is Jewry that is the most predominantly conservative, the oldest and mustiest in the world. The true ghetto where Jewry suffocates is Judaism. Greater national exclusiveness and more intolerance is not known in another religion... They raise revolution to remove the Pale of Settlement... If the Jews live among our native populace, like in Poland, and if they completely take over trade, the press, the stock exchange, the theater, the justice ministry, and finally the parliament, that will be the end of Russian life. Honest Jews will agree that they are hostile to all nationalities, except for theirs... If it were not for cowardice and self-interest, the vast majority of liberals would be against Jewish domination: only ignoramuses or political adolescents can deny it... cohabitation between a Jew and a Russian leads to the domination of the first..."¹⁷

This speaker also explains the reasons why this idea was not more widely held: censorship (from a government not eager to spread ideas which could lead to further unrest and violence) and the supposed grip of the Jews on the Russian press - which they used to manipulate public opinion:

"Not all the public knows, but she needs to know that our press, in addition to censorship, is under the pressure of parties whose oppression turns into a terror against those who dare to have an independent judgment. Particularly intolerant are the radicals, and especially the Jewish newspapers. ... [Here Theodotich begins speaking as a Jew] we will drag your name through the most fetid mud, we will slander you, we shall defile you, we will forever kill your reputation in the eyes of the crowd. Do you think the crowd has its own judgment? She has ours. The choral

¹⁷ М. Меншиковъ (M. Menshikov), "Письма къ Ближнимъ, Раздоръ" (Letters to the Near, Discord), Новое Время, no. 10445. 3 (16) April 1905, (St. Petersburg, Russia) pp. 3-4.

hypnosis is omnipotent. If a hundred idiots from day to day began screaming that Pushkin is an idiot, a million intelligent people will believe it. We, the Jew, are the strength, we are the power, because we have the throats, try to shout over us!"¹⁸

The government censorship mentioned in this speech was apparently insufficient to stop the spread of anti-Jewish ideas and the suspicion that Jews were somehow responsible for the crisis. According to a contemporary Jewish-American yearbook, 54 pogroms took place in the Russian Empire between January and early October 1905.¹⁹ In May 1905 in Zhitomir, in present-day Ukraine, a pogrom was organized by pro-monarchist elements in the city. This is said to be the first sighting of the "Black Hundreds."²⁰ The Black Hundreds were a generic name for the various pro-Tsarist, radical Russian Orthodox, Russian chauvinist groups that sprang up all over Russia during this time of crisis and revolution. As they grew in size and geographic reach these groups received encouragement and support from local police and clergy.²¹ They were named after organizations of merchants who had supported the Tsar during some of the darkest days of Russian history in the 17th century.²² These groups were sometimes reported as leading pro-Tsar processions and instigating attacks against Jews.²³ These groups had a variety of different names, and most confined their activities to printing pro-Tsarist anti-Revolutionary pamphlets. The Jews were a prime target for these anti-revolutionary broadsides, along with intellectuals, students, Poles, Finns, and the Japanese.²⁴ Senior police officials adopted a hands-off policy to these groups. A circular from the director of the central police department instructed police to confiscate fliers produced by these groups as "undoubtedly undesirable and even extremely dangerous" but also instructed his subordinates to not bring charges against these anti-revolutionary groups, despite the fact they were all illegal, unregistered, and inciting violence.²⁵ An example of the fliers produced during this time, retrieved from the Russian State Archives, encourages readers to kill Jews, members of the *zemstva* (local government), and students:

"Beat the damned traitors everywhere and all over, wherever you find them and with whatever [you can], beat the yids, destroyers of the Russian tsardom, beat the bloodthirsty robbers [in] the *zemstva*, beat the instigators of the sedition and strikes, beat... the school youth, even if he would be your son, brother, or relative, all the same he's a traitor, don't pity [him], beat him, he's a complete wretch and is the destroyer of the people and the Russian land, the more of them we destroy, the better for Russia and [for] the people, the more of them we kill, the less sedition there will be in Russia and Russia will be on the path to redemption."²⁶

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 3-4.

¹⁹ Shlomo Lambroza, "The pogroms of 1903-1906" in *Pogroms, Anti-Jewish violence in modern Russian history*, John Klier and Shlomo Lambroza eds., (Cambridge University Press, 1992), p 223.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 223-224.

²¹ Harcave, pp. 150-151.

²² Ruud and Stepanov, p. 103.

²³ Lambroza, p. 225.

²⁴ Jacob Langer, "Corruption and the Counterrevolution: The Rise and Fall of the Black Hundred" (PhD Diss., Duke University, 2007), p. 46.

²⁵ Langer, p. 48.

²⁶ Langer, p. 47.

Unsurprisingly, given the tone of this anti-Jewish anti-democratic propaganda, the *Protocols* re-emerged from obscurity during this period. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the *Protocols* is a piece of pro-autocracy anti-republican anti-liberal propaganda. It would never have spread all through Russia and then the world if it had not been found useful by pro-Tsarist propagandists. The network provided by the Russian Assembly likely facilitated this re-emergence and solidified the reputation of the *Protocols* in pro-autocracy anti-Jewish circles during this time. Before 1905 the *Protocols* had only been published in Krushevan's 1903 newspaper edition and as part of another minor anti-Jewish book in early 1904. For over a year there was no further publishing of the document, and it may have forever remained in obscurity if it were not for the outbreak of Revolution in 1905. Then, an abridged and modified version of the *Protocols* was published in the official journal of the Russian Assembly: *Mirni Trud*. The text was presented almost without commentary, but the ideology it was targeting with slander was obvious from the title: "Report of N. L. Mordvinov: The Secrets of Politics, its ways of operation, and the results achieved by it with the help of science and false liberalism."²⁷ (N. L. Mordvinov might be identifiable with the N. L. mentioned earlier.) Subsequently a volume containing the abridged and altered *Protocols* was cleared for publication by the censor in late September 1905.^{28 29} This edition of the *Protocols* was published part of a larger work of mysticism titled *The Great in the Small: Antichrist considered as an imminent political possibility*. This edition was later to become the "standard" version of the *Protocols* internationally. It was published by the press of the Red Cross located near one of the imperial residences. Norman Cohn believes this edition was published to influence the Tsar himself.³⁰

From the point of view of pro-autocracy conspiracy theorists, the Tsar would certainly have needed some advice. His situation had continued to deteriorate, in spite of the February concessions. As the Japanese had laid siege to Port Arthur in China the Tsar had dispatched part of the Russian Baltic Fleet to reinforce the Pacific fleet. In May 1905 the entire Russian fleet of 38 ships and almost 10,000 men was annihilated or captured in the battle of Tsushima. This was an incredibly embarrassing defeat.³¹ A humiliating peace agreement followed this 18-month-long series of battlefield disasters. The strike movement in Russia got bigger and bigger. The idea of a country-wide general strike to demand a constituent assembly spread and became a real possibility. A general strike of the railroads shut down the entire rail network in Russia in October 1905. A simultaneous strike of typesetters shut down printing and therefore the dissemination of news. Lawyers and hospital workers and other professionals joined the strike, creating "a union of forces in a general display of contempt for the regime."³² In addition to the violence on the borderlands, by mid-October 1905 armed revolt within Russia itself seemed imminent, and on October 14th officials in the capital once again prepared to use

²⁷ Langer, p. 130.

²⁸ Interestingly, this version names US president McKinley as a discarded tool of the Jewish conspiracy.

²⁹ "Докладъ Н. Л. Мордвинова: Тайны политики, способы ея дѣйствій и результаты, достигнутые ею при помощи науки и лжелиберализма" (Report of N. L. Mordvinov: The Secrets of Politics, its ways of operation, and the results achieved by it with the help of science and false liberalism), *Мирный Трудъ* (Peaceful Work), No. 8, 1905, Kharkov (based on Censor's mark), p. 130

³⁰ Cohn, p. 73.

³¹ See Constantine Pleshakov, *The Tsar's Last Armada: The Epic Journey to the Battle of Tsushima*, (Basic Books, 2008).

³² Ann Healy, *The Russian Autocracy in Crisis 1905-1907*, (Connecticut: Akron Books, 1976) pp. 28-30.

deadly force against Russians. When news of these preparations got out it strengthened the case against the Tsar made by revolutionaries.³³ As chaos mounted the bishop of Moscow gave a sermon on October 16th that defended the autocracy, made direct reference to the *Protocols*, and repeated the theme that all revolutionary ideas are just camouflage for anti-Christian satanic usurpers.

“Oh, if our unfortunate workers knew who was in charge of them, who sends the instigating rabble-rousers, then they would turn from them in horror... the so-called ‘social democrats’, are revolutionaries who have long renounced God... Their main nest is abroad: they dream of enslaving the whole world for themselves; in secret protocols they call us, Christians, the beasts that God gave them, they say we have the human image only so that they, the supposed elect, would not be disgusted to use our services... With Satanic cunning, they catch in their networks people who are frivolous, and promise them an earthly paradise, but carefully hide from them their secret purposes, their criminal dreams. By deceiving an unfortunate, they push him to the most horrible crimes allegedly for the sake of the common good and really turn him into an obedient slave.”³⁴

Notice how the bishop avoids the word “Jew” - perhaps he was trying to work around censorship. This sermon later came to be known as the “Pogrom Sermon of 16 October.” The sermon was read out to all churches in Moscow and published in the major newspaper *Moskovskie Vedemosti*.³⁵

Unbeknownst to the bishop and many other pro-Tsarist activists throughout the Russian Empire, the Tsar was about to reluctantly make major concessions in an attempt to pacify the country. Sergei Witte, the former Economy Minister despised by Butmi for introducing the gold standard to Russia, had returned from peace negotiations with the Japanese and managed to persuade most of the court to pressure the Tsar into accepting the need for major reforms. The concession document known as the “October Manifesto” was signed on the evening of October 17. It included three major concessions: 1. “...genuine personal inviolability, freedom of conscience, speech, assembly, and association” 2. Suffrage for “those classes of the population that are now completely deprived of electoral rights, leaving the further development of the principle of universal suffrage to the new legislative order” and 3., a most shockingly for an autocrat: “to establish as an inviolable rule that no law may go into force without the consent of the State Duma...”³⁶

One can imagine the effect of this manifesto on Pro-Tsarist subjects who had earlier abhorred the very idea of a parliament and believed the Tsar was weak enough already. If any believed, like Butmi, that countries governed by parliaments and constitutions are inevitably prey of the international Jewish conspiracy, then the October Manifesto was the prelude to the final success of this conspiracy. Alexander Dubrovin, a member of the Russian Assembly who was

³³ Harcave, p. 190.

³⁴ Архиепископ Никон (Рождественский) (Archbishop Nikon (Rojdesvenskii), *Козни врагов наших сокруши... Дневники* (Thou shalt Crush the plans of our Enemies... Diary), (LitResm, 2017) p. 1242-1243.

³⁵ Cohn, pp. 73-74. Norman Cohn says that this happened because Sergey Nilus was “much in favour at the imperial court.” It is more likely the bishop, whose later works show him to be a true believer in the Judeo-Masonic conspiracy, wrote the sermon of his own accord.

³⁶ Harcave, pp. 192-195.

later to play a leading role in Russian right-wing politics, wrote that he was terrified when he heard about the October Manifesto:

"On the morning of the 18th I did not have time to get out of bed again, as a newspaper was being printed with the word 'Constitution' in huge letters. I was stupefied. Russia is given over to enemies. Russia had perished. But how could this happen? Has the Tsar betrayed his people? No, it cannot be. The Russian Tsar will not yield a single inch, the Russian Tsar will never betray the Russian people."³⁷

The initial reported reaction of the urban public in the Russian Empire was positive, even euphoric. A burst of pro-Manifesto, and sometimes anti-Tsar and even violent anti-Russian demonstrations in non-Russian parts of the European empire followed the publication of the October Manifesto on the 18th. There were also "patriotic" counter-demonstrations that occurred all over the Russian Empire following the announcement of the October Manifesto. When pro- and anti-Manifesto demonstrations met, there was often violence. There was also an enormous spate of pogroms.³⁸

Rumors circulated in some regions of the Pale of Settlement that Jews had insulted the Tsar and were going to massacre all the Christians.³⁹ Sectarian tensions were exacerbated by a loss of confidence in the government's ability to keep order, and even the perception of minority rule. In Odesa, for example, a terrible pogrom was preceded by the local Prefect ordering all police and troops to quarters, and armed members of student militias and Jewish self-defense units maintained order on the streets instead. When a Russian patriotic demonstration on the 19th was fired on by revolutionaries the marchers began crying "Beat the kikes" and indulged in a three-day pogrom that killed at least 500 people, the worst in the city's history up till that point. Some reports say the Prefect of the city refused to put the soldiers and police back on duty.⁴⁰ Others say the soldiers joined in and led the mobs, and that some soldiers were killing Jews involved in the self-defense groups. A delegation of Jews is said to have approached the Prefect for protection and got the response "You wanted freedom. Well, there's your freedom."⁴¹

The Russian government and the Pogroms of 1905

The pogroms that followed the October Manifesto all across the Empire have often been blamed on the secret machinations of the Russian government, attempting to get revenge on the revolutionary movement by attacking the supposed base of the movement: the Jews. However, despite intense scholarly scrutiny, no smoking gun has ever been found in the Russian archives linking the Russian government to the pogroms of October 1905, or indeed any previous pogroms in the Russian Empire. In fact, the archives show that the central

³⁷ А. И. Дубровин (A. I. Dubrovin,) "Какъ начался Союзъ Русскаго Народа на Руси," *Почаевскія Извѣстія* (Pochaiv Izvestiya), No.22, Monday, 28 January, 1908, pp. 1-2.

³⁸ Lambroza, pp. 229-230. Also Healy, p. 19. Also Harcave, p. 202.

³⁹ Lambroza, 223.

⁴⁰ Harcave, pp. 202-204.

⁴¹ Ruud and Stepanov, p. 244.

government was continually trying to restrain the pogroms.⁴² The ultimate causes of these pre-1906 pogroms, or indeed any kind of mass sectarian violence, is a worthy subject for further research.

While it appears to be true that the Russian government did not instigate the pogroms of October 1905, the Russian government did itself no favors in creating this impression. There was an official attempt to blame the pogroms on the October 16th Moscow sermon that had mentioned the *Protocols*. The official newspaper of the central government published a rebuke from the Synod, that linked the sermon with the pogrom:

“...the deplorable events that occurred among the population of Moscow after the reading on the 16th of October of the of the sermon printed and circulated by the Moscow church administration with the title: ‘What shall we do in these troubled days.’ ...seeing in some parts of this teaching a kind of call to the local population for self-defense in the field of political beliefs, which, if interpreted unilaterally, could be the cause of internecine strife among the population...”⁴³

The clergy were admonished to “use all its pastoral impact on the elimination of civil strife among the population.”⁴⁴ It is possible that embarrassed elements of the government were trying to blame the pogroms on this sermon.

The attitude of the government and the Tsar towards pogroms is perhaps typified by a statement by the father of Tsar Nicholas II, Alexander III. He hated the Jews deeply, but once remarked to the governor of Poland: “I am very glad when they beat up Jews, but nevertheless it can’t be allowed.”⁴⁵ The central government would have been against pogroms for reasons other than the international embarrassment and the destruction of property. In an autocratic government disorganized violence and civil strife are unpredictable and dangerous things, even if the mob does initially attack the “right” targets. This is especially true in areas which might not be loyal to the central government. Studies of the Russian Imperial government archives in Poland shows that the Russian government there consistently opposed pogroms,⁴⁶ but not because of any special love for the Jews.

Nevertheless, the impression that the Russian government instigated the pogroms of October 1905 persists. One should keep in mind that Russia was just emerging from autocracy, and the idea that major pro-government political events could happen without the government’s blessing was still novel. The fact that the Russian state was in near collapse in October of 1905 and unable to successfully control the capital city or communicate with its officials across the empire (because of the telegraph and rail strike) did not make the idea of the super-powerful state disappear. One liberal Russian newspaper in October 1905 demonstrated this attitude by stating: “The very scope of the Russian-wide organization of the counter-demonstrations with all of their scandalous variations shows that this was the business of the authorities, who had the

⁴² John Klier, “Unravelling of the Conspiracy Theory: A New Look at the Pogroms,” *East European Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 23, Issue 2, 1993, p. 86,.

⁴³ “Определение святейшаго синода” (Decision of the Holy Synod), Правительственный Вѣстникъ (Pravitelstvennii vestnik) No. 227, 23 October (5 November) 1905, p. 1, column 1.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Montefiore, p. 463.

⁴⁶ Klier, “Unravelling,” p. 82, footnote 10.

means to arrange it; it was not done by feeble private organizations.”⁴⁷ There is one single piece of documentary evidence that implicates the Russian government in the pogroms immediately following the October Manifesto. There is a February 1906 report given to the Russian Prime Minister stating that a secret printing press at Police headquarters at St. Petersburg had printed reams of anti-Jewish, anti-revolutionary propaganda pamphlets in October and November 1905.⁴⁸ According to this report, this had been ordered by Pyotr Rachkovsky, the vice-director of the department, and organized by the gendarme officer M. S. Komissarov.⁴⁹ Even if this report is accepted uncritically, pamphlets themselves could not create the sectarian hatred necessary for a pogrom overnight, nor could pamphlets printed in St. Petersburg have made it down to Odesa or Vilnius and been distributed within 48 hours, especially with a rail strike and telegraph strike underway. Nevertheless, the various pro-Tsarist “Black Hundreds” groups scattered throughout the Empire probably were involved in a predictable reaction to the major concessions in the October Manifesto, and contributed to the violence. They had already been participating in pogroms and printing anti-Jewish pro-Tsarist pamphlets.

Propaganda after the pogroms of October 1905

While the accusation that the Russian government created the pogroms of October 1905 is in great doubt, there is no doubt that the Russian government tolerated and then later funded the printing and distribution of large amounts of propaganda featuring anti-Jewish conspiracy theories. Many examples have survived to this day, and anyone who wishes can go and see the newspapers and pamphlets that are available in archives and libraries. Later in this chapter two government-funded anti-Jewish publications will be studied as examples.

If the Russian government opposed pogroms in general (at least before 1905) how does one explain large amounts of anti-Jewish propaganda published before and especially after the October Manifesto? The change in the political structure of the Russian government announced in the October Manifesto changed the way pogroms would have been perceived by senior politicians. Rather than disorganized rabble threatening public order, or even Russian peasants getting “revenge” on their local *Kahal*-led oppressors, the pogroms after the October Manifesto could be seen as a patriotic response to Jewish troublemakers. This view was stated by the Tsar himself, the man who signed the October Manifesto, in a letter to his mother:

“In the first days of the Manifesto the subversive elements raised their heads but a strong reaction set in quickly and a whole mass of loyal people suddenly made their power felt... the revolutionaries had angered people once more; and because nine-tenths of the troublemakers are Jews, the People’s whole anger turned against them. That’s how the pogroms happened. It is amazing how they took place simultaneously in the towns of Russia.”⁵⁰

There was an undeniable counter-revolutionary aspect to the pogroms following the October Manifesto. One report from a gendarme officer about a violent action that took place in Nizhyn, in present-day Ukraine, in late October 1905 described a violent pro-Tsarist event in

⁴⁷ Ruud and Stepanov, p. 238.

⁴⁸ Lambroza, p. 235.

⁴⁹ Ruud and Stepanov, p. 161.

⁵⁰ Lambroza, p. 234, note 114.

which Jews were not even peripherally involved: "The people roamed the streets looking for any Russian democrats, dragged them from their apartments, forced them to stand in front of portraits publicly, to swear oaths, to join processions, and to sing hymns. The people sobbed. The Jews were not present."⁵¹

This grassroots pro-Tsarist sentiment was now a valuable political resource. The October Manifesto had called for elections and a Duma to pass laws. These elections were going to be incredibly consequential for the political future of Russia. The feelings among the populace that produced pogroms could be harnessed for political ends in the new more democratic age. This hatred of the October Manifesto could be especially useful to those interested in limiting the power of the new Duma (Russian Parliament.) Anti-Jewish conspiracy theories used in propaganda could be a means to not only fight revolutionaries by calling them secret usurpers, but could also be used to turn out voters for the conservative cause.

A surviving early example of this use of an anti-Jewish conspiracy theory in an attempt to inflame and harness anti-Jewish sentiments towards a political end is a pamphlet authorized by the censor on 19 February 1906 (March 4th in the modern calendar). It has been preserved because it was included as evidence in a 1907 book attempting to blame the Russian government for instigating the pogroms. The authors of the pamphlet seem to have been familiar with the *Protocols*. The pamphlet argued that there was a secret Jewish plot to take over Russia and oppress the people:

"Do you know brethren, workmen and peasants, who is the chief author of all of our misfortunes? Do you know that the Jews of the whole world... have entered into an alliance and decided to completely ruin Russia... They would then, by means of lies and craft, take away the land from the Russian peasant, make him the slave of the Jew, do away with our priests, and convert the Orthodox churches and monasteries into Jewish stables and pig-styes. The first thing they did to ruin Russia was to incite the Japanese against us... now they have made up their minds to do away with the only defenders of the Russian people and of their faith - the Orthodox landed proprietors and the merchants and manufacturers... it is not only the Jews and other people of non-Russian origin who detest Russia, but also many Russians and dishonest Poles, who have lost their God and their honor... [they] pose as friends of the people, smuggle themselves into factories and villages,... deceive you by specious promises, and incite you to all sorts of strikes... as well as to pillage and burn the houses of the landed proprietors.... Learn, therefore, poor trustful people, that by obeying these cowardly agitators you will only dig for yourselves a pit... [the Jews] will make you work night and day, and pay you just enough to keep you from dying of hunger.... In the courts of law there will be only Jews and their mercenary Russian hangers-on whom they have bought... There will be no one to take your side, since your natural defenders, the Orthodox landowners, manufacturers, and merchants will have been ruined by yourselves... Do not believe the honeyed words and the promises of the Jews and of their mercenary tools... These mercenaries are helping the Jews to ruin Russia, helping them to buy this ruined country for a mere song, and to found in it a Jewish Kingdom."⁵²

After this extended harangue, similar to that the previously quoted Black Hundred pamphlet, this pamphlet turned to instructing the readers in politics. Notice how the pamphlet did not criticize democracy and elections, this would have been difficult after the Tsar himself had signed a manifesto calling for them. Instead, it mixed an exhortation to deadly violence against

⁵¹ Ruud and Stepanov, p. 238.

⁵² Eugenia Semenov, *The Russian Government And The Massacres: A Page Of The Russian Counter-Revolution (1907)*, Kessinger Publishing, 2009, pp. 99-102.

the Jews and their “helpers” with political advice. Sergei Witte, the politician hated by many right-wing Russian subjects (people like Butmi) for introducing the gold standard, negotiating peace with the Japanese, and getting the Tsar to sign the October Manifesto, had been appointed prime minister. Witte had also married a converted Jewish divorcee. His appointment, and his wife were directly referenced in this pamphlet, along with advice about how to vote in the coming election:⁵³

Whenever those betrayers of christ come near to you, tear them to pieces, kill them. At the present time all honest Russians, those who love Russia, are endeavouring to induce the Emperor to dismiss as soon as possible from his post as Prime Minister the principal enemy of the Russian people, the principal collaborator of the Jews, with his Jewish wife.... At present the order is given to elect to the Duma representatives who will approach the Tsar in connection with your affairs.... Endeavour to elect peasants who are not drunkards, who believe firmly in God, and who are honest.”⁵⁴

The *Protocols* was reprinted again during this time. In addition to the edition published by the Russian Assembly and also the version published by the press of the Red Cross near the Imperial Palace before the October Manifesto, two other editions of the *Protocols* were published in 1905: one in Moscow sometime after October and another as a pamphlet from a press at the headquarters of the military district of St. Petersburg.⁵⁵

As for the report of a press churning out anti-Jewish pamphlets at the St. Petersburg police headquarters, no official was ever prosecuted for spreading slanders during this rash of pogroms. The Tsar intervened to make sure the man accused of running the press was not punished. Instead he was given 25,000 rubles.⁵⁶

Institutionalizing paranoid hatred

Having looked at an early example of anti-Jewish right-wing but democratic (i.e. intended to energize voters) propaganda, this section will examine how this kind of propaganda became a normal part of the Russian political landscape after the revolution of 1905.

Right-wing, pro-Tsarist groups in the Russian Empire had a big ideological problem engaging in democratic politics, because a pillar of their political beliefs was that democracy itself was poison.⁵⁷ Supporters of the Tsar had to square their belief in autocracy and hatred of parliamentary government with the reality of the October Manifesto. The Tsar himself had declared that he wanted elements of a republic introduced into Russia! The path of resolving this contradiction was to deny that the October Manifesto had really instituted parliamentary government, and to insist that in no way did Russia have a constitution. Rather, the Tsar had merely invited his people to select representatives to gather and advise him on governing the

⁵³ Sidney Harcave, *Count Sergei Witte and the Twilight of Imperial Russia: A Biography*, (Routledge, 2015), p. 46-47.

⁵⁴ Semenoff, pp. 102-103.

⁵⁵ De Michelis, p. 9-10.

⁵⁶ Lambroza, p. 237.

⁵⁷ Hans Rogger, *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics in Imperial Russia*, (University of California Press, 1986), p. 190.

country. Remember, the *Protocols* had declared that one of the strategies of the Jews was to prevent kings from having contact with the people, which allows kings to be manipulated by corruptible bureaucrats and the people to be separately deceived by demagoguery: “We have made a gulf between the far-seeing Sovereign Power and the blind force of the people so that both have lost all meaning, for like the blind man and his stick, both are powerless apart.”⁵⁸ What better way to smash this strategy than to institute a parliament-like body to advise the king? The important point to insist on was that there was no constitution. A constitution would mean the Tsar’s powers could be hemmed in by law and by the votes of a corruptible parliament. Dubrovin, the right-wing activist who was quoted earlier in the chapter, stupefied by the newspaper reports about the introduction of a constitution, demonstrated this rationalization when he described his reaction to the first news of the Manifesto:

“I began to reread the manifesto, to disassemble it from all sides and came to the conclusion that no constitutions were given and the way of publishing laws was simply changed: first there was one institution; The State Council, but now there will be two; The State Duma would be added. I was frightened, and I imagined that a constitution was introduced in Russia, only because I did not manage to wake up after a dream.”⁵⁹

This attitude was not entirely without grounding. The Tsar had signed the October Manifesto under duress. The country was imploding and, at the last moment the Tsar had tried to make his cousin a military dictator instead of signing the October Manifesto, but his cousin refused, drawn his revolver, and threatened to kill himself right there in front of the Tsar if he did not accept Witte’s program.⁶⁰ Despite the newspapers shouting about a “constitution” the Tsar had deliberately avoided using the word in the October Manifesto and in public. He believed he could continue to have arbitrary power over the laws that the Duma enacted.⁶¹

Seen in this light, the celebration by the public and the press of the “constitution” after the October Manifesto could be viewed as another step in a long-term subversion. The revolutionaries had gotten their Duma and their civil rights, now they wanted to take Russia a step further and establish a constitution. Perhaps this step would be the first thing the Duma would do when it met. This anti-constitutional fear gave men who were resolutely pro-autocracy, like Butmi and Dubrovin, a reason to engage in mass politics in an attempt to dominate the parliament and forestall it voting for the next great calamity: a constitution.

Unlike the socialist and pro-constitution parties that had been organizing among the people for years, the supporters of the autocracy were inexperienced in democratic politics. They had no party organization to turn out votes for the upcoming elections. The Russian Assembly, previously an ostensibly cultural organization, now attempted to engage in mass politics and published its own election manifesto in late 1905. It insisted that the autocracy continued: “Tsarist autocracy was not abolished by the Manifesto of October 17, 1905, and continues to exist in Russia, and under a new form...” This program insisted that the new State Duma could not affect the fundamental laws of Russia or impact the prerogatives of the Tsar,

⁵⁸ *Protocols*, p. 153.

⁵⁹ А. И. Дубровин (A. I. Dubrovin,) “Какъ начался Союзъ Русскаго Народа на Руси” *Почтаевскія Извѣстія* (Pochaiv Izvestiya), No.22, Monday, 28 January, 1908.

⁶⁰ Montefiore, p. 526.

⁶¹ Pipes, location 1410.

and was merely a body for discussion and for conducting oversight of officials. Nevertheless, the Russian Assembly considered “it its duty to facilitate the selection for the State Duma of all who share this view and the following provisions.”⁶²

There followed a list of 12 statements, reiterating the necessity of the autocracy, the supremacy of the Russian Orthodox Church, the Russian language, the importance of agriculture and self-sufficiency to the Russian economy, - statements similar to those which could have been made by almost any kind of European nationalist in the 19th century. However, point number 9 made the belief in a Jewish conspiracy a plank of their manifesto:

“IX. The Jewish question should be resolved by laws and management measures, separate from other ethnic issues, because of the continued elemental hostility of Jewry to Christianity and non-Jewish nationalities and the desires of Jews to dominate the world.”⁶³

Although it issued this election manifesto, the Russian Assembly was still a noble-oriented club of high-caste Russians, hardly an ideal instrument for waging a democratic political campaign. Several members of the Russian Assembly formed a political party proposed to reach out beyond the elite circles and paradoxically, to engage in mass politics in favor of autocracy. This party was named the “Союз Русского Народа” - the Union of Russian People (hereafter just URP). It was a group designed to attract the kind of people who encouraged or took part in the pogroms following the October Manifesto - including the groups called the “Black Hundreds.” The main founder and leader of the URP was Alexander Dubrovin, the physician and member of the Russian Assembly quoted earlier in this chapter.⁶⁴ He continually insisted that the URP was not a political party, but had “broader tasks, higher goals” like serving as the link between the Russian people and the Tsar, opposing the narrow interests of bureaucrats and parties.⁶⁵ Other people who got involved early in the URP were the two likely authors of the *Protocols*: Butmi, who was part of the Council of the URP⁶⁶ and Pavel Krushevan, who reported that he attended the inaugural meeting and who soon became an active member.⁶⁷ The Russian Assembly did not disappear. It came to be considered the more respectable, if less popularly influential, branch of the Russian pro-Tsarist movement.⁶⁸ The URP grew rapidly and soon overshadowed the Russian Assembly.⁶⁹ The URP absorbed many of the smaller Russian pro-Tsarist groups and made appeals to all social classes. By 1907 the URP and other similar monarchist groups were estimated to have about 400,000 members. These other groups

⁶² ПРОГРАММА Русского собрания избирателям в Государственную думу (Program of the Russian Assembly for voters for the national Duma), 1905, E-resources, Pacific National University, Available at http://pnu.edu.ru/ru/faculties/full_time/uf/iogip/study/studentsbooks/hist-sources1/ioio79/. Accessed March 25, 2018.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ А. Степанов (A Stepanov), “ДУБРОВИН Александр Иванович” (Dubrovin, Alexander Ivanovich), in *Black Hundreds, historical encyclopedia*, p. 178.

⁶⁵ Rawson, p. 59.

⁶⁶ А. Степанов (A Stepanov), “ДУБРОВИН Александр Иванович” (Dubrovin, Alexander Ivanovich), in *Black Hundreds, historical encyclopedia*, p. 178.

⁶⁷ А. Степанов (A Stepanov), “КРУШЕВАН Павел (Паволакий) Александрович,” in *Black Hundreds, historical encyclopedia*, p. 267.

⁶⁸ Rogger, p. 193.

⁶⁹ Rogger, p. 207.

sometimes had a contentious relationship with the URP, but in the early period immediately during and after the Revolution of 1905 the URP was certainly the dominant group.⁷⁰

The URP's political program predictably included demands to limit Jewish civil rights, insisting that there be a maximum of three Jewish deputies in the parliament. It also included demands that favored the interests of the peasantry and the rural masses. The party decried big businesses and anyone who might do business with foreign and Jewish capital.⁷¹ One can even detect the influence of ideas like Butmi's in the URP's call for cheap credit and a Ruble not backed by gold.⁷² To explain the difficult conditions for Russian workers during this period, the URP claimed that this was partly the result of Jewish ownership of many factories, and urged the creation of mutual aid unions for workers. Local URP branches worked on getting jobs for fired URP factory workers.⁷³ The legislative program of the URP even included a proposal to establish a Jewish state, (so as to have a place to expel the Jews to.)⁷⁴

The URP appears to have originally been a private initiative of supporters of the Tsar,⁷⁵ but it quickly acquired a semi-official character. The Tsar received a delegation from the URP in December 1905.⁷⁶ The Tsar also made public statements of support for the URP, which the URP made use of in their propaganda.⁷⁷

The URP split up after a few years, but did not entirely disappear until the end of Tsarism. Rampant corruption within the organization as well as the ambitions of various right-wing leaders contributed to its decline and fragmentation and the proliferation of various different pro-Tsarist groups.⁷⁸ At one point the Russian secret police reported the existence of at least 47 right-wing groups across Russia.⁷⁹

Even with the constant division of these groups, the government continued to subsidize the main ones. The major activity of the URP and other "Black Hundred" monarchist groups and the reason they received most of their subsidies⁸⁰ was their publication of pro-Tsarist newspapers. An estimated 89 different monarchist periodicals existed in the Russian Empire at the beginning of 1906.⁸¹ Nearly every "Black Hundred" newspaper received some government subsidies.⁸² Starting from shortly after the first Duma election, the URP received subsidies of up to 100,000 rubles at a time directly from the treasurer of the central police department. The URP and other monarchist groups also received subsidies from the Russian government's Main Board for Press Affairs. The ultimate source of these monies was the secret personal fund of

⁷⁰ Langer, p. 62-64.

⁷¹ Rogger, p. 209.

⁷² Rogger, p. 209.

⁷³ Langer, pp. 69-70.

⁷⁴ Rogger, p. 209.

⁷⁵ Rogger, p. 215.

⁷⁶ Rogger, p. 215.

⁷⁷ Langer, p. 78.

⁷⁸ This is the theme of Langer's PhD dissertation "Corruption and the Counterrevolution: The Rise and Fall of the Black Hundred."

⁷⁹ Rogger, p. 221.

⁸⁰ Langer, p. 93.

⁸¹ Langer, p. 71.

⁸² Langer, p. 25.

the Tsar. In 1909 the government was secretly giving out between 600,000 and 700,000 rubles to various “Black Hundreds” groups, and by 1916 this had grown to 1,400,000 rubles a year.⁸³

Despite this secret state support for this propaganda, officials still fined these publications regularly⁸⁴ and they faced other retributions from the Tsarist government. As we shall see, the URP and other pro-Tsarist groups produced very inflammatory propaganda that would have increased social tensions, and they sometimes even directly attacked officials for being insufficiently dedicated to the eradication of the Jewish conspiracy.⁸⁵ This is a similar phenomenon to when the anti-French Revolution magazine *Eudämonia* denounced the censor of Vienna as being an Illuminati agent, which made it no friends (see the discussion on this in chapter 3).

Despite all this propaganda, in 1906 the initial results at the ballot box for the URP and other right-wing groups were disappointing.⁸⁶ It was said that the Tsar was shocked by such a poor showing.⁸⁷ Only six “Rightist” deputies were elected out of 448. URP members claimed the Jews had funded the parties opposing them, or that the government itself (that is, bureaucrats) had deliberately held the election at the worst possible time to benefit one party, the Constitutional Democratic party (known as the Kadets.)⁸⁸ This party became one of the main targets of the propaganda of the URP and other right-wing groups.⁸⁹ Not only was it the major party in the first Duma, but it also had the dreaded word “constitutional” in its name. This party will be discussed further in the section on the kinds of right-wing propaganda directed against them.

The First Duma collapsed in less than 100 days. The elections held for the Second Duma showed that the Russian right had some promise. It did slightly better at the national level in these elections and made significant gains in local elections.⁹⁰ The URP spent the period after the election trying to sabotage the Second Duma, maneuvering to keep things chaotic, even siding with the Left when it was necessary to maintain gridlock, and continually petitioning the Tsar to dissolve the Duma.⁹¹ In the Third Duma in October 1907, after the Tsar changed the system of electing deputies to favor his supporters, right wing groups did much better, with the URP finishing with 32 deputies. Combined with allies from other similar groups, the extreme right constituted 51 deputies in the Third Duma,⁹² a third of them members of the clergy.⁹³ This was the last Russian national election until 1912.

According to the analysis of the scholar Don Rawson, who wrote the definitive study of right-wing Russian groups and the duma elections after the Revolution of 1905, the rightists did particularly well in the central Russian provinces, where they emphasized law and order, and along the Western borderlands of the Empire, where they played on religious and national

⁸³ Langer, pp. 91-92.

⁸⁴ Langer, p. 25.

⁸⁵ Langer, p. 89.

⁸⁶ Healy, p. 131.

⁸⁷ Healy, p. 173.

⁸⁸ Rawson, p. 168.

⁸⁹ Rogger, p. 220.

⁹⁰ Rawson, p. 172.

⁹¹ Rogger, p. 222.

⁹² Rogger, p. 223.

⁹³ Rogger, p. 219.

issues.⁹⁴ The province where rightists got the most political support was Volyn, which covered parts of what is today Western Ukraine. There they benefited from the network associated with the Pochaiv Monastery. This monastery located close to the border with Austria had long served as a bastion of pro-Russian sentiment in the region. The abbot of the monastery firmly believed that the pre-1905 order had to be defended and threw his monastery's resources into supporting the URP. He became the chairman of the local branch of the URP. The virulently anti-Jewish, anti-Polish, and anti-constitutional URP newspaper produced by this monastery, *Pochaiv Izvestiia*, will be discussed in the subsequent section as it contains many excellent examples of conspiracist propaganda from this period.⁹⁵

Black Hundred Propaganda

This section will examine some major themes and targets of Russian right-wing propaganda from this period, 1905-1917. Unfortunately, much of the voluminous pro-Tsar, anti-Jewish, anti-constitution conspiratorial propaganda material produced in this period has been lost due to a neglect in preserving cheap pamphlets and newspapers, and perhaps a reluctance of Soviet archivists to preserve the propaganda of their former opponents. Fortunately, enough Black Hundred propaganda from this period has survived in the form of published books to get a sense of the major themes. In addition to drawing from books published by URP members in this period, this section has made use of available copies of two URP newspapers which are available at the Ukrainian National Library. The library holds many copies of one of the flagship newspapers connected to the URP: *Вече* "Veche" ranging from mid-March 1906 (immediately before the first Duma elections) to May 1907 and a more complete set of editions of *Pochaiv Izvestiia* ranging from February 1907 to April 1908.

Before embarking on a discussion of conspiracy theories in Black Hundred propaganda it should be pointed out that the propaganda was not exclusively conspiratorial, although one might get that impression from perusing a few pages of *Veche* or *Pochaiv Izvestiia*. This propaganda was useful to the Tsar and pro-autocracy officials who subsidized it because it advocated for autocracy and denigrated the idea of a constitution. These appeals could just take the form of a religious admonition for the divine right of the Tsar to rule, which would not have been significantly different from the propaganda of any Christian absolutist regime in the 15th-19th centuries. Take this example from a Pochaiv publication from December 1909 describing

⁹⁴ Rawson, p. 224.

⁹⁵ Rawson, pp. 92-95.

the proper political views of “a faithful *soyuznik*” [meaning a member of the URP, the word for union in Russian is “soyuz”]:

A faithful *soyuznik* professes himself and teaches to his brother that the autocratic power of the King is sacred, for the Tsar is an envoy of God, elevated to the throne according to the special favor of God, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are abundantly shed upon Him. Who would go against the King - goes against God, who encroaches on the power of the Tsar, dares to resist the will of God. Without the Autocratic Tsar there is no indivisible Russia, there is no Father and Defender of the Russian people, there is no happiness and prosperity of the Motherland. The personal salvation of each Christian depends on how much he has worked to protect this second foundation.”⁹⁶

There was also an economic populism aspect of URP propaganda, one that upset many of the Tsar’s upper-crust supporters. One minister at the time later complained in his memoirs that the URP had adopted policies very close to the leftist revolutionaries: advocating the redistribution of private property and actions to save the poor from oppression (though this was the oppression of Jews and Jewish capitalists not capitalists in general.)⁹⁷ In a foreshadowing of the Communist state propaganda still a decade away, one article spotted in this sample of Black Hundred propaganda railed against “kulaks” - relatively wealthy peasants - who were called the brothers of the Jews.⁹⁸ There was a report that URP activists in the Western Russian empire had been implying that URP members would be first in line to receive land when the government seized and re-distributed the estates of the congenitally disloyal Polish gentry.⁹⁹

While there was plenty of standard religious appeals and economic appeals, Black Hundred propaganda mainly dealt with the identification of enemies and their plots, and exhortations to loyal subjects to support the Tsar at the ballot box or even use violence against his enemies. The overriding enemy in Black Hundred propaganda were the Jews and their Masonic and constitutionalist servants. This fear of the Jews and Freemasons dovetailed with sectarian hatred of Jews and fears of supposedly anti-Christian Enlightenment doctrines. A pillar of this propaganda was a narrative that was essentially a copy of the Western European Judeo-Masonic conspiracy theory that one can trace all the way back to the early 19th century, to ideas like those in the Simonini letter and the 1821 Portuguese Judeo-Masonic propaganda pamphlet. This Judeo-Masonic conspiracy was salted with concerns for the general welfare of the peasantry, soon to be crushed under Jewish domination, which was reminiscent and likely



Figure 1

⁹⁶ “Свои и чужие” (Yours and strangers), *Прибавление къ почтаевскому листку* (Supplement to the Pochaiv Sheet), 11 December 1909, no 834, p. 22.

⁹⁷ Rogger, p. 217.

⁹⁸ *Почтаевскія Извѣстія* (Pochaiv Izvestiya), 7 May 1907, no 103, p. 1.

⁹⁹ Rogger, p. 218.

ultimately derived from Brafman's *Kniga Kagala*. A concise statement laying out the perceived ultimate enemies of Russia and the associated sectarian fears was given in the previously quoted testament of the URP's founder Dubrovin:

"Our enemies are mainly foreign aliens and Jews, who have flooded all of Russia and are sucking our blood. They are united with our enemies, who live abroad, in a Jewish-Masonic union. Their main goal is to break the power of Russia, and for this they first need to shake and weaken what is strong - the ORTHODOX RELIGION... In all of Europe and even in all the world, the Masons are eager to destroy Christianity. In some countries, for example, France, the Churches have already been destroyed, instead of the Divine Liturgy, on the altars desecrated by Masonry there are already black masses held in honor of Satan. At the head of the government there stands Jews [zhidi] and their henchmen, and the common people groan under economic oppression, worse and more severe than serfdom."¹⁰⁰

The familiar trappings of the Grand Conspiracy Theory, the story of an organization capable of recruiting well-meaning gentiles and Jews who don't know the whole plan, was useful in tarring anyone as an agent of the Elders of Zion in their campaign to destroy Russia and take over the world. The vast deceptive powers of the conspiracy could explain all contrary evidence and any grievances against the Tsarist government. The powers of this conspiracy also provided a way to explain that all the different groups that were against the Tsar were in fact secretly united, with the ultimate goal of seizing global power and oppressing the common people.

Themes from Brafman and the Rothschild conspiracy theory of a Jewish plot to seize all economic power are all over the pro-Tsarist propaganda from this period. The ideas of Brafman, that Jews in the Pale of Settlement had seized the economic commanding heights and were oppressing the people, were combined with the ideas of Butmi and other Russian anti-constitutional Jew-haters who believed in a conspiracy to bring all of Russia under the domination of the Jews. The Revolution of 1905 was portrayed as the event that kicked off the Jew's attempt to gain full equality, end the Pale of Settlement, and impose a constitution on Russia that would lead to their total domination. As one article from *Pochaiv Listok* (a sister publication of *Pochaiv Izvestiia*) put it: "There was once groaning in Ukraine from the yoke of the Jews, but now almost our whole fatherland is groaning, and this groan becomes more and more loud and more painful every day."¹⁰¹ A cartoon from *Veche* from 23 Feb 1907 (no. 23) warned under a picture of a poor peasant being swindled by Jews: "Look, as it was in Malorossiia [Ukraine], so it will be in all of Russia, if the Jews get equal rights." See Figure 1 for an illustration from *Pochaiv Izvestiia*, (No. 74, April 1 1908) of a greedy Jewish octopus with tentacle fingers seizing railroads, newspapers, cattle, flour, tea, tobacco etc. The caption reads: "The Jew seizes everything with his paws." For a period in 1907 the banner at the top of each issue of *Pochaiv Izvestiia* had this slogan, just to the right of the symbol of the URP: "*Russian, and not Polish-Jewish-Armenian*. Particular attention is paid here to peasant needs and how to

¹⁰⁰ А. И. Дубровин (A. I. Dubrovin,) "Какъ начался Союзъ Русскаго Народа на Руси," *Почаевскія Извѣстія* (Pochaiv Izvestiia), No.22, Monday, 28 January, 1908, pp. 1-2.

¹⁰¹ А Полеяукъ (A Poleayuk), "Жи́ды думать" (Zhid thought), *Прибавленіе къ почаевскому листку* (Supplement to the Pochaiv Listok), 11 December 1909, no 832.

facilitate peasant life.”¹⁰² This portrayed the rebellions in Poland and the Caucasus as part-in-parcel of a grand Jewish plot, and also linked the struggle against the Jews to the welfare of the peasantry.



Figure 2

Revolutionary violence actually got worse after the October manifesto.¹⁰³ From October 1905 to October 1906 3,611 Russian officials were killed throughout the empire. By the end of 1907 at least 9,000 people had been killed in “terrorist” attacks, including civilians.¹⁰⁴ Between the October manifesto in 1905 and February 1908, 1,967 people were killed by Polish revolutionary terrorists, both civilians and civil servants.¹⁰⁵ It is true that the linkage of Jews to terrorist violence was facilitated by the relatively high number of Jews working at senior levels in some revolutionary terrorist organizations. (It should be reiterated that during much of this

period the head of the SR [Socialist Revolutionary] Combat Organization, the most feared revolutionary terrorist group, was a Jew and also an informant for the Russian secret police.)¹⁰⁶ The idea of a Jewish source for terrorist violence and strikes (the other great disruptive force during this revolutionary period) was a standard part of the propaganda campaign. Figure 2 is an image from the 27 August 1906 edition of *Veche*, (No. 54) which shows a caricature of a Jewish businessman supervising other Jews who are making and stockpiling bombs. The crates on the ground are stamped with their destinations: Kiev, Warsaw and Białystok, suggesting a link between the rebellion in the Western Empire and a Jewish conspiracy.

This linkage of various struggles for independence or autonomy with revolutionary terrorism and the supposed Jewish conspiracy was combined with a call to violence against these rebels and their Judeo-Masonic masters, justifying the violence as self-defense. Here is a translation of a poem from the 21 April 1907 edition of *Pochaiv Izvestiia* (no. 92), slightly shortened:

The Freemasons have gone too far,
They begin to devour Russia,
All the foreigners
Sign up for this battle

¹⁰² See many issues from 1907, but for a specific date see *Pochaiv Izvestiya*, no 169, August 1 1907, p. 1.

¹⁰³ Geifman, p 19-20.

¹⁰⁴ Geifman, p. 21.

¹⁰⁵ Geifman, pp. 23-28.

¹⁰⁶ For an account of his life and career, see the chapter on him based on his Russian secret police file in Charles A. Ruud and Sergei A. Stepanov, *Fontanka 16: The Tsars' Secret Police*, (McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), p 126-151.

They play at revolution
Ransacking the rebellious Rus
Bomb-making is taught
To unschooled children.

And the Jews they dance - they skip
Singing vile songs
They have fooled all the officials
They gave them gifts.

And the Georgians, and the Armenians
The Poles, and the Fins¹⁰⁷
Are chattering about their rubbish
-That they need autonomy.

Do not threaten us, enemy children
With the fire of insurrection-
Our songs, our whips
Are worse than a sharp knife!

...The Cossacks will judge you
In your diabolical affairs,
You will get your autonomy
Hanging on the branches of an aspen.

Note in this poem the line: "They [the Jews] have fooled all the officials, They gave them gifts." This is an example of another pillar of this propaganda campaign: the idea that the bureaucracy of the Tsarist government, the king's ministers, had been corrupted by the Jewish conspiracy. The fact that the Tsar had already made serious compromises regarding religious toleration, civil rights for non-Russians, and of course, by issuing the October Manifesto was evidence that the Tsar was being manipulated or coerced behind the scenes, and that he needed to be publicly defended from his own government.¹⁰⁸ This theme was in some ways an echo of the old "the Tsar is good but the nobles are bad" idea that Russians used for centuries to explain problems within the Russian Empire without criticizing the Tsar - only in this iteration bureaucrats and ministers replaced the nobles as the supposed source of manipulation and evil. The kingpin of the evil men who were said to surround the Tsar was still the hated Sergei Witte, the first Prime Minister under the new republican, or quasi-republican, government.

An example of the use of this idea in propaganda is this short item from the *Pochaiv Izvestiia* from January 1908 "Who brings the Constitution to Russia"¹⁰⁹ about the constitutional revolution in Iran. The article took a report that the Russian ambassador agreed with the British ambassador in urging the Shah of Iran to accept a constitution as evidence that there the pro-constitutional conspiracy reached the highest levels of the Russian government:

"...it is clear who wants to establish a constitution in Russia: Not the Tsar, but the government, high officials, ministers. They surrounded the Tsar, saying that the people wanted a constitution, and the

¹⁰⁷ Literally, the "Chukhna."

¹⁰⁸ Gilbert, p. 98. Also Langer, p. 89.

¹⁰⁹ "Кто заводитъ конституцію въ Россіи" (Who brings the Constitution to Russia), *Почаевскія Извѣстія* (Pochaiv Izvestiya), No. 18, 23 January 1908, p. 3.

people were being told that the Tsar wanted a constitution. But in reality neither Tsar nor the people want a constitution, only the ambitious or foreigners.”¹¹⁰

One can see in this item the hatred of the very idea of a constitution, which some supporters of the Tsar believed would allow the Jewish conspiracy to manipulate and eventually destroy the Tsar. Black Hundred propaganda is peppered with references to the evils of constitutions and warnings that doom awaits the nations that adopt them. The main political enemy in this regard was the Constitutional Democratic party, the Kadets. They were the main political target of URP propaganda, and were so hated that during the first few Dumas the URP even sometimes threatened to ally with the socialists in the Duma just to beat the Kadets.¹¹¹

This party was founded during a 1905 Moscow conference between leftist *zemstvo* leaders and other liberals who wanted a constitutional monarchy, civil liberties, and a national assembly. The conference was still in session when a journalist brought them the text of the October Manifesto, and those gathered formed a party to contest the upcoming elections.¹¹² In the elections of 1906 the Kadets' platform promised an autonomous region for the Poles, the restoration of the constitution for the Grand Duchy of Finland (which had been suspended in 1903),¹¹³ and the establishment of other autonomous regions later. With a platform like this, the Kadets did very well in the border regions of the Empire. They formed electoral blocks with pro-constitution groups from Ukraine and the Baltics. Jews in the western borderlands tended to support the Kadets, and the Kadets formed an important alliance with the “League for the Attainment of Full Rights for the Jewish People of Russia” which greatly helped the Kadets in winning urban elections.¹¹⁴

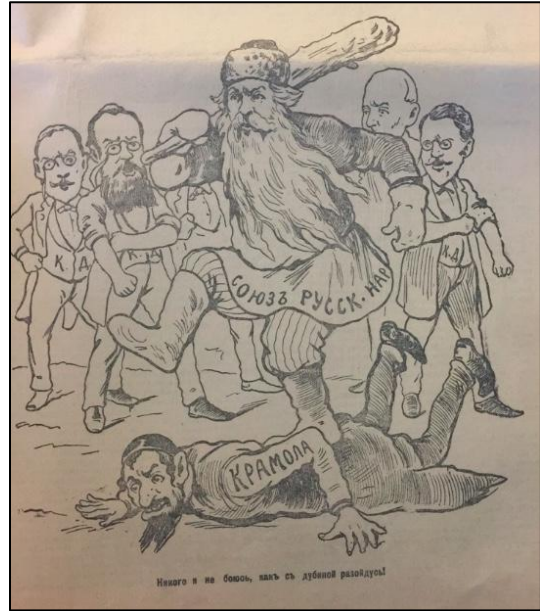


Figure 3

URP propaganda against the Kadets painted them as the cat's paw of the Jewish conspiracy against Russia. Figure 3, from the March 6 1907 edition of *Veche* (no. 26, p. 1) is a representative example of the way the Kadets were depicted: the URP, dressed in traditional Russian garb, is stomping on a Jew labeled “Rebellion.” Behind him stand well-dressed men labeled “K.D” (Kadets) their expression aghast as they roll up their sleeves to intervene and help the Jewish “rebellion.” The caption reads “I’m not afraid of anyone, I’ll disperse them with a club!”

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Rogger, p. 220.

¹¹² Healy, p. 17.

¹¹³ Raymond Pearson, *The Longman Companion to European Nationalism 1789-1920*, (Routledge, 2014), p. 86.

¹¹⁴ Healy, pp. 128-131.

The fact that the hated Kadets were even allowed to exist in Russia worried URP members and other Black Hundred activists. This tied back to the previously mentioned anti-government/bureaucracy aspect of their propaganda. If the bureaucracy and ministers who should be protecting Russia and the Tsar were allowing an obviously anti-Russian political party to exist and operate freely, it indicated that the bureaucracy was in on the conspiracy. This item from an August 1906 edition of *Veche* complained that the government allowed the Kadets to openly organize and spread their deceptive propaganda:

"In recent days in Moscow there have been several meetings of the People's Freedom Party [another name for the Kadets] ...mainly about how and with what to intimidate the government so that it makes concessions, i.e. so that instead of a Tsar reigning in Russia there would be a president from among the Jews or from their henchmen...Local authorities do not interfere with these meetings, but demand only that they occur in the presence of police authorities, so as to prevent rebellious speech. But this does not achieve the goal at all, because rebels speak in a language that is not always able to be understood by ordinary people, and the police officers almost always have to present themselves as witless dolls. It would have been more expedient to completely stop these gatherings of rebels."¹¹⁵

The *Protocols* served as an important part of the ideological foundation to this propaganda, but its direct role in mass propaganda was limited. Only six printings of the *Protocols* were made in Russia before the 1917 Revolution.¹¹⁶ This is unsurprising, as the *Protocols* is a literary document, written to be read by an educated elite - not for mass consumption. However, while there may not have been a campaign of publishing the *Protocols*, it was often referenced as the key piece of evidence supporting the idea that Russia was resisting a grand Judeo-Masonic conspiracy. Like the reference to the *Protocols* in the October 16 1905 Moscow sermon known as the "Pogrom Sermon of 16 October" - the *Protocols* did not have to be read and understood by the masses in order to have an effect as an ideological loadstone and as "proof" of the conspiracy that could be referenced in other works. Its reputation would have spread even among people who had not or could not read it.

Butmi himself published another edition of the *Protocols* in 1906, dedicated to the URP.¹¹⁷ This edition makes an important change from previous editions: The earlier editions of the *Protocols* had a line where the narrator promises violence and terrorism in the future: "We will show one of them our strength by means of violence, that is, by terrorism." Butmi, publishing his edition after the violence of the Revolution of 1905 had died down, turned this statement into a retrospective, using the past tense: "We have shown one of these governments our powers by assassination, by terrorism."¹¹⁸ During this time Butmi was also busy publishing a number of works along the same lines as the *Protocols*, with titles like: *Freemasonry and High Treason* and *Jews in Freemasonry and in the Revolution* (and it seems like he had an ongoing

¹¹⁵ "Московские гадюки (Кадеты) зашевелились" (The Moscow vipers [Kadets] stirred), *Въче* (Veche), no. 44, 3 August 1906, p. 4.

¹¹⁶ Ruud and Stepanov, p. 203.

¹¹⁷ Г. Бутми (G. Butmi), *Враги Рода Человѣческаго* (Enemies of the Human Race), (St. Petersburg: Printers of the School for the Deaf, 1906).

¹¹⁸ Herman Bernstein, *The History of a Lie*, (New York: J. S. Ogilvie Publishing Company, 1921), p. 83.

collaboration with the mysterious “N. L.”)¹¹⁹ The first publisher and likely other co-author of the *Protocols* Pavel Krushevan also continued his anti-Jewish conspiratorial writing and also for a time stayed involved with the URP. He was even elected as a representative to the second Russian Duma in 1907. He was disappointed with the Duma, which was in line with his obvious antipathy towards a national representative government made very clear in his previous work and with his publication of the *Protocols*.^{120 121}

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the key ideological element of the *Protocols* was its indirect assertion that gold standards, constitutions, freedom of the press, and other accoutrements of liberalism in that era were not merely bad ideas that the system of Tsarist absolutism was competing against, they were poison concocted by Jewish absolutists to usurp the rightful power of legitimate absolute rulers. This accusation allowed propagandists arguing against liberalism to proclaim that the Jews who created these ideas do not even believe them themselves. This would allow a propagandist to bypass much argument about good and bad ideas and go straight to a discussion about friends and enemies.

A prime example of this kind of argument, which includes a reference to the *Protocols*, is the 1910 pamphlet, *Simple Conversations with Simple People. Part two. Subject: Who needs the ‘liberation movement’?* As the title suggests, the pamphlet is written in clear and easy-to-read Russian, intended for a wide audience. It was published by the Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius monastery, located just outside of Moscow. The pamphlet places the question of support for Tsarist power in a sectarian light, and blames the Masons for spreading the false idea of liberalism. Notice here how it cites the *Protocols* as evidence of a Judeo-Masonic plot, but without quoting the complicated document at length:

“Satan directs all his efforts to destroy this Tsarist power. If it is impossible to destroy it at once, at least first to limit, to undermine full confidence in it, to settle mutual distrust between the King and his subjects, and there he already managed to completely abolish-not only the Tsarist, but all Christian power, and his servants will completely take over the world. And he will then plant his faithful servant and elect the Antichrist over the whole world... Tricky, experienced in the affairs of all kinds of evil, Satan has already found his own servants for his destructive business. In Western countries... a society was formed, which set itself to fight against Christianity, to undermine the holy faith in Christ everywhere, to sow enmity and malice between Christians in order to subordinate them to their power... The members of this God-resisting society are called ‘Masons’, they are scattered all over the world and carefully conceal their membership in this criminal, satanic society. They publish godless writings, publish godless newspapers, everywhere start trouble by preaching socialism, anarchy... In alliance with them are the sworn enemies of Christianity - the Jews.... it's not easy to find out their secrets. Five or six years ago it was possible to get these protocols ‘of the Elders of Zion’ and - my Lord, what was written there!.. It was an entire, very clever and comprehensive plan for the conquest of the whole world, with the whole purpose of establishing one king over all the earth – an Israelite, but, according to Christianity - the Antichrist.”¹²²

¹¹⁹ Н. Л. (N. L.) and Г. Бутми (G. Butmi) , *Фран Масонство и Государственная Измена* (Freemasonry and State Treason), St. Petersburg 1905. Н. Л. (N. L.) and Г. Бутми (G. Butmi), *Иудеи в масонстве и в революции* (Jews in Freemasonry and the Revolution) (St. Petersburg: 1906).

¹²⁰ He had a falling out with the Right-wing faction in the Duma. He returned to Bessarabia, where he died in 1912. See *Black Hundreds, Historical Encyclopedia*, pp. 267-268.

¹²¹ А. Степанов (A Stepanov), “КРУШЕВАН Павел (Паволакий) Александрович,” in *Black Hundreds, historical encyclopedia*, pp. 267-268.

¹²² *Простые беседы*, pp. 7-9.

The pamphlet points out that although there were not obvious Jews or Masons everywhere in Russia, it makes the point that Russians can be unwittingly recruited into Jewish plots. It also hints at the possibility of hidden Jews. This network uses all kinds of tools, but especially "books and newspapers" The target the pamphlet chooses is the *Zemstvo* movement - those who believed in strong local self-government:

"You will say: But where are these Jews? We can see, we know who seduces, embarrasses, teaches socialism, incites revolts: they are not Jews, they are Russians, they are teachers at *zemstvo* schools, *zemstvo* doctors, statisticians, midwives, nurses, different students, engineers ... Are these Jews?

This is the great cunning of the Jews and their Masonic allies: they know how to use their books and newspapers with their nonsense to quash people who are not hard in the Christian faith, that these Russian people give themselves completely to the service of Jews and Masons, without knowing it."¹²³

Towards the end the pamphlet turns to a direct attack on representative government and a constitution, as this form of government is least able to defend the nation against the massive Jewish conspiracy. (This theme is quite similar to with the attacks from Austrian propaganda against representative government after the French Revolution as unable to defend against the Illuminati, also discussed in chapter 3.) It directly attacks the Kadets, with another direct reference to the *Protocols*, and enlists the idea of a massive deception that had drawn the naive liberal Kadets into a Jewish plot to destroy Russia:

"...in elections, bribes, unrealizable promises, flattery and deception are often used: all means are good, if only to get a place in the "parliament", as these "representatives" called our State Duma. And it turns out that under a constitution, it's not the Tsar, God's Anointed One, [but] these "representatives", more simply, the more skillful people [who] begin to write laws,... there is a game of darkness between these parties: the Constitutional Democrats, or, as they were nicknamed for ridicule and brevity: 'Kadets,' are flirting with revolutionaries and socialists and those with them, and all of them, those and others, invisible to them, are led by the enemies: Masonry and Jewry... The Kadets serve not the fatherland, not the native people, but the Jews and Masons. And in vain our educated people want to assure themselves that they wish Russia well when they seek to limit Tsarist power: they only help the enemies of Russia, they only lead Russia to destruction. Whoever read the above-mentioned Protocols of the Elders of Zion knows that the Jews themselves consider autocracy the best form of state government; their future king of the world will be an autocrat; so they are trying all over the world to destroy the autocratic form of government, and if they cannot immediately arrange a republic somewhere, they try to get the constitution first. Read about this in their famous protocols: in there they simply laugh at the irrationality, the unreasonableness of Christians who, by their secret direction, set up constitutions. Are we Russians proceeding according to their instructions? The Jew wants us not to have the autocracy: so [shall we] listen to what he orders? He will then demand that we have a republic: so is it necessary to obey him in this too? But our Kadets, our supposed guardians of people's freedom, are leading to this! Of course, this is the case: although we must again make the reservation that most of them, these Kadets, work for the Jews unconsciously, imagining that they serve the people ..."¹²⁴

Black Hundred propaganda and violence

As mentioned earlier, no link between the central Russian government and the pogroms of October 1905 or earlier pogroms has ever been established.¹²⁵ However, after the 1905 October Manifesto and the preparations for the elections of the First Duma, the Tsar began

¹²³ *Простая беседа*, p. 13.

¹²⁴ *Простая беседа*, p. 17-19.

¹²⁵ Klier, "Unravelling."

subsidizing publications that encouraged people to blame their troubles on the Jews, accused the Jews of carrying out a massive deceptive usurpation and called for violence. Even if no one in the central government ever gave an order to carry out a pogrom, the massive anti-Jewish propaganda campaign makes it impossible to completely absolve the Russian government of responsibility for subsequent pogroms. Even if the purpose of this propaganda was not to incite violence against the Jews, but rather to harness anti-Jewish sectarian feeling in the service of Tsarist political ends, - if one subsidizes publications which repeatedly call for blood, one cannot be absolved when blood is shed. Additionally, Black Hundred groups were armed by the state. During the Revolution of 1905 the Black Hundred movement was also used by the state as a kind of auxiliary police force. In February 1906 the Russian Minister of Interior ordered that anyone who presented a certificate from the URP be automatically given a permit to carry weapons.¹²⁶ These same groups were calling for vigilante violence in their state-subsidized publications.

Despite the calls for violence and the obvious anti-Jewish incitement that is contained in this state-subsidized pro-Tsarist propaganda, the number of pogroms sharply declined before the anti-Jewish pro-Tsarist propaganda campaign could get any real traction, falling from a peak of 600 pogroms in November 1905 to less than 5 by February 1906. There were no reported pogroms from February to May 1906.¹²⁷ However, in June 1906 one of the most intense pogroms from the period killed between 83 and 200 Jews in Białystok. A report from the Duma said that local officials and soldiers working with Black Hundreds had orchestrated the pogrom, and there were multiple reports that soldiers in the area had directly participated in killing defenseless Jews and that the Governor had made threats to use soldiers against Jews.^{128 129} According to this Duma report, before the pogrom: "... the Organization of the so-called Genuine Russian Men was continually propagating the idea that Jews are the enemies of Tsardom, and that all the evils and the whole confusion in the country emanate from the Jews or from the Jewish agitation: that therefore the struggle with the Jews was a struggle with the conspiracy which was ruining the country, and that in conquering the Jews the conspiracy would be combated, and then there would be peace and quietness... Proclamations began to circulate among the soldiers stating that one must kill the conspirators, that the Imperial Duma was Jewish, that the revolutionaries were opposed to the Czar, and so on."¹³⁰ The response of the Imperial government to these reports of incitement by a Black Hundred organization and of participation of troops in the pogrom was to issue a statement giving thanks to the troops for their "splendid service, and their glorious, self-sacrificing, untiring, just and honest devotion to duty during the Białystok Pogrom." A police chief fingered as an organizer of the pogrom was promoted.¹³¹

After this apparent-but-short period of favorably towards sectarian violence, the Imperial government again changed its attitude towards the pogroms by late 1906. Any mass gathering

¹²⁶ Ruud and Stepanov, p. 104.

¹²⁷ Lambroza, p. 229.

¹²⁸ Lambroza, p. 237.

¹²⁹ Rawson, p. 138.

¹³⁰ "Report of the Duma Commission on the Białystok Massacre," *American Jewish Year Book*, Vol. 8 (1906-1907), pp. 70-71.

¹³¹ Lambroza, p. 238.

or outbreak of violence was potentially destabilizing.¹³² The last pogrom of the era took place in September 1906.¹³³ Also, the continued violence of the radical rightists embarrassed the more moderate rightists and harmed the reputation of the whole movement.¹³⁴ The right-wing hooliganism and pogroms began to get out of hand, particularly in the southwestern Russian Empire, and the government began to curb their activities. Foreign ambassadors were complaining of Black Hundred harassment of expatriates and stories of violence in Russia appeared in European newspapers.¹³⁵

Some have argued that, as far as police action was concerned, based on documentary sources and the logic of containing unrest, the Tsarist government attempted to limit anti-Jewish violence after 1900, not promote it.¹³⁶ However, when one takes into account that after 1905 the Russian state was heavily subsidizing the publication of the most vile anti-Jewish conspiracy theories, including in publications that advocated “retaliatory” violence, a more complex picture emerges. This picture does not excuse the Tsarist government nor support the ideas of a central conspiracy of Tsarist officials to start pogroms. Rather, it seems that propagandists, funded by the government, were using these conspiracy theories to direct the sectarian hatred of Jews in specific directions favorable to the goals of Tsarist hardliners: propagandizing against a constitution, the Kadets, and any revolutionary organizations. Any related anti-Jewish violence would have been the cost of doing business.

Black Hundred violence went beyond mob violence and organizing pogroms. The URP began to imitate the violent tactics of far-leftist terrorists. According to an interview of the secretary of the URP council given during the investigation conducted by the 1917 Russian Provisional Government, the leadership of the URP formed a secret department within the organization to fight the revolution with deadly force - or as they would have seen it: a conspiracy against the conspiracy. This organization was led by the head of the URP Dubrovin himself and had a task to “fight the leftist parties with weapons, and naturally the extermination of prominent left-wing figures.”¹³⁷

According to the testimony of other former URP members the weapons for this operation were secured from Finland, and Dubrovin kept photographic plates of the intended targets. One witness said there were cells in other cities as well.¹³⁸ The existence of this organization became an open secret. They engaged in burglaries and extortion, which even included extorting money from Jews by threatening to incite pogroms.¹³⁹

If one places oneself in the conspiratorial mindset of a URP member in this period, what were the logical conclusions do draw from URP propaganda? URP and other right-wing propaganda emphasized that the government had been infiltrated by the Jewish conspiracy. Sergei Witte, married to a Jew and a main advocate of constitutionalism, had even been the

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Rawson, p. 141.

¹³⁵ Ruud and Stepanov, pp. 108-110.

¹³⁶ Ruud and Stepanov, p. 213.

¹³⁷ *Союз русского народа. По материалам Чрезвычайной следственной комиссии Временного правительства 1917 г.*, (Union of the Russian people. The materials of the Extraordinary Investigative Commission of the Provisional Government of 1917), p. 33.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 41-42.

¹³⁹ Langer, p. 82.

Prime Minister for a time! He had retired by May 1906 but remained a member of the State Council. Some URP members would have viewed the success of the Kadets in elections as evidence that Jewish groups were taking over.¹⁴⁰ Scholars of the period have pointed out that the attitude of the groups on the Russian right towards the state was often ambivalent or even somewhat hostile.¹⁴¹ Given these assumptions, stoked by state-subsidized propaganda, is it at all surprising that members of the URP would think that state action was insufficient, or even counterproductive, and start “freelancing” by building clandestine networks for political terror - though this terror was in support of Tsarist autocracy, not against it?

In July 1906 a URP death squad traveled to the Finnish city of Terijoki and assassinated Mikhail Gertsenshtein, a Jew and member of the Duma from the Kadet party. Two of the assassins were arrested and tried for murder in a Finnish court, but were then pardoned by the Tsar. When the court tried to also charge Dubrovin as the instigator of the murder, the Russian government declared that he was outside the jurisdiction of any Finnish court.¹⁴²

In early 1907 two bombs that had failed to go off were discovered in the home of former prime minister Witte. The well-known hatred of the URP towards Witte and the fact that the bombs were built differently than the ones commonly made by left-wing revolutionaries caused blame to fall on the URP, which denied involvement. Not long afterward a former liberal Duma deputy and newspaper editor was murdered, and further suspicion fell on the URP. The suspicion was compounded by the fact that the murder happened not far from the place where the flagship Black Hundred newspaper *Veche* was published. This paper had earlier made several death threats against the victim. In March 1907 a URP operative in Moscow fooled two would-be left-wing revolutionaries into murdering G. B. Illos, the editor of the newspaper *Russkie Vedomosti* and former Kadet member of the Duma. The URP member had told the assassins that Illos was a Black Hundred member who had been marked for death by revolutionaries.¹⁴³ In April 1907 Russian Prime Minister Stolypin ordered all Black Hundred fighting groups to disband and ordered the police to make sure officials complied with the ban.¹⁴⁴

The suspicion that the Tsar secretly supported these URP death squads and pogrom instigations while he was claiming to be pushing for reform and striving for reconciliation was highly embarrassing to the Imperial government. After the Tsar dissolved the second Duma in June 1907 the socialists began a public campaign against the URP and its attempts at terrorism.¹⁴⁵ After the murderer of the deputy Gertsenshtein in Finland and the pardon of the murderers, the Kadet party started its own investigation. They identified two former members of a URP “fighting squad” who were still in prison in Finland.¹⁴⁶ They collected derogatory information about two URP death-squad leaders from the prisoners, and in late 1907 the Kadets had gathered enough evidence to have the Russian interior ministry arrest them. They had been

¹⁴⁰ Rogger, p. 213.

¹⁴¹ Rogger, p. 212.

¹⁴² Langer, p. 82-83, citing from *Союз русского народа* (investigation), pp. 42, 65, 87, 48-49, 54-55, 428

¹⁴³ Langer, p. 84 citing from *Союз русского народа* (investigation), pp. 53-62

¹⁴⁴ Ruud and Stepanov, pp. 108-110.

¹⁴⁵ Ruud and Stepanov, p. 111.

¹⁴⁶ Ruud and Stepanov, p. 115.

hiding out in the Pochaiv monastery, in the heartland of the URP. After they were arrested, accusations surfaced that the assistant chief of the *Okhrana* had sent them there.¹⁴⁷

While these terrorist actions were few in number when compared to the wave of revolutionary terrorism that Russia had just passed through, they caused a sensation. The URP was credited with terrorist capabilities far beyond its actual capacity, and was still credited with this capacity long after the state had ordered and enforced the disbandment of its fighting groups. The URP may have tried to make use of this reputation by intimidating politicians with threats of violence.¹⁴⁸

It should be noted that the URP terrorist organization did not “strike back” at left-wing terrorist or terrorist-supporting groups, but instead targeted the Kadets and Witte. This might be chalked up to capabilities - the URP would have lacked the intelligence network to go after secret terrorist organizations like the SR Combat organization, but the political “mother” of the SR Combat organization, the Socialist Revolutionary Party, participated openly in the second parliamentary election of February 1907 in order to “utilize the State Duma for organizing and revolutionizing the masses.”¹⁴⁹ The party had a delegation of 34 deputies in the second Duma. One of their delegates even openly defended the use of terrorism against “carriers of arbitrary rule and violence.”¹⁵⁰ One might suspect that these delegates would be prime targets for URP violence. Instead the target selection of the short-lived URP terror campaign was in line with the main political enemies identified in their propaganda campaign: Witte and the Kadets. The Socialist Revolutionaries, the Social Democrats, and other socialists in the second Duma had entered the parliament in order to sabotage it and spread propaganda while enjoying parliamentary immunity. They did not want bourgeois parliamentary democracy, they wanted revolution.¹⁵¹ In this way the revolutionaries were indirect allies with the URP and other anti-constitutional right-wingers. If the terrorist organization of the URP had lasted, this quasi-revolutionary anti-revolutionary organization, it may have eventually gotten around to assassinating socialist politicians, but in the second Duma the URP in fact sometimes allied with leftists to ensure gridlock.¹⁵² The target selection of the URP death squads seems to show an attempt to intimidate the politicians pushing for a constitution, as the URP believed that the introduction of a constitution in Russia was the next big political project of the Judeo-Masonic conspiracy.

The terror campaign of the URP was not only cut short by a government crackdown on their fighting groups. By mid-1907 the “necessity” of attacking leftist Duma members had dissolved along with the Tsar’s dissolution of the Second Duma. The new election law, which violated the fundamental laws made after the October Manifesto, unilaterally changed the qualifications and process for getting elected to the Duma to favor landowners, higher-class individuals, i.e. people more likely to support the Tsar. The representation of the Kadets in the parliament was brought down to just 54 seats and the faction of right-wing representatives grew

¹⁴⁷ Ruud and Stepanov, p. 117.

¹⁴⁸ Langer, pp. 85-86.

¹⁴⁹ Pipes, locations 4734-4735.

¹⁵⁰ Manfred Hildermeier, *The Russian Socialist Revolutionary Party Before the First World War*, (Lit Verlag, 2000), p. 166.

¹⁵¹ Pipes, location 4736.

¹⁵² Rogger, p. 222.

to 147 of whom 51 were from the extreme right (out of 422 total seats.)¹⁵³ The Tsar was now much more secure in his power, and the URP became less potentially useful as an violent counter-revolutionary force, and more of just what those who subsidized their newspapers intended: a state-subsidized propaganda organ supporting the Tsar.

The ideology of the URP - radical anti-liberalism

The URP and other Black Hundred groups were something new in Russian history, and perhaps in the history of the world. The URP has been called a forerunner of fascism.¹⁵⁴ Even if calling it a forerunner of fascism is a bit of an anachronism, coming as it did before WWI, the “conservative” URP certainly contained elements alien to the old style of Russian conservatism. There was a huge difference between Black Hundred groups and even the most hardline “conservative” pro-Tsar pro-autocracy organizations of the old model, which eschewed popular opinion and placed the emphasis on stability and obedience. Rather than emphasizing obedience to the king and his government, deference to authority, and prudence, the URP sought to increase and harness the angry mobs of looters, sectarian murderers, and rapists and turn them into “useful” elements of a movement to protect autocracy. Black Hundred propaganda eschewed prudence and instead emphasized that radical action was necessary to stave off the victory of the Judeo-Masonic conspiracy. The hour was late, they claimed. The conspiracy had already infiltrated the bureaucracy and turned Russia over to the power of Jewish international capital by adopting the gold standard. They maintained that the Jews were sponsoring terrorism and rebellion all over the Empire - and if they managed to secure a constitution then their triumph would be almost irreversible.

An obsession with the supposed powers of deception of the Judeo-Masonic conspiracy is the foundation for the extremism-baiting rhetoric of Black Hundred propaganda. An organization capable of twisting the policies of the Tsar, of deceptively maneuvering the mighty Russian Empire to the point of near defeat, of destroying Christianity and sovereign governments in Western Europe - in the “constitutional” countries - is capable of accomplishing almost anything through such trickery. This kind rhetoric encourages people not to stem the tide or just to roll it back a bit, but to violently overthrow the system that had brought the world to this state - including elements of staid and respectable institutions that had perhaps been “infiltrated” by Jewish agents. This rhetoric could, as the Russian government once said about the October 16 1905 sermon in Moscow that mentioned the *Protocols*, serve as a “kind of call to the local population for self-defense in the field of political beliefs, which, if interpreted unilaterally, could be the cause of internecine strife among the population...”¹⁵⁵ URP propaganda suggests they believed what was needed was not just political self-defense, but a total overthrow of the old ways of governing and even some radical changes of existing social structures in order to purge out the Judeo-Masonic disease: like expropriations of land in the West, and the exclusion of Jews from public life, or even their expulsion. In the words of one Black Hundred publicist, “We

¹⁵³ Pipes, Locations 4774-4790. Also Rogger, p. 223.

¹⁵⁴ Rogger, p. 213-214.

¹⁵⁵ “Определение святейшаго синода” (Decision of the Holy Synod), Правительственный Вѣстникъ (Pravitelstvennii vestnik) No. 227, 23 October (5 November) 1905, p. 1, column 1.

are revolutionaries of the right.”¹⁵⁶ The contrast between the old conservatism and this attitude was recognized by one contemporary liberal writer:

“But can this spiteful desire to overthrow all sorts of beneficial public undertakings have something in common with conservatism, that is, with the desire to protect and strengthen the foundations of communal life? Was Attila, who boasted that the grass ceased growing where his horses’ hooves had trod, a conservative?... Conservatism presupposes a feeling of respect for a certain kind of cultural success achieved by society, and a desire to protect these from premature and risky upheavals. Conservatism presupposes some moral capital previously acquired by society, along with the ability and dignity to assess its significance... these large and small Attilas, ...breathing with malice against all the achievements of culture, can equally have nothing in common with progress or with conservatism. They are just born *oprichniki* [thugs],¹⁵⁷ whose minions’ deeds do not spare either the beneficial shoots of novelty nor the venerable monuments of antiquity.”¹⁵⁸

The main thing keeping the lid on the radicalism of the URP and other conspiracy-theorist monarchist groups was their proclaimed slavish devotion to Tsar Nicholas II, who they considered God’s representative on Earth. While on the surface a belief in the divine right of kings and the belief in a nearly all-powerful satanic conspiracy are perfect complements to each other, there is a misalignment between these two ideas, based in the nature of monarchy and the belief in a super-conspiracy. As illustrated in chapter 2, there were ways that a conspiracy could usurp power even within a strict monarchy. What if the king himself had been so manipulated that he has effectively lost power? What if the king is unwilling to face the fact of the existence of this super-powerful international conspiracy. Even if the URP could have remained steadfastly loyal to Nicholas II, what would have happened when there was a succession or another crisis, if the dynasty had collapsed and been replaced by another? Remember, this had all happened before during the Time of Troubles (1598-1613) and many Russians would have pointed to the hand of the Jesuits behind that catastrophe. Had the Tsarist regime not collapsed in 1917, eventually there may have been a “Salais-Sogio effect” - conspiracy theory inspired right-wing activists turning not just against the bureaucracy but against the empire itself. Actually there was some talk among URP activists about the need for a coup against the government to restore the pure autocracy in Russia.¹⁵⁹

Beyond a few assassinations and perhaps instigating a few pogroms the political effects of the URP, the Russian Assembly, and similar groups was mostly limited in the time immediately following the Revolution of 1905. Their biggest effect was probably in popularizing the Judeo-Masonic conspiracy theory, making sure the *Protocols* did not just remain as an obscure piece of propaganda published in an obscure right-wing newspaper. The size and

¹⁵⁶ Gilbert, p. 99.

¹⁵⁷ The word *oprichniki* refers to the organization used by Ivan the Terrible to enforce his reign of terror over part of Russia in the late 16th century. They arbitrarily tortured and murdered the perceived enemies of the Tsar. One of their most heinous acts was the sack of Novgorod at the orders of the Tsar. Novgorod is one of the oldest and most storied Russian cities, one of the cradles of Russian civilization. It never recovered from its sacking by the oprichniki. See chapter 13 of *Reign of Terror: Ivan IV* by Ruslan G. Skrynnikov, Brill (Leiden), *Eurasian Studies Library*, Volume: 6, 2015.

¹⁵⁸ А. Кизеветтер (A. Kizevetter), “Консерватизм и наши „правые“ партии” (Conservatism and our “right” parties), *Свобода И Культуры* (Freedom and Culture), No. 1, 1 April 1906, p. 3.

¹⁵⁹ Rogger, p. 223-224.

duration of this conspiracy theory propaganda push ensured that these ideas survived long after the government which sponsored them was long gone. In comparison, think of the effect of the first generation of grand conspiracy theorists after the French Revolution: Hoffman's newspaper the *Wiener Zeitschrift*, sponsored by the Austrian Emperor and spreading anti-French Revolution propaganda making liberal use of the Freemason/Illuminati conspiracy theory lasted less than 2 years (1792-1793.) The following propaganda journal that took up this theme, *Eudämonia*, only lasted about 4 years (1794-1798). These newspapers had limited circulation, but still managed to set up a solid foundation of conspiracy-theory narratives and "evidence" that subsequent writers like Barruel and Hoffman were able to make use of. The anti-revolutionary, anti-liberal conspiracy theory propagandizing in the Russian empire lasted nine years, with dozens of newspapers, and many books and pamphlets. This large and varied effort ensured that the idea of a Judeo-Masonic conspiracy dedicated to spreading representative government, destroying Christianity, and taking over the world was eventually spread all over Europe after the Russian revolution.

Coda: anti-Jewish conspiracy theories after the revolutions of 1905 and 1917

After the Third Duma election and the apparent success of the counter-revolution, the URP declined in prominence along with other far-right groups, which continued to splinter into various different factions and engage in infighting and corruption. The subsidies did not cease however, and the URP continued to exist right up till WWI.¹⁶⁰

During WWI, the URP did not discard the imaginary Judeo-Masonic enemy, and portrayed the war as another attempt to extract concessions from the Tsar. This example of a piece of URP propaganda from WWI shows their continuing obsession with fighting Jews, constitutionalists, and parliamentarians. Notice how it praises the autocratic German form of government even though Russia was at war with Germany:

"Taking advantage of the temporary and transitory difficulties in supplying our gallant army with shells and weapons, the internal enemies of our homeland: constitutionalists, parliamentarians, revolutionaries, and especially Germans and Jews, try to deceive the Russian people in every way... the Jews want to reduce the rights of the autocrat of all Russia...they demand from the tsar appointing ministers from their midst, ministers responsible to the political parties that have clashed, and not to the tsar, ministers appointed by foreigners and Jews, and not by the anointed sovereign, the emperor... The Masonic Jews are silent that in England and in the defeated Belgium the ministers are responsible to the parliament, they keep silent that the ministers of the republic, all socialists and democrats, did not interfere with the defeats of France, that riots, abuses and embezzlements in the supply of arms to the French army were found constantly and remain unpunished.

The Masonic Jews are maliciously silent and that in Germany, which is still the strongest of the powers, the ministry is responsible to the Kaiser and is not responsible to the German parliament..."¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ The slow death and increasing irrelevance of the URP and other rightist groups after 1905-1908 is a major theme of Dr. Langer's PhD dissertation cited often in this chapter. See also *Союз русского народа* (investigation) for information on subsidies paid to Black Hundred newspapers on the eve of the Russian Revolution of 1917.

¹⁶¹ *Союз русского народа. По материалам Чрезвычайной следственной комиссии Временного правительства 1917 г.*, (Union of the Russian people. The materials of the Extraordinary Investigative Commission of the Provisional Government of 1917), p. 99.

The idea of a Judeo-Masonic conspiracy came back with a vengeance in White propaganda after the collapse of the Russian Empire during WWI. A Provisional Government, a republic, was briefly established before the October 1917 coup by the Communists that deposed it. Those who believed the message of the *Protocols* saw the Jewish plan behind this rapid evolution from autocracy to republic to a communist despotism (with a Jew, Lev Davidovich Bronstein aka Leon Trotsky close to the top of the Bolshevik hierarchy.) Among the former supporters of the autocracy who saw the machinations of the Judeo-Masonic conspiracy was the former Tsar himself. In an entry from his diary written while under arrest in March 1918, a year after he was deposed and several months since the Communist coup, the Tsar wrote about the *Protocols* as an explanation for Russia's troubles: "...I began to read aloud the book by Nilus about the anti-Christ, with a supplementary 'report' on the Jews and Masons. It was very contemporary reading."¹⁶²

It should be noted that while it was true that Trotsky and many other prominent Bolshevik Communists were Jews, Jews were much more numerous in the Menshevik faction than the victorious Bolshevik faction of the Communists.¹⁶³ Be that as it may, the Russian Civil War saw unprecedentedly severe pogroms that were exceeded only by the Holocaust during WWII.¹⁶⁴ Communist troops were also responsible for anti-Jewish violence during this period. Jews could be viewed as anti-socialist capitalist oppressors.¹⁶⁵ However, the undeniable preponderance of violence against Jews as Jews during this period was inflicted by anti-Communist troops, many of whom adopted the points of URP and other pro-Autocracy propaganda as their ideology.

After the Ukrainian nationalists lost Kyiv in January 1919 a spate of pogroms broke out in the area they still controlled. The worst one was in February 1919 where 2000 Jews were murdered after an attempted Communist uprising in Khmelnytskyi, in present day Ukraine.¹⁶⁶ It is probably not coincidental that this violence took place in the territory that was once the heartland of the URP, where its anti-Jewish propaganda had penetrated most deeply and achieved its greatest electoral success. The Tsar was no more (he had been murdered in July 1918) but the idea of a Jewish conspiracy lived on, and elements of pro-Russian propaganda were easily appropriated by others, in this case anti-Russian nationalists, demonstrating again the utility of conspiracy theories for all kinds of ideologies. Even though the Ukrainian nationalists government made moves to emancipate the Jews and their leader denounced the pogroms, the killings continued, and the leadership did little to actually halt them.¹⁶⁷

Another force fighting the Communists during this time, the White Russian "Volunteer Army" also extensively used anti-Jewish propaganda, and after they suffered decisive defeats in late 1919 they engaged in their own spate of pogroms. Many Jews had been supporters of the Volunteer Army before this point and were bitterly disappointed. Indeed, White violence was

¹⁶² Kent de Price, "Diary of Nicholas II, 1917-1918, an annotated translation" (PhD Diss., University of Montana, 1966), entry for March 27/April 9 Tuesday 1918, p. 195. In translation Nilus is rendered "nilusa."

¹⁶³ Cohn, p. 133.

¹⁶⁴ Peter Kernez, "Pogroms and White ideology in the Russian Civil War," in *Pogroms, Anti-Jewish violence in Modern Russian history*, John D. Klier and Shlomo Lambroza eds., (Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 293.

¹⁶⁵ Kernez, p. 294.

¹⁶⁶ Kernez, p. 295.

¹⁶⁷ Kernez, p. 296.

probably a major factor in increasing Jewish support for Communism among Ukrainian Jews. Estimates of the total number of Jews killed during this period range from tens of thousands to 200,000.¹⁶⁸ A scholar who has examined the surviving archives of the Volunteer Army states that their leaders were “obsessed with antisemitism. Secret reports, obviously not meant as propaganda, make it clear that this antisemitism, full of paranoid delusions, bordered on the pathological.”¹⁶⁹

In Siberia, where there were fewer Jews to feel the brunt of pro-Tsarist-conspiracist “retribution”, the *Protocols* still appeared to play some sort of role in anti-Communist propaganda. A few new editions of the *Protocols* were published in Vladivostok and Khabarovsk in the Russian Far East.¹⁷⁰

The *Protocols* even spread to other continents during this period. An edition was published by White Russian refugees in Japan. According to one report by the leader of the World Zionist organization, the first time he saw part of the *Protocols* was when he was shown an abridged edition acquired by British officers who had accompanied some White units, presumably with the Volunteer Army. This edition was reportedly given to every White officer and N.C.O., propaganda for the troops.¹⁷¹

In the subsequent chapter we will examine how these ideas, summoned and spread to support the Russian autocracy, were spread all through the world, and specifically in Germany by refugees from the Russian empire and their propaganda. These ideas bore fruit when planted in other climates and encouraged a strain of “revolutionary reaction” in Central Europe and later in the Middle East.

¹⁶⁸ Kernez, p. 297-302.

¹⁶⁹ Kernez, p. 304.

¹⁷⁰ Cohn, p. 130.

¹⁷¹ Cohn, p. 130.