

sympathetic historian of the Comintern, writes more modestly that "some" in the West "viewed with satisfaction the prospect of a German expansion at the expense of the Soviet Union" (*Comintern and World Revolution*, 1964, p. 142).

Early in 1939, Poland's foreign minister went to Berlin with the apparent aim of signing an agreement with Hitler directed against the USSR. At this point, evidently, Stalin began to entertain the idea of a deal with Hitler himself. In his 18th Party Congress report in March, he saw war as almost certain—with the fascist states as the aggressor and the "non-aggressive" states appeasing them at every turn. The latter's aim, he said, was to have Germany and the USSR "weaken and exhaust one another . . ."

But, he declared, no visible grounds existed for war between Germany and the USSR. While still pressing for alliance with Britain, France and the United States, he did not exclude the possibility of coming to terms with Germany. Those of us politically active at the time may recall the intense discussions aroused by this

18th Congress report with its implications of rapprochement with Nazi Germany if collective security was finally rejected by the West.

The Nazis initially approached the USSR for discussions late in May and received a non-committal reply. But early in August, Stalin proposed discussions with Britain, France and Poland on mutual action in the face of Hitler's intent to attack Poland. The British sent an elderly retired admiral to Moscow without instructions. It was obvious to Stalin they were not serious about stopping Hitler. In response to an Aug. 15 note from Hitler, Stalin proposed a commercial agreement, a non-aggression pact and an agreement defining spheres of interest.

The Nazi-Soviet pact was thus Stalin's alternative to what appeared a clear intent to push Hitler to war with the USSR. Rosenthal may be right that the USSR would not have accepted the public aspects without the secret clauses defining spheres of interest, but there is no way of knowing this. ■

Stalinism and the Jewish Question

Lenin's Basic Principles Violated

By LOUIS HARAP

" . . . There is only one solution of the national question . . . and that solution is consistent democracy. . . . The national program of the Marxist . . . demands . . . equality of nations and languages, prohibition of all privileges altogether in this respect. . . . The proletariat welcomes any kind of assimilation of nations except forcible assimilation. . . . Inseparably connected with the principle of complete equality is the guaranteeing of the rights of a national minority . . . every citizen would be able to demand the rescinding of orders that could prohibit hiring, at state expense, of special teachers of the Jewish language, Jewish history, or the provision of state-owned premises for lectures for Jewish, Armenian or Romanian, or even for one Georgian child."

—Lenin, 1913

IN this centenary year of Stalin's birth Dec. 21, 1879, all the world, particularly socialists, and even more particularly Jewish socialists and JEWISH CURRENTS, is taking stock of the impress made by Stalin, especially from the late 1930s until his death in 1953. In these pages, Max Gordon has given us a general estimate of his significance [Oct.], and Sid Resnick and A. B. Magil have discussed the

present state of Biro-Bidzhan and the current anti-Semitic campaign in the Soviet Union, respectively [July-Aug. and May].

Now we take a deep look at the historical development of the predicament of Soviet Jews. How could it happen that the unequivocal principles of equality of nationalities, including the Jewish nationality, as set forth by Lenin in 1913, could deteriorate into the present dangerous prevalence of anti-Semitic propaganda in the guise of a patently false version of anti-Zionism and into the minimal opportunities for cultural and communal expression of the Jewish nationality in the USSR?

The socialist position on the Jewish question as understood by Lenin had two essential aspects. First, he believed, as indeed many socialists have held and even now agree, that the solution of the Jewish question, both inevitable and desirable, is assimilation into the majority nationality. In this view, relative freedom from persecution under advanced capitalism is conducive to absorption of Jews into the majority nationality so that all Jewish cultural and ethnic features will gradually disappear. Under socialism, this view holds, complete freedom from all class and national privilege and total

equality for Jews with all other citizens will consummate the process of assimilation and Jews will merge totally with the majority nationality.

Second, Lenin asserted categorically that such assimilation must *not* be forced. That is, it must *not be imposed* from above. He believed that under fully democratic conditions no kind of privilege would be tolerated. The distinction between voluntary assimilation, that is, the process presumed to occur under democratic conditions, and forced assimilation is essential to our understanding of the problem. Voluntary assimilation requires absence of any pressures of any kind in the form of punishment or reward upon the minority nationality to conform and be absorbed into the majority culture. Legal disability, however, except in extreme cases like fascism, is not the main problem for Jews because it is rare in modern capitalist or socialist governments. More dangerous and sinister are those subtle pressures outside the law in tacit social practice—under both capitalism and socialism—which in actuality intimidate Jews with social disabilities. Such pressures, whether tacit or overt, constitute privilege for the majority nation. For Jews to be exposed to such pressures is a form of forced assimilation.

In the Soviet Union forced assimilation has taken the form not only of prejudiced behavior against Jews but even—and most sinister—of administrative diminution and even elimination of the indispensable vehicles and institutions which sustain nationality—language instruction, schools, a press, theater and other cultural forms. This pressure has been administered at varying speeds since the late 1930s on the

pretext of Jewish lack of interest or audience.

In the post World War II years, instead of reviving the institutions that had been destroyed by the Nazi invasion, the Stalinist regime completed the process after 1948 by simply closing down what remained of Jewish institutions, the press and theater. This was crude forced assimilation. So drastic was the Stalinist intention in this regard—and sadly, this still remains true—that Jewish identity is being suppressed by as little mention as possible—usually in denigration—of Jews or Jewishness.

What has happened to the Jews in the Soviet Union since the late 1930s is in direct contradiction to the basic principles of Lenin—or of any democratic, Marxist approach to the problem. There is a certain irony in this. In 1913, Stalin wrote his famous essay on the national question under Lenin's direction and final approval. Stalin asserted the assimilationist principle more drastically and dogmatically than Lenin: "The Jewish nation is coming to an end, and therefore there is nobody to demand autonomy for." Stalin also reiterated that "no one has the right *forcibly* to interfere in the life of the nation, to *destroy* its schools and other institutions, to *violate* its habits and customs, to *repress* its language, or *curtail* its rights" (emphasis in original). He assigned these prohibitions with respect to the "nation," but they apply with equal force to nationality, whose equality "*in all forms*" he also asserted. Finally, "a state law based on complete democracy in the country is required, prohibiting all national privileges without exception and . . . restrictions on the rights of national minorities." (Joseph Stalin, *Marxism and the Na-*

tional and Colonial Question, N. Y., n.d., pages 35, 18, 58, 58-59.)

These are the rock-bottom principles on which socialism was presumed to operate. Under Stalinism, as every one knows, they were observed more in the breach than in observance. But they *were* observed in the early years of the Revolution. The Bolsheviks fought anti-Semitism, not only in defense of the Jews, but because this was a weapon of the pogromist counter-revolution. As a matter of principle one of the first acts of the new regime was to remove all disabilities from Jews and to make anti-Semitism a crime, and anti-Semites were frightened into repression of their prejudice for a time.

Further, nationality rights of all sorts were accorded the Jews as they were to all nationalities. By 1933, for instance, in the Ukraine there were 154 Jewish "Village Soviets." Thousands of Jews were settled on the land and recruited for factories. Jewish "national districts" were set up in the Crimea and the Ukraine. By the mid-1930s there were about 500 Jewish collective farms. In many areas Yiddish was the official language of administration and the courts.

A Jewish culture in Yiddish was generously supported by the state. The Ukraine alone had 250 Jewish schools by 1925. There was a varied periodical press, 10 Yiddish newspapers, and the Ukrainian Academy of Science sponsored an Institute of Jewish Culture. A galaxy of Jewish poets, fiction writers, and critics and intellectuals flourished in a Yiddish cultural renaissance.

In 1926, Soviet Pres. Mikhail Kalinin proposed assignment of Biro-Bidzhan as a Jewish autonomous region to counteract "assimilation

and national erosion" and establish a base for "the struggle to maintain its national identity." Strategic considerations—building a defense outpost in the Far East against Japan—as well, led in 1934 to official declaration of the area as a "Jewish Autonomous Region."

Despite the strong and widely held belief among socialists, Lenin among them, that a democratic Jewish future lay in assimilation, an equally democratic imperative of granting nationality rights to Soviet Jews was simultaneously followed in the practical affairs of the new socialist republic. Confronted by the Jewish reality, the new regime implemented the nationality rights of the Jews by providing unprecedented facilities for realizing these rights. But a dual process was taking place. At the same time as Jewish cultural life was vigorous, assimilation was also going forward. Who knows what might have happened if this dual process had been allowed to proceed without hindrance? Would assimilation have become dominant? As it happens, the violation of Jewish nationality rights and permissiveness toward anti-Semitism produced the effect exactly opposite to that desired—they revived a flagging Jewish awareness among many Soviet Jews on the way to assimilation.

The democratic process was gradually curtailed. There were some in the *Yevseksia* (Party Jewish Sections, administrators of Jewish affairs) who viewed this period in the adjustment of Jewish nationality to socialism as a prelude to the end of Jewishness, the sooner the better, and they acted to make it come sooner.

By the end of the 1930s, Stalin was beginning to take steps toward

liquidation of Jewish life. While Stalin was engaged in elimination of his opposition in the purges from 1936 onward, during which all sorts of innocent people were swept up in his monstrous police and prison system, many Jews were dispatched to execution or the camps.

It is difficult to extricate the anti-Semitic motive in the paranoid orgy of suspicion, imprisonment and execution. When the entire Jewish leadership of Biro-Bidzhan was swept into oblivion in 1937, was the cause anti-Semitism, Stalinist paranoia or both? Many Jewish leaders utterly loyal to Stalin, such as S. Dimonshtein, disappeared. Toward the end of the 1930s a contraction of facilities for Jewish culture, not entirely accountable by the shrinking but still substantial audience for Yiddish, began to be felt. The Leninist policy of *voluntary* assimilation, as well as other basic principles of socialism, were being eroded under the growth of Stalinist centralized power. In other words, a policy of *forced* assimilation was beginning. This was true in part also for other Soviet nationalities, and Great Russian chauvinism gathered strength.

What had happened? Stalin had branded anti-Semitism akin to "cannibalism" in 1931. By the 1940s, however, anti-Semitism had become a component of his paranoia. His false theory of the intensification of class struggle under socialism was the "theoretical" cover for his ruthless drive to sweep everything before him in the quest for absolute power. Thus, anyone who, in the paranoid mind of Stalin or his major and minor imitators, might be suspected of at some time standing in the way of this power was put away. More and more a tolerant or permissive attitude toward the overt expression

of anti-Semitism grew up, and at worst, anti-Semitism itself was actively brought into play. All this was buttressed by a rationale of assimilation.

A turning point was reached in 1939 with the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact. From then to the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union June 21, 1941, Jewish suffering at the hands of the Nazis dropped out of public attention—the subject was virtually taboo in deference to Nazi sensibilities. Even the term "fascism" was rarely used. Once the Nazis attacked, however, Jewish voices were once again heard in condemnation of Nazi brutalization of Jews, and appeals were addressed to world Jewry for support in the common struggle against Nazism. Soviet Jewish participation in the war itself was impressive; a half million Jews served in the armed forces and 160,772 were awarded decorations; 121 were Heroes of the Soviet Union. There were over 50 Jewish generals. Jews also fought in the Partisan units.

Yet there is evidence that anti-Semitism was rife in the armed forces. In the Nazi-occupied areas, Russian anti-Semitism, far from uprooted, once again flourished, fertilized by Nazi propaganda. The tragedy was that this anti-Semitism was not resisted by Soviet counter-propaganda. During the war mention of the Jews practically dropped out of the Soviet press. Why? Did the Soviet authorities fear that defense of the Jews might reduce popular morale? Or was concurrence with anti-Semitism itself by the authorities part of the explanation? Whatever the reason, Jews became scapegoats: to allow sleeping dogs to lie, Jews special suffering at the hands of the

Nazis barely received mention in the Soviet press.

On the international side the policy was different. Shortly after the Nazi attack prominent Soviet Jewish writers and intellectuals and artists issued an appeal to the Jews of all the world for solidarity and resistance against the Nazi assault on "all mankind" and in particular on "our unfortunate brothers." In 1942 the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee's formation was announced, with prominent Soviet Jews in the leadership, to sustain this appeal to Jews of the world to help win the war. The visit of Soviet Yiddish State Theater director and actor Solomon Mikhoels and Yiddish poet Col. Itzik Feffer to England and the United States in 1943 on behalf of the Committee was a highly publicized event. Thus, Soviet policy toward the Jews was accommodated separately to domestic and to foreign policy—suppression of mention of Jews at home out of fear of injuring morale because of anti-Semitism, and constant, widely publicized appeals to Jews in the rest of the world to exert themselves to the utmost in the war against Nazi barbarity.

From the end of World War II to 1948, Jews returning from the war met resistance in their efforts to restore Jewish institutions destroyed by the Nazis. However, the Yiddish publishing house Emes survived, and 110 Yiddish books were published from 1945 to 1948. But by 1948 a series of active anti-Semitic campaigns began at home at the same time that the Soviet Union gave indispensable diplomatic and even military aid to Israel. All through 1947 and 1948 the Soviet Union supported the birth of Israel by decisive diplomatic aid to the United Nations move to create independent Jewish

and Arab States in Israel. And after the State was established, an Israeli army under attack from invading Arab forces had its depleted stock of arms renewed by Czechoslovakia. A case can be made that Israel might never have been allowed to be born, or might not have survived after birth, were it not for Soviet diplomatic and military help.

The reason for this help was not only, as Gromyko said in the UN in 1947, to respond to the "legitimate aspirations of the Jewish people for the creation of this state . . . especially taking into consideration all the Jews have suffered in World War II." Certainly decisive was this major opportunity to weaken British imperialism by its removal from the Middle East, and to combat the reactionary Arab satraps of imperialism, as well as to open the way to Soviet influence in this strategic area on its Southern border.

A contradictory policy toward the Jews was simultaneously followed at home. Soviet authorities feared that the favorable Soviet actions on the Middle East issue would encourage spread of Zionism among the Jews. In 1948 the presupposition of international activity of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee—that there was a world Jewish people which could be appealed to in defense of its "brothers" against a common enemy—was contradicted by the momentous article of Ilya Ehrenburg in *Pravda* on Sept. 21, 1948 denying the existence of a world Jewish people. Ehrenburg argued against the "mystic" Jewish notion of nationality that Jews in various countries had nothing in common except the threat of anti-Semitism. This article turned out to be the harbinger of the most drastic attack on Jewish identity to date.*

There had been premonitory signs. The great actor Mikhoels had been murdered on the streets of Minsk in Jan., 1948. Jewish schools had not been reopened after the war. By 1948, only the Emes publishing house, the newspaper *Eynikayt* and the State Yiddish Theater remained. By the end of the year, the Anti-Fascist Committee had been liquidated, *Eynikayt* was suspended and the Emes Publishing house was closed down, and in the next year, the State Theater was shut. Destruction of all Jewish institutions, except the *Biro-Bidzhaner Shtern* and the synagogue, was accomplished.

Protests gathered all over the world and increased after Khrushchev's revelations in 1956. Nearly the entire Anti-Fascist Committee had been imprisoned and/or executed, as were the entire creative leadership of Yiddish culture. The basic charge was "nationalism," and some were falsely charged with attempting to make the Crimea into a separate Jewish state. No Yiddish books were published for about a decade. Forced assimilation appeared to have completed its work by administrative fiat.

Why this effort to destroy Jewish identity at home? Various reasons were offered in the USSR as covers for a series of anti-Semitic campaigns. There was a paranoid fear of Jewish national identity inter-

* Ehrenburg's record on Soviet Jews is not altogether as negative as his authorship of the *Pravda* article might imply. Among countervailing considerations are: his complaint that the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee was "not a Jewish Committee but an anti-Jewish Committee" because he thought its activities deficient in Jewishness; his refusal to cooperate with Stalin's plans in 1953 for "relocation" of Jews to the Far East; and his exposure of Stalinism and Soviet anti-Semitism in *The Thaw* (1954) and his memoirs in the 1960s.

preted as "Zionism," which was invested by Soviet propagandists with possession of some mysterious power, and which would in any case divert Jews from Stalinist orthodoxy. Another weak rationale was the claim that Jews were "cosmopolitans" and therefore disloyal to the Soviet Union. Restraints against anti-Semitism gradually weakened so that by 1953 the "Doctors' Plot" threatened to erode this resistance to the danger point.* For we now know that Stalin was exploring the project, after conviction of the Doctors, of "relocating" Jews from Soviet cities to the Far East. Only Stalin's death on March 5, 1953 put an end to these sinister plans.

By this time, the policy of the Soviet Union toward Israel was also

* Readers long familiar with *JEWISH CURRENTS* and its pre-1957 *Jewish Life* are aware that, from its founding in 1946 to the Khrushchev exposure of Stalinism in 1956 and the revelation of Soviet anti-Semitism in the USSR in the Polish Yiddish weekly *Folkshimme* (English translation in our May, 1956 issue), our magazine had been an unwitting apologist for Stalinism and Soviet treatment of the Jews. Our totally uncritical attitude toward events in the Soviet Union was prompted by a naive faith in the post-Lenin leadership of the USSR and in their efforts to realize socialism. We refused to believe many devastating facts about the Stalinist actuality because they were revealed by anti-Soviet and non-Soviet sources. Only when Soviet sources themselves exposed at least part of the truth did we finally realize how totally we had been taken in by an exploitation of our socialist convictions. In our June, 1956 issue we published our editorial apology to our readership, "Review and Reappraisal." Since then we have faced this situation with candor. We have made a special effort to seek out the facts about the Soviet Jewish situation and have kept our readers informed of developments, both positive and negative. We have repeatedly urged editorially the rectification of the status of Soviet Jews.

changing. After a few years of following a "neutralist" policy, called "non-identification with East or West," Israel abandoned it by a vote in the Knesset on Nov. 6, 1951, and became a full-fledged member of the pro-Western bloc in Cold War politics. Soviet support shifted from Israel to those Arab states which overthrew their reactionary old regimes. One of the standard false charges made against Jews in the Soviet dock regularly became "spying" for "Zionism." Soviet anti-Semitic propaganda took on an increasingly "anti-Zionist" cast. Totally uncritical support by the USSR of Arab policy soon followed, despite Arab determination to destroy the Jewish state which the Soviet Union helped to make possible, and whose right to exist the USSR still supported, as it does in principle to this day.

A steady stream of protest went on for years against the Soviet treatment of Jews from many parts of the world, from governments, and, following the Khrushchev report, even from Communist parties. These protests finally bore reluctant fruit when, in 1959, several Yiddish books appeared. Jewish singers and actors toured Soviet cities with Yiddish programs before packed houses, contradicting claims of Jewish "lack of interest." In 1961, *Sovetish Heimland*, a literary journal in Yiddish, began to appear bi-monthly (and monthly in 1965), publishing about 100 Yiddish authors. A trickle of Yiddish books appeared each year. But this did not mean that the policy of forced assimilation had been abandoned. The fact that Khrushchev in his 1956 speech did not even mention Stalin's crimes against

the Jews was evidence of the continuity with Stalinist practice on the issue of forced assimilation. The cultural concessions to the Jews were meager, and meant only to counteract protest: it was, and is still, the intention of the Soviet authorities to efface Jewish identity by attrition, if not all at once.

Together with these grudging cultural provisions, the "anti-Zionist" campaign went on. The most egregious anti-Semitism at this time, however, came from the so-called anti-religious tracts. A sort of climax was reached in 1963 in a book which charged Judaism with every social crime in the calendar, Trofim Kichko's *Judaism Without Embellishment*. So crude, blatant and wild was the book's anti-Semitism that it evoked protests from all over the world, including, after a time, from Communist parties, the CPUSA among them. The book was condemned officially even in the Soviet Union. But this proved to be proforma. Anti-Semitic articles and books continued to pour forth from the Soviet presses unabated, including several by Kichko himself.

The campaign reached a new level after the Arab defeat in the 1967 war. Anti-Judaism and anti-Zionism were now fused in a single hysterical thrust. Foreign policy motives for anti-Semitism ("anti-Zionism" in the interest of uncritical pro-Arab policy in which everything Israel says or does is wrong) and for domestic anti-Semitism (forced assimilation and reluctance to resist widespread anti-Semitism for fear of weakening popular support for the government) were joined. Through the entire gamut of the Soviet press, anti-Semitic articles under the guise of "anti-Zionism" proliferated: from Com-

munist Party and Government organs, *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, to the mass journal *Ogonyok*; to mass youth newspapers like *Komsomolskaya Pravda*; to the Red Army newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda*; to cultural journals like *Sovetskaya Kultura*; to Party leadership guides like *Agitator*; to learned journals. Between 1975 and 1978 no fewer than 50 anti-Semitic books were published in the Soviet Union.

What is even more profoundly shocking in this gush of anti-Semitism is its revival of the main themes of the notorious forgery, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*—that the “Zionists” (read Jews) were seeking world domination and were corrupting the morals and mind of the non-Jewish world. One Vladimir Begun, in a book published in Moscow in 1977 in 150,000 copies, wrote that Israel is a “predatory octopus whose tentacles, the Zionist organizations, have enmeshed half the world and suck the sap of life . . . The Zionist movement’s main strategic role (is) establishing dominion over the world. . . . Especially repulsive is the chauvinistic idea of the dominion over the world formulated by the ‘holy scriptures’ and reflected in prayers.”

So far has this vicious campaign gone that Lev Kopelev, the respected Jewish dissident, told in an interview (*N.Y. Times*, June 27) the startling story of a pamphlet, issued by an anonymous “Russian Liberation Movement,” charging that “Zionists” have taken control of the Politburo and that Pres. Leonid Brezhnev is the “chief Zionist.” It now appears that “Zionism” threatens to perform a similar function in the Soviet Union as “Communism” did in the United States. One is reminded of the John Birch Society’s charge that Eisen-

hower was a “Communist” and of Joe McCarthy’s charge of “Communism” against Gen. George Marshall. In May a letter was circulated among Moscow’s intellectuals charging that “a powerful Zionist lobby” exists in the Party Central Committee apparatus. One may well wonder what forces are at work at the top of Soviet power preparing to pass beyond anti-Semitic propaganda to something more drastic for the Jews, now that Pres. Brezhnev is on the verge of retirement and decisions must be made about a new leadership. Would they take up the cause where Stalin left off? Will this centenary of Stalin’s birth be “celebrated” by a return to Stalin’s anti-Jewish activism?

Dark as the present situation is, it is not without some hope. In the winter of 1978, a novel, *Heavy Sand*, by the Russian Jewish writer Anatoly N. Rybakov, broke the virtual taboo since the middle of World War II against mention of Jewish suffering under the Nazis, or even Jewish contributions to the war.* The novel delineates the experience and suffering of Jews in a small Ukrainian town occupied by the Nazis. Rybakov gives a rounded picture of the

* It is true that Jews have generally been treated as “positive” heroes in Soviet literature. A study by the B’nai B’rith International Council, *The Jew in Post-Stalin Literature*, by Prof. Maurice Friedberg, in 1970 confirms that, “considering the generally anti-Semitic tenor of Soviet journalism in the last two decades, there have been relatively few anti-Semitic literary works published.” Unfortunately, humanistic treatment of Jews in this work is restricted to individuals. The Rybakov novel is exceptional in that a whole Jewish community during the war is depicted, thus revealing the special suffering of the Jews as such.

people in this Nazi ghetto and the variety* of behavior by its Jews, heroic and deplorable. The author received many congratulatory messages from both Jews and non-Jews. One Jewish parent wrote him, “If my children had read your novel, they wouldn’t have left for Israel.”

It is well that Jews are still allowed, though with much obloquy and harassment, to emigrate in large numbers. Enjoyment of nationality rights to which Jews are entitled would no doubt considerably reduce the number of emigrants. Although discrimination against Jews in education and some professions does exist, in many areas the Jews do enjoy equality. It is a curious fact that, despite propaganda and discrimination, Party membership among Jews is proportionately higher than in any other Soviet nationality, though Party leadership at higher levels is denied them and they are represented in the Soviets at various levels in very low proportion to their numbers. Still published are *Sovetish Heimland*, an occasional book in Yiddish, the Yiddish *Biro-Bidzhaner Shtern* (which is simply a Yiddish version of the Russian paper with minimal Jewish content). A number of Yiddish professional actors and singers perform in concert tours. There are amateur Yiddish acting companies in Vilna, Moscow, Kovno,

Biro-Bidzhan and other places. But such activity goes on in an atmosphere of general hostility, and persists in spite of, and not because of, the Soviet attitude toward a surviving Jewish culture.

But the intensity of “anti-Zionist” that is in fact anti-Semitic propaganda grows and assumes the debased form of the *Protocols* in “Marxist” dress. As has been amply documented, since the 1950s the Jew has almost totally dropped out of Soviet school history texts, as if they had barely existed. A policy of forced assimilation goes on unabated. The effect has been harmful not only to Soviet Jews, but to the idea of socialism itself, which tends to be discredited among many people of good will who are not fully aware that anti-Semitism is itself anti-Marxist, anti-socialist.

The task of socialists in the capitalist world is thereby rendered far more difficult. The centenary of Stalin’s birth occurs at a time when a change in Soviet leadership is imminent. If the lessons of Stalinism are learned—and there is little evidence that they really have been—one imperative job that needs doing is for Soviet officials to put an end to the anti-Semitic propaganda that is debasing to the Soviet people and to restore full national rights to the Soviet Jewish people, with a renewal of appropriate cultural institutions. ■