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## FROM THE DREYFUS AFFAIR TO FRANCE TODAY

By HANNAH ARENDT

"What irony is this," cried Georges Clémenceau in a noteworthy passage, "that men should have stormed the Bastille, guillotined their king and promoted a major revolution, only to discover in the end that it had become impossible to get a man tried in accordance with the law!"<sup>1</sup> Indeed, it must have been a bitter experience for the French people to watch the century which had opened with the Revolution and the fame of the *Grande Armée* come to an end in a morass of petty scandals and political graft, with republic and army alike in the dust and a hitherto unknown species of nationalism rearing its ugly head.<sup>2</sup> More dreadful still, however, was the experience of the Jewish compatriots of Alfred Dreyfus who saw their liberty challenged and their rights impugned in the very land which had been the cradle of their emancipation.<sup>3</sup>

The case of Captain Dreyfus was never really settled. The reinstatement of the accused was never recognized by the masses and the passions which were originally aroused never entirely subsided. As late as 1908, nine years after the pardon and two years after Dreyfus was cleared, when, at Clémenceau's instance, the body of Emile Zola was transferred to the

<sup>1</sup> Clémenceau, *Contre la justice* (Paris 1900); article dated February 5, 1899.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. du Gard, Roger Martin, *Jean Barois* (Paris 1923) p. 313: "This is a remarkable century which opened with the Revolution and ended with the *Affaire*! Perhaps it will be called the century of rubbish."

<sup>3</sup> The most extensive and still indispensable work on the subject is that of Reinach, Joseph, *L'Affaire Dreyfus* (Paris 1903-11) 7 vols. The most detailed recent study, including exhaustive chronological tables, is by Herzog, Wilhelm, *Der Kampf einer Republik* (Zurich 1933).

Panthéon, Alfred Dreyfus was openly attacked on the street. A Paris court, moreover, by acquitting his assailant indicated that it "dissented" from the decision which had cleared Dreyfus. A similar mood revealed itself at the première of *L'Affaire Dreyfus* in 1931.<sup>4</sup> After thirty-two years the old atmosphere still prevailed: quarrels in the auditorium, stink-bombs in the stalls, the shock troops of the Action Française standing around to strike terror in actors, audience and bystanders. And here again it was the old story: the capitulation of Laval's government, unable or unwilling to guarantee order, a seeming triumph for the Dreyfusards, yet scarcely a night when the performance was not interrupted and, finally, summary suspension of the play. In 1935 when Dreyfus died the press was noticeably reserved.<sup>5</sup> It was only the socialist papers that spoke openly of the injustice he had suffered. Extreme rightist circles still averred that he had been a spy.<sup>6</sup> Far from having been settled by the court's verdict, the Dreyfus case has been throughout a vehicle of political expediency.<sup>7</sup> The Third Republic possessed no tribunal with sufficient authority to apply the law and Clémenceau, for his part, recognized in this fact the approaching end of constitutional government and the beginning of a national collapse.<sup>8</sup>

The Dreyfus case is a typical expression of the nineteenth century, when men followed legal proceedings so keenly because each instance afforded a test of its greatest achievement, the complete impartiality of the law. It is characteristic of the period that a miscarriage of justice could arouse such political passions and inspire such an endless succession of trials and retrials, not to speak of duels and fisticuffs. The doctrine of equality before the law was still so firmly implanted in the conscience of the civilized world that a single miscarriage of justice could provoke

<sup>4</sup> Written by Rehfish and Wilhelm Herzog this drama appeared under the pseudonym of René Kestner.

<sup>5</sup> The *Action Française* (July 19, 1935) praised the restraint of the French press while voicing the opinion that "the famous champions of justice and truth of forty years ago have left no disciples."

<sup>6</sup> There appeared a curious exception among liberal journals outside of France, *La Gazette de Lausanne*, which has expressed doubt as to Dreyfus' innocence.

<sup>7</sup> During the 'twenties two officers at the behest of the *Action Française* undertook to establish Dreyfus' guilt. The result is embodied in the standard reference manual of the anti-Dreyfusards, Dutrait-Crozon, Henri (a pseudonym), *Précis de l'Affaire Dreyfus* (Paris 1924).

<sup>8</sup> See his article dated January 17, 1898 in *L'Iniquité* (Paris 1899): "Patriotism requires a fatherland. And there can be no fatherland without justice. There is no fatherland without law."

public indignation from Moscow to New York. Nor did it occur to anyone, except in France itself, to associate the matter with political issues.<sup>9</sup> The wrong done to a single Jewish officer in France was able to draw from the rest of the world a more vehement and united reaction than all the persecutions of German Jews a generation later. Even Tsarist Russia could accuse France of barbarism while in Germany members of the Kaiser's entourage could express themselves openly in terms of indignation matched only by the radical press of the nineteen-thirties.<sup>10</sup>

### *The Third Republic in Decay*

The *dramatis personae* of the case might have stepped out of the pages of Balzac: on the one hand, the class-conscious generals frantically covering up for the members of their own clique and, on the other, their antagonist, Picquart, with his calm, clear-eyed and slightly ironical honesty. Beside them stand the nondescript crowd of the men in Parliament, each terrified of what his neighbor might know; the president of the republic, notorious patron of the Paris brothels, and the examining magistrates, living solely for the sake of social contacts. Then there is Dreyfus himself, actually a parvenu, continually boasting to his colleagues of his family fortune which he spent on women; his brothers, pathetically offering their entire fortune and then reducing the offer to 150,000 francs for the release of their kinsman, never quite sure whether they wished to make a sacrifice or simply to suborn the general staff; and the lawyer Démange, really convinced of his client's innocence but basing the defense on an issue of doubt so as to save himself from attacks and injury to his personal interests. Lastly, there is the adventurer Esterhazy, he of the ancient escutcheon, so utterly bored by this bourgeois world as to seek relief equally in hero-

\* The sole exceptions, the Catholic journals most of which agitated in all countries against Dreyfus, will be discussed below. American public opinion was such that in addition to protests there began to be organized a boycott of the Paris World Exposition scheduled for 1900. On the effect of this threat see below. For a comprehensive study of this subject see the master's essay on file at Columbia University by Rose A. Halperin, "The American Reaction to the Dreyfus Case" (1941). The author wishes to thank Professor S. W. Baron for his kindness in placing this study at her disposal.

<sup>10</sup> Thus, for example, H. B. von Buelow, the German chargé d'affaires at Paris, wrote to Reichchancellor Hohenlohe regarding the verdict at Rennes that it was a "mixture of vulgarity and cowardice, the surest signs of barbarism," and that France "has therewith shut herself out of the family of civilized nations;" cited by Herzog, *op. cit.*, under date of September 12, 1899. In the opinion of von Buelow the *Affaire* was the "shibboleth" of German liberalism; see his *Denkwürdigkeiten* (Berlin 1930-31) vol. i, p. 428.

ism and knavery. An erstwhile second lieutenant of the Foreign Legion, he greatly impressed his colleagues by his superior boldness and impudence. Always in trouble, he lived by serving as duelist's second to Jewish officers and by blackmailing their wealthy co-religionists. Indeed, he would avail himself of the good offices of the chief rabbi himself in order to obtain the requisite introductions. Even in his ultimate downfall he remained true to the Balzac tradition. Not treason nor wild dreams of a great orgy in which a hundred thousand besotten Uhlans would run berserk through Paris<sup>11</sup> but a paltry embezzlement of a relative's cash sent him to his doom. And what shall we say of Zola, with his impassioned moral fervor, his somewhat empty pathos and his melodramatic declaration, on the eve of his flight to London, that he had heard the voice of Dreyfus begging him to bring this sacrifice?<sup>12</sup>

All this belongs typically to the nineteenth century and in the ordinary course of events would never have excited the emotions of the Paris of 1931. The old-time enthusiasm for Esterhazy, like the hatred against Zola, had long since died down to embers, but so too had that fiery passion against aristocracy and clergy which had once inflamed Jaurès and which had alone secured the final release of Dreyfus. As the Cagoulard affair was to show, officers of the general staff had no longer to fear the anger of the masses when they hatched their plots for a coup d'état. Since the separation of church and state, France, though certainly no longer clerically-minded, had lost a great deal of her anti-clerical feeling, just as the Catholic Church had itself lost a great part of its political aspirations. Pétain's recent attempt to convert the republic into a Catholic state was blocked by the utter indifference of the people.

Nevertheless, the Dreyfus case left behind it two significant legacies. The first was hatred of the Jews, the second, suspicion of the republic itself, of Parliament and the state machine. The larger section of the public could still go on considering them, rightly or wrongly, as under the influence of the Jews and the power of the banks. Down to recent times the term anti-Dreyfusard could still serve as a recognized appellation of all that was anti-republican, anti-democratic and antisemitic. It could still comprise everything, from the monarchism of the Action Fran-

<sup>11</sup> Reinach, Théodore, *Histoire sommaire de l'Affaire Dreyfus* (Paris 1924) p. 96.

<sup>12</sup> Reported by Joseph Reinach, as cited by Herzog, *op. cit.*, under date of June 18, 1898.

gaïse to the National Bolshevism of Doriot and the social fascism of Déat. It was not, however, to these fascist groups, relatively unimportant as they were, that the Third Republic owed its collapse. On the contrary, the plain, if paradoxical, truth is that their influence was never so slight as at the moment when the collapse actually took place. What made France fall was the fact that she had no more true Dreyfusards, no one who believed that democracy and freedom, equality and justice could any longer be defended or realized under the republic.<sup>13</sup> At long last the republic fell like overripe fruit into the lap of that old anti-Dreyfusard clique<sup>14</sup> who had always formed the kernel of her army, and this at a time when she had few enemies but almost no friends. How little the Pétain clique is a product of fascism is shown clearly by its slavish adherence to the old formulas of forty years ago. That notorious Anglophobia, which once set the entire colonial administration against the republic and which was really the result of reverses in Egypt, remains unaltered, despite the fact that the French possessions in North Africa are today threatened from quite a different quarter and can be saved only by an Anglo-French alliance. While Germany shrewdly truncates her and ruins her entire economy, France's leaders in Vichy still tinker with the old Barrès formula of "autonomous provinces,"<sup>15</sup> thereby crippling her all the more. They have introduced anti-Jewish legislation more promptly than any Quisling, boasting all the while that they have no need to import antisemitism from Germany and that their law governing the Jews differs in essential

<sup>13</sup> That even Clémenceau no longer believed in it toward the end of his life is shown clearly by the remark quoted in Benjamin, René, *Clémenceau dans la retraite* (Paris 1930) p. 249: "Hope? Impossible! How can I go on hoping when I no longer believe in that which roused me, namely, democracy?"

<sup>14</sup> Weygand, a known adherent of the Action Française, was in his youth an anti-Dreyfusard. He was one of the subscribers to the "Henry Memorial" established by the *Libre Parole* in honor of the unfortunate Colonel Henry who paid with suicide for his forgeries while on the general staff. The list of subscribers was later published by Guillard, one of the editors of *L'Aurore* (Clémenceau's paper), under the title of *Le Monument Henry* (Paris 1899). As for Pétain, he was on the general staff of the military government of Paris from 1895 to 1899, at a time when no Dreyfusard would have been tolerated. See de Latour, Contamine, "Le Maréchal Pétain," in *Revue de Paris*, vol. i, p. 57-69. Brogan, D. W., *The Development of Modern France* (New York 1940) p. 382, pertinently observes that of the five World War marshals, four (Foch, Pétain, Lyautey and Fayolle) were bad republicans, while the fifth, Joffre, had well-known clerical leanings.

<sup>15</sup> Herzog, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

points from that of the Reich.<sup>16</sup> They seek to mobilize the Catholic clergy against the Jews, only to give proof that the priests have not only lost their political influence but are not actually antisemites. On the contrary, it is the very bishops and synods which the Vichy regime would turn once more into political powers who voice the most emphatic protest against the persecution of the Jews.<sup>17</sup>

Not the mere trials but the Dreyfus affair in its entirety offers a foregleam of the twentieth century. As Bernanos pointed out in 1931,<sup>18</sup> "The Dreyfus affair belongs to that tragic era which was not ended by the last war. The affair reveals its old inhuman character, preserving amid the welter of unbridled passions and the flames of hate an inconceivably cold and callous heart." It was not in France, however, that the true sequel to that era was to be found. France might have succumbed in time to the cancer of the nineteenth century but the evils which that century harbored first broke out in Germany. The reason that France fell an easy prey to Nazi aggression is not far to seek. Hitler's propaganda spoke in a language long familiar and never quite forgotten. That the "Caesarism"<sup>19</sup> of the Action Française and the nihilistic nationalism of Barrès and Maurras never succeeded in their original form is due to a

<sup>16</sup> The myth that Pétain's anti-Jewish legislation was forced upon him by the Reich, which took in almost the whole of French Jewry, has now been exploded on the French side itself. See especially the excellent work of Simon, Ives, *La Grande crise de la République Française: observations sur la vie politique des français de 1918 à 1938* (Montreal 1941). It is on Simon's conclusions (p. 175 ff.) that our estimate of France's post-war situation is based. That French antisemitism did not have to be invented by Pétain is shown further by Giraudoux, J., *Pleins Pouvoirs* (Paris 1939). The author was a close friend of Daladier and was minister of propaganda in the Daladier cabinet until its collapse. His antisemitic diatribes (p. 66 ff.) are directed specifically against the poorer Jews born abroad and it is just this tendency which characterizes the Vichy laws. Two years before the Pétain regime Giraudoux was writing: "We agree entirely with Hitler that no policy can attain its higher form unless it be racial;" *op. cit.*, p. 75-76. For Nazi criticism of French antisemitism see Vernunft, Wilfried, "Die Hintergründe des französischen Antisemitismus," in *National-sozialistische Monatshefte* (June, 1939); this critic spares Céline alone.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Simon, *op. cit.*, p. 176 ff. A London dispatch of December 29, 1941 reports that the Catholic Church is currently a target of Nazi attacks on account of its pro-Jewish attitude.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Bernanos, Georges, *La Grande peur des bien-pensants, Edouard Drumont* (Paris 1931) p. 262.

<sup>19</sup> Gurian, Waldemar, *Der integrale Nationalismus in Frankreich: Charles Maurras und die Action Française* (Frankfurt am-Main 1931) p. 92, makes a sharp distinction between the monarchist movement and other reactionary tendencies. The same author discusses the Dreyfus case in his *Die politischen und sozialen Ideen des französischen Katholizismus* (M. Gladbach 1929).

variety of causes, all of them negative. They lacked social vision and were unable to translate into popular terms those mental phantasmagoria which their contempt for the intellect had engendered. Moreover, France was saved from the taint of an indigenous fascism by that revolutionary tradition which saw in the ideal of equality a prime source of her glory and of which Clémenceau was the last champion. However, while this patriotic fervor won the first World War it was incapable of winning the peace.<sup>20</sup>

The present study is concerned essentially with the political bearings of the Dreyfus affair. Sharply outlined in it are a number of traits characteristic of the twentieth century. Faint and barely distinguishable during the early decades of the century, they have at last emerged into full daylight and stand revealed to us in all their grim aspect. After thirty years of a mild, purely social form of antisemitism it had become a little difficult to remember that there was once a day when the cry, "Death to the Jews," echoed through the length and breadth of a modern state and when its domestic policy was crystallized in the issue of antisemitism. Time had caused men to forget the Algerian pogroms instigated and carried out not, as was claimed, by "backward Arabs" but by thoroughly sophisticated officers of the French colonial administration. Forgotten too were the days when a free and equal franchise elected the Jew-hater Karl Lueger mayor of Vienna and another, Max Régis, mayor of Algiers. For thirty years the old legends of world conspiracy had been no more than the conventional stand-by of the tabloid press and the dime novel and the world did not easily remember that not so long ago, but at a time when the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* were still unknown, a whole nation was wracking its brains trying to determine whether "secret Rome" or "secret Judah" held the reins of world politics.<sup>21</sup>

The vehement and nihilistic philosophy of spiritual self-hatred<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Simon, *op cit.*, p. 20: "The spirit of the French Revolution survived the defeat of Napoleon for more than a century. . . . It triumphed but only to fade unnoticed on November 11, 1918. The French Revolution? Its dates must surely be set at 1789-1918."

<sup>21</sup> For the creation of such myths on both sides, cf. Halévy, Daniel, "Apologie pour notre passé," in *Cahiers de la quinzaine*, series 11, no. 10 (1910); even Herzog, *op. cit.*, p. 27 ff., retained a belief in "secret Rome."

<sup>22</sup> A distinctly modern note is struck in Zola's *Letter to France* of 1898: "We hear on all sides that the concept of liberty has gone bankrupt. When the Dreyfus business cropped up, this prevalent hatred of liberty found a golden opportunity. . . . Don't you see that the only reason why Scheurer-Kestner has been attacked with such fury is that he belongs to



suffered something of an eclipse when a world at temporary peace with itself yielded no crop of outstanding criminals to justify the exaltation of brutality and unscrupulousness.<sup>23</sup> The Jules Guérins had to wait nearly forty years before the atmosphere was ripe again for quasi-military storm-troops. It needed a widespread shake-up of the liberal economy before that coup d'état which had so long remained but a grotesque plot<sup>24</sup> could achieve reality almost without effort. The prelude to Nazism was played over the entire European stage. German political romanticism was an integral part of it and so was Pan-Slavism, in which the doctrine of racial selection was first combined with antisemitism. It is into this general framework that the history of the Dreyfus case, like that of "Christian Social" antisemitism in Austria, fits. For the present purpose, therefore, the Dreyfus case is no bizarre, imperfectly solved "crime,"<sup>25</sup> not an affair of staff officers disguised by false beards and dark glasses, peddling their sinister forgeries by night in the streets of Paris. Its hero is not Dreyfus but Clémenceau and it begins not with the arrest of a Jewish staff officer but with the Panama scandal.

### *The Political Antecedents of the Case*

Between 1880 and 1888 the Panama Company, under the leadership of de Lesseps, who had constructed the Suez Canal, was able to make but little practical progress. Nevertheless, within France itself it succeeded during this period in raising no less than 1,335,538,454 francs in private loans.<sup>26</sup> This success is the more significant when one considers the carefulness of the French middle class in money matters. The secret of the Company's success lies in the fact that its several public loans were invariably backed by Parliament. The building of the Canal was generally

a generation which believed in liberty and worked for it? Today one shrugs one's shoulders at such things . . . 'Old greybeards', one laughs, 'outmoded greathearts'." Cf. Herzog, *op. cit.*, under date of January 6, 1898.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>24</sup> The various attempts made during the 'nineties to stage a coup d'état are well analyzed by Rosa Luxemburg in her article, "Die soziale Krise in Frankreich," in *Die Neue Zeit*, year 19, vol. i (1901).

<sup>25</sup> Whether Colonel Henry forged the *bordereau* on orders from the chief of staff or upon his own initiative, is still unknown. Similarly, the attempted assassination of Labori, counsel for Dreyfus at the Rennes tribunal, has never been properly cleared up. Cf. Zola, *Emile, Correspondance: lettres à Maître Labori* (Paris 1929) p. 32, n. 1.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Frank, Walter, *Demokratie und Nationalismus in Frankreich* (Hamburg 1933) p. 273.

regarded as a public and national service rather than as a private enterprise. When the Company went bankrupt, therefore, it was the foreign policy of the republic that really suffered the blow. Only after a few years did it become clear that even more important was the ruination of some half million middle-class Frenchmen. Both the press and the Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry came to roughly the same conclusion:<sup>27</sup> the Company had already been bankrupt for several years. De Lesseps, they contended, had been living in hopes of a miracle, cherishing the dream that new funds would be somehow forthcoming to push on with the work. In order to win sanction for the new loans he had been obliged to bribe the press, half of Parliament and all of the higher officials. This, however, had called for the employment of middlemen and these in turn had commanded exorbitant commissions. Thus, the very thing which had originally inspired public confidence in the enterprise, namely, Parliament's backing of the loans, proved in the end the factor which converted a more or less sound private business into a colossal racket.

There were no Jews either among the bribed members of Parliament or on the board of the company. Jacques Reinach and Cornélius Herz, however, vied for the honor of distributing the baksheesh among the members of the Chamber, the former working on the right wing of the bourgeois parties and the latter on the radicals (the anti-clerical parties of the petty bourgeoisie).<sup>28</sup> Reinach was the secret financial counsellor of the government during the 'eighties<sup>29</sup> and therefore handled its relations with the Panama Company, while Herz's role was a double one. On the one hand he served Reinach as liaison with the radical wings of Parliament, to which Reinach himself had no access; on the other this office gave him such a good insight into the extent of the corruption that he was able constantly to blackmail his boss and to involve him ever deeper in the mess.<sup>30</sup>

Naturally there were quite a number of smaller Jewish businessmen working for both Herz and Reinach. Their names, however, may well

<sup>27</sup> For the report of the Commission of Inquiry see the *Précis de l'Affaire Panama*.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Suarez, Georges, *La Vie orgueilleuse de Clémenceau* (Paris 1930) p. 156.

<sup>29</sup> Such, for instance, was the testimony of the former minister, Rouvier, before the Commission of Inquiry.

<sup>30</sup> Barrès (quoted by Bernanos, *op. cit.*, p. 271) puts the matter tersely: "Whenever Reinach had swallowed something, it was Cornélius Herz who knew how to make him disgorge it."

continue to repose in the oblivion into which they have deservedly fallen. The more uncertain the situation of the Company, the higher, naturally, was the rate of commission, until in the end the Company itself received but little of the moneys advanced to it. Shortly before the crash Herz received for a single intra-parliamentary transaction an advance of no less than 600,000 francs. The advance, however, was premature. The loan was not taken up and the shareholders were simply 600,000 francs out of pocket.<sup>31</sup> The whole ugly racket ended disastrously for Reinach. Harassed by the blackmail of Herz he finally committed suicide.<sup>32</sup> Shortly before his death, however, he had taken a step the consequences of which for French Jewry can scarcely be exaggerated. He had given the *Libre Parole*, Edouard Drumont's antisemitic daily, his list of suborned members of Parliament, the so-called "remittance men," imposing as the sole condition that the paper should cover up for him personally when it published its exposure. The *Libre Parole* was transformed overnight from a small and politically insignificant sheet into one of the most influential papers in the country with 300,000 circulation.<sup>33</sup> The golden opportunity proffered by Reinach was handled with consummate care and skill. The list of culprits was published in small instalments so that hundreds of politicians had to live on tenterhooks morning after morning. Drumont's journal and with it the entire antisemitic press and movement emerged at last as a dangerous force in the Third Republic.

The Panama scandal, which, in Drumont's phrase, rendered the invisible visible,<sup>34</sup> brought with it two revelations. First, it disclosed that the members of Parliament and civil servants had become businessmen. Secondly, it showed that the intermediaries between private enterprise (in this case, the Company) and the machinery of the state were almost exclusively Jews.<sup>35</sup> In France, as in all European countries where they

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Frank, *op. cit.*, in the chapter headed "Panama;" cf. Suarez, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

<sup>32</sup> The quarrel between Reinach and Herz lends to the Panama scandal an air of gangsterism unusual in the nineteenth century. In his resistance to Herz's blackmail Reinach went so far as to recruit the aid of former police inspectors in placing a price of ten thousand francs on the head of his rival; cf. Suarez, *ibid.*, p. 157.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Frank, *ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Drumont, Edouard, *Les tréteaux du succès: les héros et les pitres* (Paris 1901), p. 229 ff.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Levailant, "La Genèse de l'antisémitisme sous la troisième République," in *Revue des études juives*, vol. liii (1907) p. 97.

had obtained emancipation, Jews had become, during a period of 150 years, closely connected with the finances of the state. In the eighteenth century this had taken the form of direct subsidies and war supplies furnished by Jewish financiers. Thereafter, however, it had developed into a thriving business in the underwriting of state bonds, with the practical result that the latter were scarcely ever bought by the public unless endorsed by Jewish banking houses. From the restoration of the Bourbons down to the time of the Second Empire this important branch of national economy had been pretty well monopolized by the Rothschilds. An attempt by their rivals, Pereires Brothers, to wrest it out of their hands by establishing the *Crédit Mobilier* ended in a compromise. Although, as we shall see, the creation of the republic seriously weakened this exclusive control by the Jews, they were still powerful enough in 1882 to drive into bankruptcy the *Catholic Union Générale*, the real purpose of which was to foster outspoken antisemitism.<sup>36</sup>

When the Peace Treaty was drawn up in 1871 its financial provisions were handled both on the German and on the French side by Jewish bankers.<sup>37</sup> Germany was represented by Bleichröder to whom, as is well known, Bismarck owed the financing of the war against Austria in 1866, while French interests were supervised by the Rothschilds. It was this fact which turned French antisemitism, hitherto harping on a social, demagogic note,<sup>38</sup> into a chauvinistic movement. The Jews were blamed for the defeat of France, whereas they really deserved some credit for directing the financial demands of Germany into reasonable channels. The truth of the matter is that since the Jews were an international element in Europe and represented international interests it was impossible to achieve the modern type of "peace through annihilation" so long as they had a hand in it. Nevertheless, immediately after the conclusion of the peace, the house of Rothschild embarked on an unprecedented policy:

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Lazare, Bernard, *Contre l'antisémitisme: histoire d'une polémique* (Paris 1896).

<sup>37</sup> Cf. the report of the German entry into Paris, in *Figaro* (February 28, 1883). The report achieved notoriety through its reproduction by Drumont in his *La France juive* (Paris 1885) vol. i, p. 396.

<sup>38</sup> See especially Toussenel, *Les Juifs, rois de l'époque* (Paris 1846). For the development of antisemitic ideologies in France see also Hoberg, Cl. August, "Die geistigen Grundlagen des Antisemitismus im modernen Frankreich," in *Forschungen zur Judenfrage* (Hamburg 1940) vol. iv.

it came out in open sympathy for the monarchists and against the republic.<sup>39</sup> What was new in this was not the monarchist trend but the fact that for the first time an important Jewish financial power set itself in opposition to the current regime. Up to that time the Rothschilds had accommodated themselves to whatever political system was in power. It seemed, therefore, that the republic was the first form of government which really had no use for them.

Both the political influence and the social status of the Jews had for centuries been due to the fact that they were a closed group who worked directly for the state and were directly protected by it on account of their special services. Their close and immediate connection with the machinery of government was possible only so long as the state remained at a distance from the people, while the ruling classes continued to be indifferent as to its management. In such circumstances the Jews were, from the state's point of view, the most dependable element of society just because they did not really belong to it. The parliamentary system allowed the liberal bourgeoisie to gain control of the state machine. To this bourgeoisie, however, the Jews had never belonged and they therefore regarded it with a not unwarranted suspicion. The regime no longer needed the Jews as much as before since it was now possible to achieve through Parliament a financial expansion beyond the wildest dreams of the former more or less absolute or constitutional monarchs.

Thus the leading Jewish houses gradually faded from the scene of finance politics and betook themselves more and more to the antisemitic salons of the aristocracy, there to dream of financing reactionary movements designed to restore the good old days.<sup>40</sup> Meanwhile, however, other Jewish circles, the so-called *homines novi*, were beginning to take an increasing part in the commercial life of the Third Republic. What the Rothschilds had almost forgotten and what had nearly cost them their

<sup>39</sup> On the complicity of the Haute Banque in the Orleanist movement see Charensol, G., *L'Affaire Dreyfus et la Troisième République* (Paris 1930). One of the spokesmen of this powerful group was Arthur Meyer, publisher of the *Gaulois*. A baptized Jew Meyer belonged to the most virulent section of the anti-Dreyfusards. See Clémenceau, *L'Iniquité*, in the article "Le spectacle de jour;" see also the entries in Hohenlohe's diary, in Herzog, *op. cit.*, under date of June 11, 1898.

<sup>40</sup> On current leanings toward Bonapartism see Frank, *op. cit.*, p. 419, based upon unpublished documents taken from the archives of the German ministry of foreign affairs.

power was the simple fact that once they withdrew, even for a moment, from active interest in a regime they immediately lost their influence not only upon cabinet circles but upon the Jews. The Jewish immigrants were the first to see their chance.<sup>41</sup> They realized only too well that the republic, as it had developed, was not the logical sequel of a united people's uprising. Out of the slaughter of some 20,000 Communards, out of military defeat and economic collapse what had in fact emerged was a regime whose capacity for government had been doubtful from its inception. So much, indeed, was this the case that within three years a society brought to the brink of ruin was clamoring for a dictator. And when it got one in the presidency of General MacMahon (whose only claim to distinction was his defeat at Sedan) that individual had promptly turned out to be a parliamentarian of the old school and after a few years (1879) he resigned. Meanwhile, however, the various elements of society, from the opportunists to the radicals and from the coalitionists to the extreme right, had made up their minds what kind of policies they required from their representatives and what methods they ought to employ. The right policy was defense of vested interests and the right method was corruption.<sup>42</sup>

It has been justly observed that at this period of French history every political party had its Jews, in the same way that every royal household once had its retainers.<sup>43</sup> The difference, however, was profound. Investment of Jewish capital in the state helped to give the Jews a productive role in the economy of Europe. Without their assistance the

<sup>41</sup> Jacques Reinach was born in Germany, received an Italian barony and was naturalized in France. Cornélius Herz was born in France, the son of Bavarian parents. Migrating to America in early youth, he acquired citizenship and amassed a fortune there. For further details, cf. Brogan, *op. cit.*, p. 268 ff.

Characteristic of the way in which native Jews disappeared from public office is the fact that as soon as the affairs of the Panama Company began to go badly, Lévy-Crémieux, its original financial adviser, was replaced by Reinach; see Brogan, *op. cit.*, book vi, chapter ii.

<sup>42</sup> Lachapelle, Georges, *Les Finances de la Troisième République* (Paris 1937) p. 54 ff., describes in detail how the bureaucracy gained control of public funds, how the Budget Commission was governed entirely by private interests and how after 1881 swindle, to quote Léon Say (a Jew), became the only law. With regard to the economic status of members of Parliament cf. Bernanos, *op. cit.*, p. 192: "Most of them, like Gambetta, lacked even a change of underclothes." The Panama scandal was preceded by the so-called "Wilson affair;" the President's son-in-law was found driving an open traffic in honors and decorations.

<sup>43</sup> As Frank remarks (*op. cit.*, p. 321 ff.), the right had its Arthur Meyer, Boulangerism its Alfred Naquet, the opportunists their Reinachs and the Radicals their Dr. Cornélius Herz.

eighteenth-century development of the national state and its independent civil service would have been inconceivable. The shady transactions of Reinach and his confederates never led to permanent riches.<sup>44</sup> All they did was to shroud in yet deeper darkness the mysterious and scandalous relations between business and politics. These parasites upon a corrupt body served to provide a thoroughly decadent society with an exceedingly dangerous alibi. Since they were Jews it was possible to make scapegoats of them when public indignation had to be allayed. Afterwards things could go on the same old way. The antisemites could at once point to the Jewish parasites of a corrupt society in order to "prove" that all Jews everywhere were nothing but termites within the otherwise healthy body of the people.<sup>45</sup> It did not matter to them that the corruption of the body politic had started without the help of Jews; that the policy of businessmen (in a bourgeois society to which Jews had not belonged) and their ideal of unlimited competition had led to the disintegration of the state in party politics; that the ruling classes had proved incapable any longer of protecting their own interests, let alone those of the country at large.<sup>46</sup> The antisemites who called themselves patriots introduced that new species of national feeling which consists primarily in a complete whitewash of one's own people and a sweeping condemnation of all others.

The Jews could remain a separate group outside of society only so long as a more or less homogeneous and stable state machine had a use for them and was interested in protecting them. When, however, the state machine was dissolved, so too were the closed ranks of Jewry, which had so long been bound up with it. The first sign of this appeared in the affairs conducted by newly naturalized French Jews over whom their native-born brethren had lost control in much the same way as occurred in the Germany of the inflation period. The newcomers filled the gaps

"It is to them and to them alone that Drumont's charge applies (*Les tréteaux du succès*, p. 237): "Those great Jews who start from nothing and attain everything . . . they come from God knows where, live in a mystery, die in a guess. . . . They don't arrive, they jump up. . . . They don't die, they fade out."

<sup>44</sup> See especially Drumont, *La France juive*.

<sup>45</sup> Herzog, *op. cit.*, p. 258-59: "The president of the republic, . . . the former leather merchant, taking superannuated Jewesses to bed; the cabinet ministers, related to the big bosses and the armament tycoons; the senators and civil servants drawing incomes as inactive supervisors of railroad and shipping companies; and the old dodderer who became governor of Paris because he was a relative or friend of someone who counted. . . . Can one have any regard for such a world?"

between the commercial world and the state. Far more disastrous in its results was another process which likewise began at this time and which was imposed from above. The division of the state into small factions, while it disrupted the solidarity of the Jews, did not force them into a vacuum in which they could go on vegetating outside of state and society. For that the Jews were too rich and, at a time when money was one of the salient requisites of power, too powerful. Rather did they tend to become absorbed into the variety of social "sets," in accordance with their political leanings or more frequently, their social connections. This, however, did not lead to their disappearance. On the contrary, they maintained certain relations with the state machine and continued, albeit in a crucially different form, to manipulate the business of the state. Thus, despite their known opposition to the Third Republic, it was none other than the Rothschilds who undertook the placement of the Russian loan while Arthur Meyer, though baptized and an avowed monarchist, was among those involved in the Panama scandal. Thus it came about that the newcomers in French Jewry who formed the principal links between private commerce and the machinery of government were followed by the native born. But if the Jews had previously constituted a strong, close-knit group, whose usefulness for the state was obvious, they were now split up into cliques, mutually antagonistic but all bent on the same purpose of helping society to batten on the state.

Seemingly removed from all such factors and immune from all corruption, stood the army, a heritage from the Second Empire. The republic had never dared to dominate it, even when monarchistic sympathies and intrigues came to open expression during the Boulanger crisis. The officer class consisted then as before of the sons of those old aristocratic families whose ancestors, as emigrés, had in fact fought against their fatherland during the revolutionary wars.<sup>47</sup> These officers were strongly under the influence of the clergy who ever since the Revolution had made a point of supporting reactionary and anti-republican movements. Their influence was perhaps equally strong over those officers who were of somewhat lower birth but who hoped, as a result of the Church's old practice of marking talent without regard to pedigree, to gain promotion with the help of the clergy.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Gonier, Urbain, *L'Armée de Condé: mémorial de la trahison pour éclairer l'annuaire de l'armée sous la Troisième République* (Paris 1898).



In contrast to the shifting and fluid cliques of society and Parliament, where admission was easy and allegiance fickle,<sup>48</sup> stood the rigorous exclusiveness of the army, so characteristic of the caste-system. Neither military life, professional honor nor *esprit de corps* was what held its officers together to form a reactionary bulwark against the republic and against all democratic influences. It was simply the tie of caste.<sup>49</sup> The refusal of the state to democratize the army and to subject it to the civil authorities entailed remarkable consequences. It made the army an entity outside of the nation and created an armed power whose loyalties could be turned in directions which none could foretell.<sup>50</sup> That this caste-ridden power, if but left to itself, was neither for nor against anyone is shown clearly by the story of the almost burlesque coup d'état in which, despite statements to the contrary, it was really unwilling to take part. Even its notorious monarchism was, in the final analysis, nothing but an excuse for preserving itself as an independent interest-group, ready to defend its privileges "without regard to and in despite of, even against the republic."<sup>51</sup> Contemporary journalists and later historians have made valiant efforts to explain the conflict between military and civil powers during the Dreyfus affair in terms of an antagonism between "businessmen and soldiers."<sup>52</sup> We know today, however, how unjustified is this indirectly antisemitic interpretation. The intelligence department of the general staff were themselves reasonably expert at business. Were they not trafficking as openly in forged *bordereaux* and selling them as nonchalantly to foreign military attachés as a leather merchant might traffic in skins or the son-in-law of the president in honors and distinctions? Indeed, the zeal of Schwartzkoppen, the German attaché, who was anxious

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Herzog, *op. cit.*, p. 38 f.

<sup>49</sup> See the excellent anonymous article, "The Dreyfus Case: A Study of French opinion," in *The Contemporary Review*, vol. lxxiv (October, 1898).

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Clémenceau in his defense of Zola on February 23, 1898 (published in *L'Iniquité*): "The sole *raison d'être* of the army is to defend the principle embodied in civilian society."

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Luxemburg, *loc. cit.*: "The reason the army was reluctant to make a move was that it wanted to show its opposition to the civil power of the republic, without at the same time losing the force of that opposition by committing itself to a monarchy."

<sup>52</sup> It is under this caption that Maximilian Harden (a German Jew) described the Dreyfus case in *Die Zukunft* (1898). Walter Frank, an antisemitic historian, employs the same slogan in the heading of his chapter on Dreyfus while Bernanos (*op. cit.*, p. 413) remarks in the same vein that "rightly or wrongly, democracy sees in the military its most dangerous rival."

to discover more military secrets than France had to hide, must have been a positive source of embarrassment to these gentlemen of the counter-espionage service who, after all, could sell no more than they produced.

### *Clerical Antisemitism*

It was the great mistake of Catholic politicians to imagine that, in pursuit of their European policy, they could make use of the French army simply because it appeared to be anti-republican. The Church was, in fact, slated to pay for this error with the loss of its entire political influence in France.<sup>53</sup> When the department of intelligence finally emerged as a common fake-factory<sup>54</sup> no one in France, not even the army, was so seriously compromised as the Church. Towards the end of last century the Catholic clergy had been seeking to recover its old political power in just those quarters where, for one or another reason, secular authority was on the wane among the people. Cases in point were those of Spain, where a decadent feudal aristocracy had brought about the economic and cultural ruin of the country, and Austria-Hungary, where a conflict of nationalities was threatening daily to disrupt the state. And such too was the case in France, where the nation appeared to be sinking fast into the slough of conflicting interests.<sup>55</sup>

In France, as in Spain, the prosecution of this policy was mainly in the hands of the Jesuits. Working deviously through members of the general staff they had cunningly jockeyed themselves into a position where they could rely on the military "higher-ups" to help them turn the army into a "state within a state."<sup>56</sup> An army, however, is by its very nature a political instrument whereas in France it was, in fact, nothing but an expression of the caste-system without the least semblance of political leadership. All the army could hope to get out of this situation, therefore, was to become once more somebody's vital tool and thereby achieve

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Lecanuet, Father Edouard, *Les Signes avant-coureurs de la séparation, 1894-1910* (Paris 1930), a work which appeared with the *imprimatur* of the Church.

<sup>54</sup> Esterhazy, who was in a position to know, described the second bureau as a "fake factory;" cf. Weil, Bruno, *L'Affaire Dreyfus* (Paris 1930) p. 169.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Clémenceau, "La Croisade," in *L'Iniquité*: "Spain is writhing under the yoke of the Roman Church. Italy appears to have succumbed. The only countries left are Catholic Austria, already in her death-struggle, and the France of the Revolution, against which the papal hosts are even now deployed."

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Herzog, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

political significance and a *raison d'être*.<sup>57</sup> The Catholic Church had, however, yet another card to play, namely, the widespread popular skepticism which saw in the republic and in democracy the loss of all order, security and popular volition. To many the hierarchic system of the Church seemed the only escape from chaos. Indeed, it was this, rather than any religious revivalism, which caused the clergy to be held in respect.<sup>58</sup> As a matter of fact, the staunchest supporters of the Church at that period were the exponents of that so-called "cerebral" Catholicism which was henceforth to dominate the entire monarchist and extreme nationalist movement and which actually meant nothing but more power to these traditionally sacred institutions, without belief in their otherworldly basis. This, indeed, had been the line first laid down by Drumont and later endorsed by Maurras.<sup>59</sup>

The Catholic clergy itself made no attempt to "save souls;" on the contrary, their policy was one of accommodation. In this, as the Dreyfus affair makes clear, they were conspicuously successful. Thus, when Victor Basch took up the cause for a retrial his house at Rennes was stormed under the leadership of three priests,<sup>60</sup> while no less distinguished a figure than the Dominican Father Didon called on the students of the Collège D'Arcueil to "draw the sword, terrorize, cut off heads and run amok."<sup>61</sup> Similar too was the outlook of the three hundred lesser clerics who immortalized themselves in the "Henry Memorial," a monument for all time to the shocking corruption of the French people at that date.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>57</sup> In an article published February 5, 1899 and reprinted in *Contre la justice Clémenceau* speaks of "a military caste under orders from the Church."

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Bernanos, *op. cit.*, p. 152: "The point cannot be sufficiently repeated: the real beneficiaries of that movement of reaction which followed the fall of the empire and the defeat were the clergy. Thanks to them national reaction assumed after 1873 the character of a religious revival."

<sup>59</sup> On Drumont and the origin of "cerebral Catholicism," see Bernanos, *op. cit.*, p. 127 ff.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Herzog, *op. cit.*, under date of January 21, 1898.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Lecanuet, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

<sup>62</sup> The *Libre Parole's* list of subscribers to a fund for the benefit of Madame Henry, widow of the Colonel who had committed suicide while in prison (see above, note 14), is one of the most important of the contemporary documents, since the subscribers were not content with furnishing cash but also took the opportunity of venting their views on the solution of the Jewish problem. Jews were to be torn to pieces, like Marsyas in the Greek myth. Reinach ought to be boiled alive. Jews should be stewed in oil, or pierced to death with needles; they should be "circumcized up to the neck." One group of officers could scarcely wait to try out the new types of guns on the 100,000 Jews who were infesting the country.

However, during the period of the Dreyfus crisis it was not her regular clergy, not her synods and certainly not her *homines religiosi* who determined the political direction of the Catholic Church. So far as Europe was concerned, her policies in France, Austria and Spain, as well as her persecution of the Jews in Vienna, Paris and Algiers were probably an immediate consequence of Jesuit tactics. It was the Jesuits who had always best represented, both in the written and spoken word, the anti-semitic school of the Catholic clergy.<sup>63</sup> Since the beginning of the nineteenth century the direction of the Church's international policy had passed into their hands.<sup>64</sup>

We have already observed how the dissolution of the state machinery facilitated the entry of the Rothschilds into the circles of the antisemitic aristocracy. The fashionable set of Faubourg Saint-Germain opened its doors not only to certain Jews but their baptized sycophants, the anti-semitic Jews, were also suffered to drift in.<sup>65</sup> Curiously enough, the Jews of Alsace, who like the Dreyfus family had moved to Paris following the cession of that territory, took an especially prominent part in this social climb. Their exaggerated patriotism came out most markedly in the way they strove to dissociate themselves from Jewish immigrants. The Dreyfus family belonged to that section of French Jewry which sought to assimilate even to the point of adopting antisemitism.<sup>66</sup> This adjustment to the

Among the subscribers were more than 1,000 officers, including four generals in active service, and the minister of war, Mercier. There was also a large number of intellectuals including, strangely enough, Paul Valéry, who contributed three francs, "non sans réflexion." Even Jews figure in the list, among them the convert, Arthur Meyer, and Gaston Pollonius of the *Soir*.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Koch, L., in *Jesuiten-Lexicon* (Paderborn 1934), s.v., "Juden."

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Boehmer, H., *Les Jésuites; traduction de l'allemand* (Paris 1910) p. 284: "Since 1820 . . . there has existed no such thing as independent national churches able to resist the Jesuit-dictated orders of the pope. The higher clergy of our day have pitched their tents in front of the Holy See and the Church has become what Bellarmine, the great Jesuit controversialist, always demanded it should become, an absolute monarchy whose policies can be directed by the Jesuits and whose development can be determined by pressing a button."

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Clémenceau, "Le spectacle du jour," in *L'Iniquité*: "Rothschild, friend of the entire antisemitic nobility . . . of a piece with Arthur Meyer, who is more papist than the Pope."

<sup>66</sup> On the Alsatian Jews, to whom Dreyfus belonged, see Foucault, André, "Un nouvel aspect de l'Affaire Dreyfus," in *Les Oeuvres libres* (1938) 310: "In the eyes of the Jewish bourgeoisie of Paris they were the incarnation of nationalist *raideur* . . . that attitude of distant disdain which the gentry affects towards its *parvenu* co-religionists. Their desire to assimilate completely to Gallic modes, to live on intimate terms with our old-established

French aristocracy had one inevitable result: the Jews tried to launch their sons upon the same higher military careers as were pursued by those of their new-found friends. It was here that the first cause of friction arose. The acceptance of the Jews into high society had been relatively peaceful. The upper classes, despite their dreams of a restored monarchy, were a politically spineless lot and did not bother themselves unduly either one way or the other. But when the Jews began seeking equality in the army, they came face to face with the determined opposition of the Jesuits who were not prepared to tolerate the existence of officers immune to the influence of the confessional.<sup>67</sup> Moreover, they came up against an inveterate caste-spirit, which the easy atmosphere of the salons had led them to forget, a caste-spirit which already strengthened by tradition and calling was still further fortified by uncompromising hostility to the Third Republic and to the civil administration.

A modern historian has described the struggle between Jews and Jesuits as a "struggle between two rivals," in which the "higher Jesuit clergy and the Jewish plutocracy stood facing one another in the middle of France like two invisible lines of battle."<sup>68</sup> The description is so far true that the Jews found in the Jesuits their first unappeasable foes while the latter came promptly to realize how powerful a weapon antisemitism could be. This was the first attempt and the only one prior to Hitler to exploit

families, to occupy the most distinguished positions in the state, and the contempt which they showed for the commercial elements of Jewry, for the recently naturalized 'Polaks' of Galicia, gave them almost the appearance of traitors against their own race. . . . The Dreyfuses of 1894? Why, they were antisemites!" Cf. also Marcel Proust's analysis of the new form of group-consciousness developed by the assimilated Jews of that generation, in the novel, *Sodom and Gomorra*, vol. i.

Herzog, *op. cit.*, under date of 1892 shows at length how the Rothschilds adapted themselves to the republic. Curiously enough the papal policy of coalitionism, which represents an attempt at rapprochement by the Catholic Church, dates from precisely the same year. It is therefore not impossible that the Rothschild line was influenced by the clergy. As for the loan of 500 million francs to Russia Count Münster pertinently observed: "Speculation is dead in France. . . . The capitalists can find no way of negotiating their securities . . . and this will contribute to the success of the loan. . . . The big Jews believe that if they make money they will best be able to help their small-time brethren. The result is that, though the French market is glutted with Russian securities, Frenchmen are still giving good francs for bad roubles;" Herzog, *ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> Cf. "K.V.T." in *The Contemporary Review*, vol. lxxiv, p. 598: "By the will of the democracy all Frenchmen are to be soldiers; by the will of the Church Catholics only are to hold the chief commands."

<sup>68</sup> Herzog, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

"the major political concept"<sup>69</sup> of antisemitism on a pan-European scale. On the other hand, however, if it be assumed that the struggle was one of two equally matched "rivals" the description is palpably false. For one thing the Jews never declared war. For another the Jews sought no higher degree of power than was being wielded by any of the other cliques into which the republic had split. All they desired at the time was sufficient influence to pursue their social and business interests. They did not aspire to a political share in the management of the state. The only organized group who sought that were the Jesuits. The trial of Dreyfus was preceded by a number of incidents which show how resolutely and energetically the Jews tried to gain a place in the army and how common, even at that time, was the hostility towards them. Subjected ever to gross insult, such few Jewish officers as there were, were obliged constantly to fight duels while gentiles were unwilling to act as their seconds. It is, indeed, in this connection that the infamous Esterhazy first comes upon the scene as an exception to the rule.<sup>70</sup>

It has always remained somewhat obscure whether the arrest and condemnation of Dreyfus was simply a judicial error which just happened by chance to light up a political conflagration or whether the general staff deliberately planted the forged *bordereau* for the express purpose of at last branding a Jew as a traitor. In favor of the latter hypothesis lies the fact that Dreyfus was the first Jew to find a post on the general staff<sup>71</sup> and under existing conditions this could not but have aroused not merely annoyance but positive fury and consternation. In any case anti-Jewish hatred was unleashed even before the verdict was returned. Contrary to custom, which demanded the withholding of all information in a spy-

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Bernanos, *op. cit.*, p. 151: "So, shorn of ridiculous hyperbole, antisemitism showed itself for what it really is: not a mere piece of crankiness, a mental quirk but a major political concept."

<sup>70</sup> See Esterhazy's letter of July, 1894 to Edmond de Rothschild, quoted by Reinach, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 53 ff.: "I did not hesitate when Captain Crémieux could find no Christian officer to act as his second." Cf. Reinach, T., *Histoire sommaire de l'Affaire Dreyfus*, p. 60 ff. See also Herzog, *op. cit.*, under date of 1892 and June, 1894, where these duels are listed in detail and all of Esterhazy's intermediaries named. The last occasion was in September, 1896, when he received 10,000 francs. This misplaced generosity was later to have disquieting results. When, from the comfortable security of England, Esterhazy at length made his revelations and thereby compelled a revision of the case the antisemitic press naturally suggested that he had been paid by the Jews for his self-condemnation. The idea is still advanced as a major argument in favor of Dreyfus' guilt.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Weil, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

case still *sub iudice*, officers of the general staff cheerfully supplied the *Libre Parole* with details of the affair and the name of the accused. Apparently they feared lest Jewish influence with the government lead to a suppression of the trial and a stifling of the whole business.<sup>72</sup> Some show of plausibility was afforded these fears by the fact that certain circles of French Jewry were known at the time to be seriously concerned about the precarious situation of Jewish officers.

It must also be remembered that the Panama scandal was then fresh in the public mind and that following the Rothschild loan to Russia distrust of the Jews had grown considerably. War Minister Mercier was not only lauded by the bourgeois press at every fresh turn of the trial but even Jaurès' paper, the organ of the socialists, congratulated him on "having opposed the formidable pressure of corrupt politicians and high finance."<sup>73</sup> Characteristically this encomium drew from the *Libre Parole* the unstinted commendation, "Bravo, Jaurès!" Two years later, when Bernard Lazare published his first pamphlet on the miscarriage of justice, Jaurès' paper carefully refrained from discussing its contents but charged the author with being an admirer of Rothschild and probably a paid agent.<sup>74</sup> Similarly, as late as 1897, when the fight for Dreyfus' reinstatement had already begun, Jaurès could see nothing in it but the conflict of two bourgeois groups, the opportunists and the clerics.<sup>75</sup> Finally, even after the Rennes retrial William Liebknecht, the German social democrat, still believed in the guilt of Dreyfus because he could not imagine that a member of the upper classes could ever be the victim of a false verdict.<sup>76</sup> The skepticism of the radical and socialist press, strongly colored as it was by antisemitism, was strengthened by the bizarre tactics of the Dreyfus family in its attempt to secure a retrial. In trying to save an innocent man they employed the very methods usually adopted in the case of a guilty one. They stood in mortal terror of publicity and relied exclusively on back-door maneuvers.<sup>77</sup> They were lavish with their cash<sup>78</sup> and treated

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Frank, *op. cit.*, p. 361.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Reinach, J., *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 471.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Herzog, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

<sup>75</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> Cf. Kohler, Max J., "Some New Light on the Dreyfus Case," in *Studies in Jewish Bibliography and Related Subjects in Memory of A. S. Freidus* (New York 1929) p. 293-318.

<sup>77</sup> The Dreyfus family, for instance, summarily rejected the suggestion of Arthur Lévy, the writer, and Lévy-Bruhl, the scholar, that they should circulate a petition of protest among

Lazare, one of their most valuable helpers and one of the greatest figures of his time, as if he were their paid agent.<sup>79</sup> Clémenceau, Zola, Picquart and Labori—to name but the more active of the Dreyfusards—could in the end only save their good names by dissociating their efforts, with greater or less fuss and publicity, from the more concrete aspects of the issue.<sup>80</sup>

There was only one basis on which Dreyfus could or should have been saved. The intrigues of a corrupt Parliament, the dry rot of a collapsing society and the clergy's lust for power should have been met squarely with the stern Jacobin concept of the nation based upon human rights,—that republican view of communal life which asserts that by infringing on the rights of one you infringe on the rights of all.<sup>81</sup> To rely on Parliament or on society was to lose the fight before beginning it.<sup>82</sup> For one thing the resources of Jewry were in no way superior to those of the rich Catholic bourgeoisie; for another all of the higher strata of society, from the clerical and aristocratic families of Faubourg St.-Germain to the anti-clerical and radical petty bourgeoisie, were only too willing to see the Jews formally removed from the body politic. In this way, they reckoned, they would be able to purge themselves of possible taint. The loss of Jewish social

all leading figures of public life. Instead they embarked on a series of personal approaches to any one or another politician with whom they happened to have contact; cf. Dutrait-Crozon, *op. cit.*, p. 51. See also Foucault, *op. cit.*, p. 309: "At this distance, one may wonder at the fact that the French Jews, instead of working on the papers secretly did not give adequate and open expression to their indignation."

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Herzog, *op. cit.*, under date of December, 1894 and January, 1898. See also Charensol, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Péguy, Charles, "Le Portrait de Bernard Lazare," in *Cahiers de la quinzaine*, series xi, no. 2 (1910).

<sup>81</sup> Labori's withdrawal, after Dreyfus' family had hurriedly withdrawn the brief from him while the Rennes tribunal was still sitting, caused a major scandal. An exhaustive, if greatly exaggerated, account will be found in Frank, *op. cit.*, p. 432. Labori's own statement, which speaks eloquently for his nobility of character, appeared in *La Grande Revue* (February, 1900) 337. After what had happened to his counsel and friend Zola at once broke off relations with the Dreyfus family. As for Picquart, the *Echo de Paris* (November 30, 1901) reported that after Rennes he had nothing more to do with the Dreyfuses. Clémenceau in face of the fact that the whole of France, or even the whole world, grasped the real meaning of the trials better than the accused or his family, was more inclined to take the incident as humorous; cf. Weil, *op. cit.*, p. 307-8.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Clémenceau in *L'Iniquité* (January 17, 1898).

<sup>83</sup> The attitude of Parliament and society is excellently described by Reinach, J., *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 233; vol. iii, p. 141.



and commercial contacts seemed to them a price well worth paying. Similarly, as the utterances of Jaurès indicate, the affair was regarded by Parliament as a golden opportunity for rehabilitating, or rather regaining, its time-honored reputation for incorruptibility. Last, but by no means least, in the countenancing of such slogans as "Death to the Jews" or "France for the French" there had been discovered what was almost a magical formula for reconciling the masses to the existent state of government and society.

### *The People and the Mob*

If it be the common error of our time to imagine that propaganda can achieve all things and that a man can be talked into anything provided the talking is sufficiently loud and cunning, so in that period it was commonly believed that the "voice of the people was the voice of God," and that the task of a leader was, as Clémenceau so scornfully expressed it,<sup>88</sup> to follow that voice shrewdly. Both views go back to the same fundamental error of regarding the mob as identical with rather than as a caricature of the people. Bernanos, with obvious reference to the Dreyfus case, describes antisemitism as the major political concept of the period. In this he is not altogether wrong for it was undoubtedly this "major concept" which mobilized the mob. True, it had been tried out previously in Berlin and Vienna, in the Ahlwardt movement and the Lueger campaign, but nowhere was its efficacy more clearly proved than in France. There can be no doubt that in the eyes of the mob the Jews came to serve as an object-lesson of all the things they detested. If they hated society they could point to the way in which the Jews were tolerated within it; and if they hated the government they could point to the way in which the Jews had been protected by or were identifiable with the state. While it is a mistake to assume that the mob preys only on Jews, the Jews must be accorded first place among its favorite victims.

Excluded as it is from society and political representation the mob turns of necessity to extra-parliamentary action. Moreover, it is inclined to seek the real forces of political life in those movements and influences

<sup>88</sup> Cf. Clémenceau in *L'Iniquité* (February 2, 1898). On the futility of trying to win the workers with the antisemitic slogans and especially on the attempts of Léon Daudet the royalist, see Dimier, *Vingt ans d'Action Française* (Paris 1926).

which are hidden from view and work behind the scenes. There can be no doubt that during the nineteenth century Jewry fell into this category as did Freemasonry (especially in Latin countries) and the Jesuits.<sup>84</sup> It is, of course, utterly untrue that any of these groups really constituted a secret society bent on dominating the world by means of a gigantic conspiracy. Nevertheless, it is true that their influence, however overt it may have been, extended far beyond the formal realm of politics, operating on a large scale in lobbies, lodges—and the confessional. Ever since the French Revolution these three groups have shared the doubtful honor of being, in the eyes of the European mob, the pivotal point of world politics. During the Dreyfus crisis each was able to exploit this popular notion by hurling at the other charges of conspiring to world domination. The slogan, "secret Judah," is due, no doubt, to the inventiveness of the Jesuits, who chose to see in the first Zionist Congress (1897) the core of a Jewish world conspiracy.<sup>85</sup> Similarly, the concept of "secret Rome" is due to the anti-clerical Freemasons and perhaps to the indiscreet slanders of some Jews as well.

The fickleness of the mob is proverbial, as the opponents of Dreyfus were to learn to their sorrow when, in 1899, the wind changed and the small group of true republicans, headed by Clémenceau, suddenly realized, with mixed feelings, that a section of the mob had rallied to their side.<sup>86</sup> In some eyes the two parties to the great controversy seemed now like rival gangs of charlatans squabbling for recognition by the rabble<sup>87</sup> while actually the voice of the Jacobin Clémenceau had succeeded in bringing back one part of the French people to their greatest tradition. Thus the great scholar Emile Duclaux, could write: "In this drama played before a whole people and so worked up by the press that everyone ultimately became an actor in it, we see the chorus and anti-chorus of the ancient tragedy railing at each other. The scene is France and the theater is the

<sup>84</sup> A study of European superstition would probably show that Jews came to this typically nineteenth-century cult of spiritualism fairly late. They were preceded by the Rosicrucians, Templars, Jesuits and Freemasons. The treatment of nineteenth-century history suffers from the lack of such a study.

<sup>85</sup> See "Il caso Dreyfus," in *Civiltà Cattolica* (February 5, 1898).

<sup>86</sup> Cf. du Gard, *Jean Barois*, p. 272 ff., and Halévy, Daniel, in *Cahiers de la quinzaine*, series xi, cahier 10 (Paris 1910).

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Sorel, Georges, *La Révolution dreyfusienne* (Paris 1911) p. 70-71; cf. Simon, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

world.”<sup>88</sup> Led by the Jesuits and aided by the mob the army at last stepped into the fray confident of victory. Counter-attack from the civil power had been effectively forestalled. The antisemitic press had stopped men’s mouths by publishing Reinach’s lists of the deputies involved in the Panama scandal.<sup>89</sup> Everything suggested an effortless triumph. The society and the politicians of the Third Republic, its scandals and affairs had created a new class of *déclassés*; they could not be expected to fight against their own product; on the contrary, they were to adopt the language and outlook of the mob. Through the army the Jesuits would gain the upper hand over the corrupt civil power and the way would thus be paved for a bloodless coup d’état.

### *The Anti-Dreyfusard Crusade*

So long as the Dreyfus family persisted in its bizarre methods of rescuing its kinsman from Devil’s Island and so long as the Jews, who really had a stake in the case, were concerned about their standing in the antisemitic salons and the still more antisemitic army, everything certainly pointed that way. Obviously there was no reason to expect an attack on the army or on society from *that* quarter. Was not the sole desire of the Jews to continue to be accepted in society and suffered in the armed forces? No one in military or civilian circles need give himself a sleepless night on *their* account.<sup>90</sup> It was disconcerting, therefore, when it transpired that in the intelligence office of the general staff there sat a high officer, who, though possessed of a good Catholic background, excellent military prospects and the “proper” degree of antipathy toward the Jews, had yet not adopted the principle that the end justifies the means. Such a man, utterly divorced from social clannishness or professional ambition, was Picquart, and with this simple, quiet, politically disinterested spirit the general staff was soon to have its fill. Picquart was no hero and certainly no martyr. He was simply that common type of citizen with an average

<sup>88</sup> These words, uttered in connection with the trial of Zola, are reproduced in Herzog, *op. cit.*, p. 190. Duclaux was the successor of Pasteur.

<sup>89</sup> To what extent the hands of members of parliament were tied is shown by the case of Scheurer-Kestner, one of their better element and vice-president of the senate. No sooner had he entered his protest against the trial than *Libre Parole* proclaimed the fact that his son-in-law had been involved in the Panama scandal. See Herzog, *op. cit.*, under date of November, 1897.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Brogan, *op. cit.*, book vii, ch. i: “The desire to let the matter rest was not uncommon among French Jews, especially among the richer French Jews.”

interest in public affairs who in the hour of danger (though not a minute earlier) stands up to defend his country in the same unquestioning way as he discharges his daily duties.<sup>91</sup> Nevertheless, the cause only grew serious when, after several delays and hesitations, Clémenceau at last became convinced that Dreyfus was innocent and the republic in danger.<sup>92</sup> At the beginning of the struggle a number of well-known writers and scholars rallied to the cause.<sup>93</sup> Clémenceau was also able to find support in the small and then insignificant circle of young intellectuals who were later to make history in the *Cahiers de la quinzaine*.<sup>94</sup> That, however, was the full measure of his allies. There was no political group, not a single politician of repute, ready to stand at his side. The genius of Clémenceau's approach lies in the fact that it was not directed against a particular miscarriage of justice, but was based upon broad, abstract ideals of righteousness, civic virtue and freedom from oppression. It was based, in short, on those very qualities which had formed the staple of old-time Jacobin patriotism and against which so much mud and abuse had been hurled.

As time wore on and Clémenceau continued, unmoved by threats and disappointments, to enunciate the same truths and to embody them into demands, the more "concrete" nationalists began to swing around. Followers of men like Barrès, who had accused the supporters of Dreyfus of losing themselves in a "welter of metaphysics," came to realize that the abstractions of the "Tiger" were actually nearer to political realities than the limited intelligence of ruined businessmen or the barren traditionalism of fatalistic intellectuals.<sup>95</sup> Although antisemitism had undoubtedly

<sup>91</sup> Immediately after he had made his discoveries Picquart was banished to a dangerous post in Tunis. Thereupon he made his will, exposed the whole business and deposited a copy of the document with his lawyer. A few months later, when it was discovered that he was still alive, a deluge of mysterious letters came pouring in, compromising him and accusing him of complicity with the "traitor" Dreyfus. He was treated like a gangster who had threatened to "squeal." When all this proved of no avail, he was arrested, drummed out of the army and divested of his decorations, all of which he endured with quite incredible equanimity.

<sup>92</sup> For this estimate of Clémenceau's part in the affair see also Hyndman, Henry M., *Clémenceau, The Man and His Time* (New York 1919) p. 174 ff.

<sup>93</sup> Most active among them were Zola, Anatole France, E. Duclaux, Gabriel Monod, the historian, and Lucien Herr, librarian of the École Normale.

<sup>94</sup> To this group belonged the youthful Romain Rolland, Suarez, Georges Sorel, Daniel Halévy and Bernard Lazare. The most famous of them was Charles Péguy.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Barrès, M., *Scènes et doctrines du nationalisme* (Paris 1899 and 1925) p. 12: "I can live only after the manner of my dead ancestors. They and my country demand a certain

gained ground during the three years following the arrest of Dreyfus, before the opening of Clémenceau's campaign, and although the anti-Jewish press had at last attained a circulation comparable to the chief papers', the streets remained quiet. It was only when Clémenceau began his articles in *L'Aurore*, when Zola published his *J'accuse* and when the Rennes tribunal set off the dismal succession of trials and retrials that the mob stirred into action. Every stroke of the Dreyfusards (who were known to be a small minority)<sup>96</sup> was followed by a more or less violent disturbance on the streets.<sup>97</sup> The organization of the mob by the general staff was remarkable. The trail leads straight from the army to the *Libre Parole*. Directly or indirectly, through the impersonal influence of the press or the personal intervention of its editors, students, monarchists, adventurers and plain gangsters were mobilized and pushed into the streets. Did Zola utter a word, at once his windows were stoned. Did Scheurer-Kestner write to the colonial minister, he was at once beaten up on the streets while the papers made scurrilous attacks on his private life.<sup>98</sup> And all accounts agree that if Zola, when once charged, had been acquitted he would never have left the courtroom alive.<sup>99</sup>

The cry, "Death to the Jews," swept the country. In Lyons, Rennes, Nantes, Tours, Bordeaux, Clermont-Ferrant and Marseilles—everywhere, in fact—antisemitic riots broke out and were invariably traceable to the same source. Popular indignation broke out everywhere on the same day and at precisely the same hour.<sup>100</sup> Under the leadership of Guérin

activity," and "Nationalism is the acceptance of a certain determinism" (p. 8). The plight of the intellectuals is illustrated by Simon's (*op. cit.*, p. 54-55) priceless story of how Charles Maurras had "the honor and pleasure," after the fall of France, of falling in during his flight with a female astrologer who interpreted to him the political meaning of recent events, advising him to collaborate with the Nazis.

<sup>96</sup> See, for example, Pujo, Maurice, *Après l'Affaire* (Paris 1898).

<sup>97</sup> The faculty rooms of Rennes University were wrecked after five professors had declared themselves in favor of a retrial. After the appearance of Zola's first article Royalist students demonstrated outside the offices of *Figaro*, after which the paper desisted from further articles of the same type. The publisher of the pro-Dreyfus *La Bataille* was beaten up on the street. The judges of the Court of Cassation, which finally set aside the verdict of 1894, reported unanimously that they had been threatened with "unlawful assault." Examples could be multiplied.

<sup>98</sup> See above, note 89.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. Weil, *op. cit.*, p. 125, and Herzog, *op. cit.*, under date of June, 1898.

<sup>100</sup> Antisemitic demonstrations took place, on January 18, 1898, at Bordeaux, Marseille, Clermont-Ferrant, Nantes, Rouen and Lyon. On the following day student riots broke out in Rouen, Toulouse and Nantes.

the mob took on a military complexion. Antisemitic shock troops appeared on the streets and made certain that every pro-Dreyfus meeting should end in bloodshed. The complicity of the police was everywhere patent.<sup>101</sup>

The most modern figure on the side of the anti-Dreyfusards was probably Jules Guérin. Ruined in business, he had begun his political career as a police stool pigeon. At that time he had been, of course, quite unconscious of the heights to which this humble office was ultimately to lead his principal. Nevertheless, it had given him a thorough mastery of that discipline and flair for organization which invariably marks the underworld. This he was later able to divert into political channels, becoming the founder and head of the Ligue Antisémitique. In him high society found its first criminal hero.<sup>102</sup> In its adulation of Guérin bourgeois society showed clearly that in its code of morals and ethics it had broken for good with its own standards. Behind the Ligue stood two sinister forces, the Duke of Orléans<sup>103</sup> and the Marquis de Morès, organizer of the butchers of Paris.<sup>104</sup> The Brigade had little difficulty in adapting its original purpose to the cause of the antisemites.

Most eloquent of these modern tendencies was the farcical siege of the so-called Fort Chabrol.<sup>105</sup> It was here, in this first of "Brown Houses," that the cream of the Ligue Antisémitique foregathered when the police decided at last to arrest their leader. The installations were the acme of technical perfection. "The windows were protected by iron shutters.

<sup>101</sup> The crudest instance was that of the police prefect of Rennes, who advised Professor Victor Basch, when the latter's house was stormed by a mob 2,000 strong, that he ought to hand in his resignation, as he could no longer guarantee his safety.

<sup>102</sup> Reinach, J., *op. cit.*, vol. iii, p. 273: "Society hostesses fell in step with Guérin. Their language (which scarcely outran their thoughts) would have struck horror in the Amazons of Dahomey. . . . Faubourg St.-Germain took the opportunity to break with the Jews who had forced its doors." Of especial interest in this connection is the article of Chevrillon, André, "Huit jours à Rennes," in *La Grande Revue* (February, 1900). He relates, *inter alia*, the following revealing incident: "A physician, speaking to some friends of mine about Dreyfus, chanced to remark, 'I'd like to torture him.' 'And I wish,' rejoined one of the ladies, 'that he were innocent. Then he'd suffer more!'"

<sup>103</sup> Cf. Bernanos, *op. cit.*, p. 346 ff., and Maurras, Charles, *Dictionnaire politique et critique* (Paris 1932) vol. ii, p. 360.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. Brogan, *op. cit.*, p. 284.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. Frank, *op. cit.*, in the chapter, "Händler und Soldaten:" "The siege seemed ludicrous but at the time of the Rennes trial it was a serious business. . . . The clash with the police was the most serious Paris had experienced in twenty years."

There was a system of electric bells and telephones from cellar to roof. Five yards or so behind the massive entrance, itself always kept locked and bolted, there was a tall grill of cast iron. On the right, between the grill and the main entrance was a small door, likewise iron-plated, behind which sentries, handpicked from the butcher legions, mounted guard day and night."<sup>106</sup> Max Régis, instigator of the Algerian pogroms, is another who strikes a modern note. It was this youthful Régis who once called upon a cheering Paris rabble to "water the tree of freedom with the blood of the Jews."<sup>107</sup> Régis represented that section of the movement which hoped to achieve power by legal and parliamentary methods. In accordance with this program he had himself elected mayor of Algiers and utilized his office to unleash the pogroms in which several Jews were killed, Jewish women criminally assaulted and some 158 Jewish-owned stores looted.<sup>108</sup> It was to him also that the polished and cultured Edouard Drumont, that most famous French antisemite, owed his seat in parliament.

What was new in all this was not the activity of the mob; for that there were abundant precedents. What was new and surprising at the time—though all too familiar to us—was the organization of the mob and the hero-worship enjoyed by its leaders. The mob became the direct agent of that "concrete" nationalism espoused by Barrès, Maurras and Daudet, who together formed what was undoubtedly a kind of élite of the younger intellectuals. These men, who despised the people and who had themselves but recently emerged from a ruinous and decadent cult of estheticism, saw in the mob a living expression of virile and primitive "strength." It was they and their theories which first identified the mob with the people and converted its leaders into national heroes.<sup>109</sup> It was their philosophy of pessimism (of which Baudelaire had been the greatest forerunner) that paved the way for the ultimate collapse of the European

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Bernanos, *op. cit.*, p. 346.

<sup>107</sup> See Herzog, *op. cit.*, under date of February, 1898.

<sup>108</sup> The figures are those of Lecanuet, *op. cit.*, p. 160 ff.

<sup>109</sup> For these theories see especially Maurras, Charles, *Au Signe de Flore; souvenirs de la vie politique l'Affaire Dreyfus, la fondation de l'Action Française* (Paris 1931); Barres, M., *Scènes et doctrines du nationalisme*; Daudet, Léon, *Panorama de la Troisième République* (Paris 1936).

intelligentsia. Even Clémenceau was not immune from the temptation to identify the mob with the people.<sup>110</sup> What made him especially prone to this error was the consistently ambiguous attitude of the Labor party toward the question of "abstract" justice. No party, including the socialists, was yet ready to make an issue of justice *per se*.<sup>111</sup> The socialists stood for the interests of the workers, the opportunists for those of the liberal bourgeoisie, the coalitionists for those of the Catholic higher classes and the radicals for those of the anti-clerical petty bourgeoisie. The socialists had the great advantage of speaking in the name of a homogeneous and united class. Unlike the bourgeois parties they did not represent a society which had split into innumerable cliques and cabals. Nevertheless, they were concerned primarily and essentially with the interests of their class. They were not troubled by any higher obligation towards human solidarity<sup>112</sup> and had no conception of what communal life really meant. Typical of their attitude was the observation of Jules Guesde, the counterpart of Jaurès in the French party, that "law and honor are mere words."<sup>113</sup>

The nihilism which characterized the nationalists was no monopoly of the anti-Dreyfusards. On the contrary, a large proportion of the socialists and many of those who championed Dreyfus, like Guesde, spoke the same language. If the Catholic *La Croix* remarked that "it is no longer a question whether Dreyfus is innocent or guilty but only of who will win, the friends of the army or its foes,"<sup>114</sup> the corresponding sentiment might well have been voiced, *mutatis mutandis*, by the partisans of Dreyfus.<sup>115</sup> Not only the mob but a considerable section of the French people declared itself as, at best, quite uninterested whether one class of the population was or was not to be excluded from the law.<sup>116</sup>

<sup>110</sup> This comes out most clearly in his preface to *Contre la justice*.

<sup>111</sup> Cf. Clémenceau, "À la dérive," in *L'Iniquité*: "There is no party ready to stand, come what may, for justice, the sole unbreakable bond of union between civilized men."

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, "Vainqueurs et Vaincus."

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Herzog, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, under date of August 4, 1899.

<sup>115</sup> It was precisely this which so greatly disillusioned the champions of Dreyfus, especially the circle around Charles Péguy. And it is this viewpoint that informs the instructive novel by du Gard, *Jean Barois*.

<sup>116</sup> Cf. Clémenceau, "Après l'attaque," in *L'Iniquité*.



*The Issue Joined*

As soon as the mob began its campaign of terror against the partisans of Dreyfus, it found the path open before it. As Clémenceau attests,<sup>117</sup> the workers of Paris cared little for the whole affair. If the various elements of the bourgeoisie squabbled among themselves, that, they thought, scarcely affected their own interests.

With the open consent of the people [wrote Clémenceau] they have proclaimed before the world the failure of their "democracy." Through them a sovereign people shows itself thrust from its throne of justice, shorn of its infallible majesty. For there is no denying that this evil has befallen us with the full complicity of the people itself. . . . The people is not God. Anyone could have foreseen that this new divinity would some day topple to his fall. A collective tyrant, spread over the length and breadth of the land, is no more acceptable than a single tyrant ensconced upon his throne.<sup>118</sup>

At last Clémenceau convinced Jaurès that an infringement of the rights of one man was an infringement of the rights of all. But in this he was successful only because the wrongdoers happened to be the inveterate enemies of the masses ever since the Revolution, namely, the aristocracy and the clergy. It was *against* the rich and the clergy, not *for* the republic, not *for* justice and freedom that the workers finally took to the streets. True, both the speeches of Jaurès and the articles of Clémenceau are redolent of the old revolutionary passion for human rights. True also that this passion was strong enough to rally the people to the struggle, but first they had to be convinced that not only justice and the honor of the republic were at stake but their own class "interests." As it was, a large number of socialists, both inside and outside the country, still regarded it as a mistake to meddle (as they put it) in the internecine quarrels of the bourgeoisie or to bother about saving the republic.

The first to wean the workers, at least partially, from this mood of indifference was that great lover of the people, Emile Zola. In his famous indictment of the republic he was also, however, the first to deflect from the presentation of precise political facts and to strike the discordant note of unreasoning hatred against "secret Rome." This was a note which Clémenceau adopted but reluctantly, though Jaurès with enthusiasm.

<sup>117</sup> Cf. *ibid.* (February 25, 1898).

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Clémenceau's preface to *Contre la justice*.

The real achievement of Zola, which is hard to detect from his pamphlets, consists in the resolute and dauntless courage with which this man, whose life and works the people had exalted to a point "bordering on idolatry," stood up to challenge, combat and finally conquer the masses, in whom, like Clémenceau, he could all the time scarcely distinguish the mob from the people. "Men have been found to resist the most powerful monarchs and to refuse to bow down before them, but few indeed have been found to resist the crowd, to stand up alone before misguided masses, to face their implacable frenzy without weapons and with folded arms to dare a no when a yes is demanded. Such a man was Zola!"<sup>119</sup>

Scarcely had *J'accuse* appeared than the Paris socialists held their first meeting and passed a resolution calling for a revision of the Dreyfus case. Yet their attitude was still ambivalent. A bare five days later some thirty-two socialist officials promptly came out with a declaration that the fate of Dreyfus, "the class enemy," was no concern of theirs. Behind this declaration stood large elements of the party in Paris.<sup>120</sup> Indeed, a tacit split in its ranks continued throughout the affair, even though the unity was sufficient to prevent the Ligue Antisémitique from thenceforth controlling the streets. A socialist meeting even branded antisemitism as "a new form of reaction." Yet a few months later when the parliamentary elections took place, Jaurès was not returned and shortly afterwards, when Cavaignac, the minister of war, treated the Chamber to a speech attacking Dreyfus and commending the army as indispensable, the delegates resolved, with only two dissenting votes, to placard the walls of Paris with the text of that address. Similarly, when the great Paris strike broke out in October of the same year, Münster, the German ambassador, was able reliably and confidentially to inform Berlin that "so far as the broad masses are concerned, this is in no sense a political issue. The workers are simply out for higher wages and these they are bound to get in the end. As for the Dreyfus case, they have never bothered their heads about it."<sup>121</sup>

Who then, in broad terms, were the supporters of Dreyfus? Who were

<sup>119</sup> Clémenceau, in a speech before the Senate several years later; cf. Weil, *op. cit.*, p. 112-13.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. Clémenceau, in *L'Iniquité* (February 25, 1898): "An important section of the socialist opposition refuses to follow Allemane and Jaurès [who were for a retrial]."

<sup>121</sup> See Herzog, *op. cit.*, under date of October 10, 1898.

the 300,000 Frenchmen who so eagerly devoured Zola's *J'accuse* and who followed religiously the editorials of Clémenceau? Who were the men who finally succeeded in splitting every class in French society into opposing factions over the Dreyfus issue? The answer is that they formed no party or homogeneous group. Admittedly they were recruited more from the lower than from the upper classes, comprising, characteristically enough, more physicians than lawyers or civil servants. By and large, however, they were a mixture of diverse elements: men as far apart as Zola and Péguy or Jaurès and Picquart, men who on the morrow would part company and go their several ways. "They come from political parties and religious communities who have nothing in common, who are even in conflict with each other. . . . Those men do not know each other. They have fought and on occasion will fight again. Do not deceive yourselves; those are the 'élite' of the French democracy."<sup>122</sup> Had Clémenceau possessed enough self-confidence at that time to consider only those who heeded him the true people of France, he would not have fallen prey to that fatal pride which marked the rest of his career.<sup>123</sup> He could never stoop to play the claue to the antics of the mob. Therefore, once he began to identify the mob with the people, he did indeed cut the ground from under his feet and forced himself into that grim aloofness which thereafter distinguished him.

The disunity of the French people and of its political groups existed only in the ranks of the Labor party. All others, as well as all parliamentary groups, were at the beginning of the campaign for a retrial solidly against Dreyfus. All that this means, however, is that the bourgeois parties no longer represented the true feelings of the electorate, for that same disunity which was so patent in the case of the socialists in fact obtained among almost all sections of the populace. Everywhere it was the minority who took up Clémenceau's plea for justice. It was this heterogeneous minority which made up the supporters of Dreyfus. Their fight against the army and the corrupt complicity of the republic which backed it was the dominating factor in French internal politics

<sup>122</sup> Cf. "K.V.T.," in *The Contemporary Review*, vol. lxxiv, p. 608.

<sup>123</sup> It is with reference to this attitude that Suarez entitles his biography of the French statesman "The Proud Life of Clémenceau." See also, Benjamin, *Clémenceau dans la retraite*.

from the end of 1897 until the opening of the exposition in 1900. It also exerted an appreciable influence on the foreign policy of the nation. Nevertheless, this entire struggle, which was to result eventually in at least a partial triumph, took place exclusively outside of Parliament. In that so-called representative assembly, comprising as it did a full 600 delegates drawn from every shade and color both of labor and of the bourgeoisie, there were in 1898 but two supporters of Dreyfus and one of them, Jaurès, was not re-elected.

The disturbing thing about the Dreyfus affair is that it was not only the mob which had to work along extra-parliamentary lines. The entire minority, fighting as it was for Parliament, democracy and the republic, was likewise constrained to wage its battle outside the Chamber. The only difference between the two elements was that while the one used the streets, the other resorted to the press and law court. In other words, the whole of the political life of France during the Dreyfus crisis was carried on outside Parliament. Nor do the several parliamentary votes in favor of the army and against a retrial in any way invalidate this conclusion. Although usually regarded as expressing a general anti-Dreyfus sentiment, it is significant to remember that when parliamentary feeling began to veer, shortly before the opening of the Paris Exposition, Minister of War Gallifet was able to declare truthfully that this in no wise represented the mood of the country.<sup>124</sup> On the other hand the vote against a retrial must not be construed as an indorsement of the coup d'état policy which the Jesuits and certain radical antisemites were trying to introduce with the help of the army.<sup>125</sup> Rather was it due to plain resistance against any change in the *status quo*. As a matter of fact, an equally overwhelming majority of the Chamber would have rejected a military-clerical dictatorship.

<sup>124</sup> Gallifet, minister of war, wrote to Waldeck: "Let us not forget that the great majority of people in France are antisemitic. Our position would be, therefore, that on the one side we would have the entire army and the majority of Frenchmen, not to speak of the civil service and the senators; . . ." cf. Reinach, J., *op. cit.*, vol. v, p. 579.

<sup>125</sup> The best-known of such attempts is that of Déroulèdes who sought, while attending the funeral of President Paul Faure, in February, 1899, to incite General Roget to mutiny. The German ambassadors and *chargés d'affaires* in Paris reported such attempts every few months. The situation is well summed up by Barrès, *op. cit.*, p. 4: "In Rennes we have found our battlefield. All we need is soldiers or, more precisely, generals—or, still more precisely, a general."

Those members of Parliament who had learned to regard politics as the professional representation of vested interests were naturally anxious to preserve that state of affairs upon which their "calling" and their profits depended. The Dreyfus case revealed, moreover, that the people likewise desired its representatives to look after its own special interests rather than to function as statesmen. It was distinctly unpopular to mention the case in election propaganda. Had this been due solely to antisemitism the situation of the Dreyfusards would certainly have been hopeless. In point of fact, during the elections they already enjoyed considerable support among the working class. Nevertheless even those who sided with Dreyfus did not care to see this political question dragged into the elections. It was, indeed, because he insisted on making it the pivot of his campaign that Jaurès lost his seat.

If Clémenceau and the Dreyfusards succeeded in winning over large sections of all classes to the demand for a retrial, the Catholics, convinced of their cause, remained unmoved.<sup>126</sup> What the Jesuits did in steering the aristocracy and the general staff, was done for the middle and lower classes by the Assumptionists whose organ, *La Croix*, enjoyed the largest circulation of all Catholic journals in France.<sup>127</sup> Both centered their tactics in agitation against the Jews. Both represented themselves as defenders of the army and the commonweal against the machinations of "international Jewry." More striking, however, than the attitude of the Catholics in France was the fact that the press of their Church throughout the world was solidly against Dreyfus. As the case progressed, it became increasingly clear that the agitation against the Jews in France followed an international line.<sup>128</sup> The Jesuits had long realized that latter-day power politics must be based on the interplay of colonial ambitions. They were therefore the first to link antisemitism to imperialism, declaring that the Jews were agents of England and thereby identifying antagonism towards

<sup>126</sup> Cf. "K.V.T.," *l.c.*, p. 597: "Among them there is no divergence of opinion. . . . Whence comes this unanimity of the clericals? In the first place, it is due to the influence of the press. . . . All these journalists marched and are still marching at the word of command of their superiors."

<sup>127</sup> Brogan goes so far as to blame the Assumptionists for the entire clerical agitation.

<sup>128</sup> Thus the *Civiltà Cattolica* (February 5, 1898) declared that Jews must be excluded from the nation not only in France but also in Germany, Austria and Italy.

them with Anglophobia.<sup>129</sup> The Dreyfus case, in which Jews were the central figures, thus afforded them a welcome opportunity to play their game. If England had taken Egypt from the French the Jews were to blame,<sup>130</sup> while the movement for an Anglo-American alliance was due, of course, to "Rothschild imperialism."<sup>131</sup> That the Catholic game was not confined to France became abundantly clear once the curtain was rung down on that particular scene. At the close of 1899, when Dreyfus had been pardoned and when French public opinion had veered round through fear of a projected boycott of the Exposition, it needed but an interview with Pope Leo XIII to stop the spread of antisemitism through the world.<sup>132</sup> Even in the United States, where championship of Dreyfus was particularly enthusiastic among the non-Catholics, it was possible to detect in the Catholic press after 1897 a marked resurgence of antisemitic feeling which, however, subsided overnight following the interview with Leo XIII.<sup>133</sup> The "grand strategy" of using antisemitism as an instrument of Catholicism had proved abortive.

The case of the unfortunate Captain Dreyfus had shown the world that in every Jewish nobleman, multimillionaire and Jewish chauvinist there still remained something of the old-time pariah, for whom human rights do not exist and whom society would gladly exclude from its privileges. There was no one, however, who found it more difficult to grasp this fact than the emancipated Jews themselves. Just because they had played so small a part in the political development of the lands in which they lived they had come, during the course of the century, to make a fetish of civil equality. To them it was an article of faith. When the Dreyfus affair broke out to warn them that their security was menaced, they were deep in the process of a disintegrating assimilation, through which their lack of political wisdom was intensified rather than other-

<sup>129</sup> "The initial stimulus in the affair came very probably from London, where the Congo-Nile mission of 1896-1898 was causing some degree of disquietude;" thus Maurras in *Action Française* (July 14, 1935). The Catholic press of London defended the Jesuits; see "The Jesuits and the Dreyfus Case," in *The Month*, vol. xviii (1899).

<sup>130</sup> *Civiltà Cattolica* (February 5, 1898).

<sup>131</sup> See the particularly characteristic article of McDermot, Rev. George, C.S.P., "Mr. Chamberlain's Foreign Policy and the Dreyfus Case," in the American monthly *Catholic World*, vol. lxvii (September 1898).

<sup>132</sup> Cf. Lecanuet, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

<sup>133</sup> Cf. Halperin, Rose A., *op. cit.*, p. 59, 77 ff.

wise. They were rapidly assimilating themselves to those elements of society in which all political passions are smothered beneath the dead weight of provincial Babbittry, big business and hitherto unknown opportunities for profit. They hoped to get rid of the antipathy which this tendency had called forth by diverting it against their poor and as yet unassimilated immigrant brethren. Using the same tactics as gentile society had employed against them they took pains to dissociate themselves from the so-called *Ostjuden*.<sup>134</sup> Political antisemitism, such as had manifested itself in the pogroms of Russia and Rumania, they dismissed airily as a survival from the Middle Ages, scarcely a reality of modern politics. They could never understand that more was at stake in the Dreyfus affair than mere social status, if only because more than mere social antisemitism had been brought to bear.

These then are the reasons why so few wholehearted supporters of Dreyfus were to be found in the ranks of French Jewry.<sup>135</sup> The Jews, including the very family of the accused, shrank from starting a political fight. On just these grounds, Labori, counsel for Zola, was refused the defense before the Rennes tribunal, while Dreyfus' second lawyer, Démange, was constrained to base his plea on the issue of doubt. It was hoped thereby to smother under a deluge of compliments any possible attack from the army or its officers. The idea was that the royal road to an acquittal was to pretend that the whole thing boiled down to the possibility of a judicial error, the victim of which just happened by chance to be a Jew. The result was a second verdict and Dreyfus, refusing to face the true issue, was induced to renounce a retrial and instead to petition for clemency.<sup>136</sup> The Jews failed to see that what was involved was an organized fight against them on an ideological front. They therefore

<sup>134</sup> Cf. Foucault, *op. cit.*

<sup>135</sup> See Clémenceau's articles entitled "Le Spectacle du jour," "Et les Juifs!" "La Farce du syndicat," and "Encore les juifs!" in *L'Iniquité*; cf. below, note 162.

<sup>136</sup> Cf. Labori, Fernand, "Le mal politique et les partis," in *La Grande Revue* (October-December, 1901): "From the moment at Rennes when the accused pleaded guilty and the defendant renounced recourse to a retrial in the hope of gaining a pardon, the Dreyfus case as a great, universal human issue was definitely closed." In his article entitled "Le Spectacle du jour," Clémenceau speaks of the Jews of Algiers "in whose behalf Rothschild will not voice the least protest." The same great Jewish philanthropists who had rushed to the aid of their brethren in Eastern Europe were unwilling to stir when their own compatriots suffered violence.

resisted the co-operation of men who were prepared to meet the challenge on this basis. How blind was their attitude is shown clearly by the case of Clémenceau. Clémenceau's struggle for justice as the foundation of the state certainly embraced the restoration of equal rights to the Jews. In an age, however, of class struggle on the one hand and rampant jingoism on the other, it would have remained without political actuality had it not been conceived, at the same time, in terms of the oppressed fighting their oppressors. Clémenceau was one of the few true friends modern Jewry has known just because he recognized and proclaimed before the world that Jews were one of the oppressed peoples of Europe. The anti-semite tends to see in the Jewish parvenu an upstart pariah; consequently in every huckster he fears a Rothschild and in every *shnorrer* a parvenu. But Clémenceau, in his consuming passion for justice, still conceived the Rothschilds as members of a downtrodden people. His anguish over the national misfortune of France opened his eyes and his heart even to those "unfortunates, who pose as leaders of their people and promptly leave them in the lurch," to those cowed and subdued elements who, in their ignorance, weakness and fear, have been so much bedazzled by admiration of the stronger as to exclude them from partnership in any active struggle and who are able only when the battle has been won to "rush to the aid of the winner."<sup>137</sup>

### *The Pardon and Its Significance*

That the Dreyfus drama was no tragedy but a comedy became apparent only in its final act. The *deus ex machina* who united the disrupted country, turned Parliament in favor of a retrial and eventually reconciled the disparate elements of the people, from the extreme right to the socialists, was nothing other than the Paris Exposition of 1900.<sup>138</sup> What Clémenceau's daily editorials, Zola's pathos and the popular hate of clergy and aristocracy failed to achieve, namely, a change of parliamentary feeling in favor of Dreyfus, was at last accomplished by the fear of a boycott.<sup>139</sup>

<sup>137</sup> *Idem*, "Encore les juifs!" and "La Farce du syndicat."

<sup>138</sup> "Just as the ostrich when he sights danger, hides his head behind a tree or in the sand, so the French hide their political heads behind the Exposition," remarked the German ambassador, von Hohenlohe, in a message to Berlin. The passage is quoted by Herzog, *op. cit.*, under date of December 4, 1899. See also the report of von Buelow, the German chargé d'affaires in Paris, quoted, *ibid.*, under date of September 12, 1899.

<sup>139</sup> Especially on the part of America and England.



The same Parliament which a year before had unanimously rejected a retrial, now by a two-thirds majority passed a vote of censure on an anti-Dreyfus government. In July, 1899 the Waldeck-Rousseau cabinet came to power. President Loubet pardoned Dreyfus and liquidated the entire affair. The Exposition was able to open under the brightest of commercial skies and general fraternization ensued: even socialists became eligible for government posts; Millerand, the first socialist minister in Europe, received the portfolio of commerce.

Parliament became the champion of Dreyfus! That was the upshot. For Clémenceau, of course, it was a defeat. To the bitter end he denounced the ambiguous pardon and the even more ambiguous amnesty. "All it has done," said Zola,<sup>140</sup> "is to lump together in a single stinking pardon men of honor and hoodlums. All have been thrown into one pot." Clémenceau remained, as at the beginning, utterly alone. The socialists, above all, Jaurès, welcomed both pardon and amnesty. Did it not insure them a place in the government and a more extensive representation of their special interests? A few months later, in May, 1900, when the success of the Exposition was assured the real truth at last emerged. All of these appeasement tactics were to be at the expense of the Dreyfusards. The motion for a further retrial was defeated by 425 votes to 60.<sup>141</sup> This defeat for Clémenceau was equally a defeat for the Church and the army. The disestablishment of the former and the ban on parochial education brought to an end the political influence of Catholicism in France. Similarly, the subjection of the intelligence service to the ministry of war, *i.e.*, to the civil authority, robbed the army of its blackmailing influence on cabinet and Chamber and removed from it any justification for conducting police inquiries on its own account.<sup>142</sup> In 1909 Drumont stood for the Academy. Once his antisemitism had been lauded by the Catholics and acclaimed by the people. Now, however, the "greatest historian since Fustel"<sup>143</sup> was obliged to yield to Marcel Prévost, author of the somewhat

<sup>140</sup> Cf. Zola's letter dated September 13, 1899, in *Correspondance: lettres à Maître Labori*.

<sup>141</sup> Even Clémenceau's government in 1906 did not dare to entrust the retrial to a normal court of law. While the Court of Cassation had the right to set aside the previous verdict it was obliged to entrust the retrial to a military tribunal. It had no power to acquit Dreyfus.

<sup>142</sup> Cf. Frank, *op. cit.*, p. 500 ff.

<sup>143</sup> Lemaitre's estimate of Drumont as quoted by Schapira, J., *Der Antisemitismus in der französischen Literatur* (Berlin 1927) p. 132.

pornographic *Demi-Vièrges*, and the new "immortal" received the congratulations of the Jesuit Father Du Lac.<sup>144</sup> Even the Society of Jesus had composed its quarrel with the Third Republic. The close of the Dreyfus case marked the end of clerical antisemitism. The compromise adopted by the Third Republic cleared the defendant without granting him a regular trial, while it restricted the activities of Catholic organizations. Whereas Bernard Lazare had asked equal rights for both sides the state had allowed one exception for the Jews and another which threatened the freedom of conscience of Catholics.<sup>146</sup> The parties which were really in conflict were both placed outside the law, with the result that the Jewish question on the one hand and political Catholicism on the other were banished thenceforth from the arena of practical politics. Had this been the upshot of the whole tragi-comedy it would have been a sorry thing for Jewish history. In point of fact, however, the Dreyfus affair was of marked positive significance: it kindled the flame of political Zionism.<sup>147</sup>

### *Herzl and Lazare*

To Western Jewry, never really assimilated despite the recourse of some to the antisemitic salons, the Dreyfus case was scarcely of decisive consequence. But to the "modern, cultured Jew who had outgrown the ghetto and its haggling it was a thrust to the heart."<sup>148</sup> For him Herzl's naive generalization was true: it had taken "the common enemy" to make

<sup>144</sup> Cf. Herzog, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

<sup>145</sup> Only the Jesuits seem to have forgotten nothing and learned nothing. Thus long before the fascist coup in Italy their journal, *Civiltà Cattolica*, was carrying anti-Jewish propaganda and its policy was not affected by the anti-Christian attitude of the Nazis; see the passage cited from the issue of April, 1938 by Starr, Joshua, "Italy's Antisemites," in *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. i (1939) 109 f.

<sup>146</sup> Lazare's position in the Dreyfus affair is best described by Péguy in *Notre Jeunesse* (Paris 1934). Regarding him the true representative of Jewish interests Péguy formulates Lazare's demands as follows (p. 110): "Common right for Dreyfus, common right against the congregations. It looks like nothing but it can lead far. It led Lazare to a death in isolation. He stood essentially for justice . . . against exceptions." Lazare was one of the first Dreyfusards to protest against the law governing congregations; *ibid.*, p. 102 ff.

<sup>147</sup> Cf. the remarks of Theodor Herzl in his opening address to the first Zionist Congress (*Gesammelte Werke*, vol. i, p. 176): "That sense of inner cohesion, with which we have so often and so virulently been charged, was in a state of utter dissolution when antisemitism fell upon us. We have, so to speak, come home. . . . But those of us who have returned like prodigal sons to the ancestral hearth find much that urgently requires improvement."

<sup>148</sup> *ibid.*

him once more member of a people.<sup>149</sup> These "prodigal sons" had learned a lot from their environment and when they returned to the ancestral hearth they found themselves possessed by that intense discontent which has always been the hallmark of true patriotism and of true devotion to one's people. Sadly and with a certain amazement they came to realize that the moment they proposed improvements in the age-old structure, it was at once decided to expel them from it. And all the time they saw the building in danger of collapse. Theodor Herzl arrived just in time to report the first Dreyfus trial for a Vienna paper. He heard the rabble cry "Death to the Jews!" and proceeded to write *The Jewish State*. Bernard Lazare had come from his home town in the south of France some years before, in the midst of the antisemitic furore caused by the Panama scandal. Shortly before the Dreyfus case he had published a two-volume work on antisemitism, in which he had laid it down that this was due, among other things, to the unsocial behavior of the Jews.<sup>150</sup> At that time he believed that he had found in socialism the solution. Lazare likewise was an eyewitness of the Dreyfus trial and he determined not to wait for the world revolution. As he came face to face with the rising hatred of the mob he realized at once that from now on he was an outcast<sup>151</sup> and accepted the challenge. Alone among the champions of Dreyfus he took his place as a conscious Jew, fighting for justice in general but for the Jewish people in particular.<sup>152</sup>

Both men were turned into Jews by antisemitism. Neither concealed the fact.<sup>153</sup> Both realized just because they were so "assimilated" that

<sup>149</sup> Cf. Herzl's statement before the British Aliens Commission: "A nation is an historic group of men united by clearly discernible ties, and held together by a common foe." (*Gesammelte Werke*, vol. i, p. 474).

<sup>150</sup> Lazare, Bernard, *L'Antisémitisme: son histoire et ses causes* (Paris 1894).

<sup>151</sup> Cf. Lazare, *Le Fumier de Iob* (Paris 1928) p. 64: "Henceforth I am a pariah."

<sup>152</sup> Cf. Péguy, *Notre Jeunesse*, p. 68-69, 74: "The politicians, the rabbis, the official communities of Israel . . . were only too willing to sacrifice Dreyfus for the sake of an illusion. The great mass of the Jews . . . has never been led to its great, if sad, destiny except by force—that is, by a band of fanatics grouped around certain heads, or more precisely, around the prophets of Israel. In this great crisis for Israel and the world the prophet was Bernard Lazare."

<sup>153</sup> Cf. Herzl's remark in a letter of the year 1895: "My Judaism was to me a matter of indifference. . . . However, just as antisemitism sent the feeble, cowardly and ambitious Jews into the ranks of Christendom, so it sent me back with renewed vigor to my Judaism." (*Tagebücher*, vol. i, p. 120-121) Similar statements occur *passim* in his diaries. Bernard Lazare's declaration may be found in his *Fumier de Iob*: "I am a Jew, yet I ignore everything Jewish. . . . I must needs know who I am, why I am hated and what I might be."

normal life was possible for them only on the condition that emancipation should not remain a dead letter, while they saw that in reality the Jew had become the pariah of the modern world.<sup>154</sup> Both stood outside the religious tradition of Judaism and neither wished to return to it. Both were removed, as intellectuals, from those narrow and parochial Jewish cliques which had somehow grown up within the framework of gentile society. Both were poles apart from that spiritual ghetto which had retained everything of the ghetto's life except its inwardness. Yet both were its natural products; it was from this that both had escaped. When they were drawn back Judaism could no longer mean to them a religion, yet to neither could it mean a half-hearted adherence to one of many cliques. For them their Jewish origin had a political and national significance. They could find no place for themselves in Jewry unless the Jewish people was a nation. In their subsequent careers both men came into serious conflict with the forces which then controlled Jewish politics, namely, the philanthropists. In these conflicts, which in the end exhausted them, both were to learn that the Jewish people was threatened not only by the antisemites from without but also by the influence of its own "benefactors" from within.<sup>155</sup>

But here the similarity ends and there begins that great difference which was to lead ultimately to a personal breach between the two men, when they were serving together on the executive committee of the

<sup>154</sup> Cf. the remark of Herzl at the "family council" of the Rothschilds: "You will never be recognized as full citizens, nay, nor even as second-class (*Staatsangehörige*);" *Tagebücher*, vol. i, p. 187. Similarly in the memoranda for his interview with Baron Hirsch there occurs the observation: "You are pariahs. You have to live on tenterhooks lest anyone deprive you of your rights or property." (*Gesammelte Werke*, vol. vi, p. 462) Cf. also Lazare's remark about the "unconscious pariah," i.e., the non-emancipated Jew and the "conscious pariah" of western society, in *Le Nationalisme Juif* (Paris 1898) p. 8.

<sup>155</sup> In his interview with Lord Rothschild Herzl described Jewish charity as "a mechanism for keeping the needy in subjection." (*Tagebücher*, vol. iii, p. 218) He came into open conflict with the philanthropists when he established the Jewish Colonial Bank and the latter subsequently foundered, as the result of being boycotted by Jewish financial circles. The matter is discussed at length in his *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. i, p. 406 ff., and there are frequent references to it in the diaries. Similarly Lazare came into conflict with the whole of French Jewry through his championship of Dreyfus. Cf. Hagani, Baruch, *Bernard Lazare, 1865-1903* (Paris 1919), p. 28 ff. That he got the worst of this conflict is shown fully by Péguy, *op. cit.*, p. 75 ff. One example quoted by Péguy (p. 84) is significant: "When negotiations were started for founding a large-scale daily, the Jewish backers always made it a condition that Bernard Lazare should not write for it."

Zionist Organization. Herzl's solution of the Jewish problem was, in the final analysis, escape or deliverance in a homeland. In the light of the Dreyfus case the whole of the gentile world seemed to him hostile; there were only Jews and antisemites.<sup>156</sup> He considered that he would have to deal with this hostile world and even with avowed antisemites. To him it was a matter of indifference just how hostile a gentile might be; indeed, thought he, the more antisemitic a man was the more he would appreciate the advantages of a Jewish exodus from Europe!<sup>157</sup> To Lazare, on the other hand, the territorial question was secondary—a mere outcome of the primary demand that “the Jews should be emancipated as a people and in the form of a nation.”<sup>158</sup> What he sought was not an escape from antisemitism but a mobilization of the people against its foes. This is shown clearly by his part in the Dreyfus case and by his later memorandum on the persecution of the Jews in Rumania.<sup>159</sup> The consequence of this attitude was that he did not look around for more or less antisemitic protectors but for real comrades-in-arms, whom he hoped to find among all the oppressed groups of contemporary Europe.<sup>160</sup> He knew that anti-semitism was neither an isolated nor a universal phenomenon and that the shameful complicity of the Powers in the East-European pogroms had been symptomatic of something far deeper, namely, the threatened collapse of all moral values under the pressure of imperialist politics.<sup>161</sup>

<sup>156</sup> Cf. his remark in *Der Judenstaat* (*Gesammelte Werke*, vol. i, p. 36): “The peoples among whom Jews live are one and all shamefully or shamelessly antisemitic.”

<sup>157</sup> Cf. the recurrent observation recorded in his *Tagebücher*, vol. i, p. 93: “It is the antisemites who will be our staunchest friends, and the antisemitic countries which will be our allies.” How he interpreted this notion in practice is revealed in a letter to Katznelson, written in connection with the Kishinev pogroms of 1903. In that letter he seeks to “derive some measure of advantage from the threatening calamity.”

<sup>158</sup> In *Le Fumier de Iob*.

<sup>159</sup> *Les Juifs en Roumanie* (Paris 1902).

<sup>160</sup> Characteristic of this attitude is the following passage from his *Juifs en Roumanie*, p. 103: “It may well be that if it [the Rumanian bourgeoisie] plunges the Jew into despair and pushes him to the limit, this very fact, despite his passivity and despite the advice of his wealthy faint-hearts, will forge a link between him and the agricultural laborer and aid both to throw off the yoke.” In marked contrast is the attitude of Herzl, as revealed when, following his interview with the sultan, he received telegrams of protest from student-meetings comprising persons of all kinds of oppressed nationalities. He was, he confessed, “pained and distressed,” but the only political effect this had on him was to make him talk about using those telegrams in his conversations with the sultan! Cf. *Tagebücher*, vol. iii, p. 103.

<sup>161</sup> Cf. his remark in *Les Juifs en Roumanie*, p. 91: “Besides, what other nation dares open its mouth? England, who wiped out the Boers? Russia, who oppressed the Finns and Jews?

In the light of the Dreyfus case and of his own experience in fighting alongside of Jews for one of their brethren<sup>162</sup> Lazare came to realize that the real obstacle in the path of his people's emancipation was not anti-semitism. It was "the demoralization of a people made up of the poor and downtrodden, who live on the alms of their wealthy brethren, a people revolted only by persecution from without but not by oppression from within, revolutionaries in the society of others but not in their own."<sup>163</sup> Ill would it serve the cause of freedom, thought he, if a man were to begin by abandoning his own. Fighters for freedom could be internationalists only if by that they meant that they were prepared to recognize the freedom of all nations; anti-national they could never be.<sup>164</sup> Lazare's criticism of his people was at least as bitter as Herzl's but he never despised them and did not share Herzl's idea that politics must be conducted from above.<sup>165</sup> Faced with the alternative of remaining politically ineffective or of including himself among the élite group of saviors, he preferred to retreat into absolute isolation where, if he could do naught else, he could at least remain one of the people.<sup>166</sup> For Lazare could find no supporters

France, who massacred the Annamites . . . and is now getting ready to butcher the Moors? Italy, who ravages in Eritrea today and in Tripoli tomorrow? Or Germany, the savage executioner of the negroes?"

An interesting insight into the connection between antisemitism's brutalization of peoples and the policies of imperialism is revealed by Fernand Labori, would-be counsel for Dreyfus, in his article "Le Mal politique et les partis," in *La Grande Revue* (October-December, 1901) 276: "Similarly, the movement of colonial expansion provides . . . a characteristic trait of the present era. It is a commonplace to point out that this policy has cost humanity moral as well as material sacrifices."

<sup>162</sup> Writing in *L'Echo Sioniste* (April 20, 1901) Lazare had the following to say about the French Jews, as he had learned to know them during the Dreyfus crisis: "Take our French Jews. I know that crowd and what they are capable of. It isn't enough for them to reject any solidarity with their foreign-born brethren; they have also to go charging them with all the evils which their own cowardice engenders. They are not content with being more jingoist than the native-born Frenchmen; like all emancipated Jews everywhere they have also, of their own volition, broken all ties of solidarity. Indeed, they go so far that for the three dozen or so men in France who are ready to defend one of their martyred brethren you can find some thousands ready to stand guard over Devil's Island, alongside the most rabid patriots of the country."

<sup>163</sup> *Le Fumier de Iob*, p. 151.

<sup>164</sup> Péguy, *Notre Jeunesse*, p. 130, stresses this contrast between the international and the anti-national as illustrating Lazare's Jewish patriotism.

<sup>165</sup> Cf. *Tagebücher*, vol. i, p. 193.

<sup>166</sup> On March 24, 1899 Lazare wrote to Herzl that he felt obliged to resign from the executive committee, which, he added, "tries to direct the Jewish masses as if they were an

in France. The only element of Western Europe which might have responded to his message, the Jews who had outgrown the petty trader's haggling, the intellectuals in the liberal professions, were virtually non-existent in that country. On the other hand, the impoverished masses, whom he had loved so deeply, and the Jewish oppressed, whom he had championed so devotedly,<sup>167</sup> were separated from him by thousands of miles as well as by a difference in language. In a certain sense, therefore, Herzl with the support of German and Austrian Jewry succeeded where Lazare failed. So utter, indeed, was his failure that he was passed over in silence by his Jewish contemporaries<sup>168</sup> to be recovered to us by Catholic writers. Better than we those men knew that Lazare was a great Jewish patriot as well as a great writer.<sup>169</sup>

ignorant child. . . . That is a conception radically opposed to all my political and social opinions and I can therefore not assume responsibility for it;" quoted by Hagani, *Bernard Lazare*, p. 39.

<sup>167</sup> Péguy, *Notre Jeunesse*, p. 87, describes him as follows: "A heart which beat to all the echoes of the world, a man who could skim four, six, eight or a dozen pages of a newspaper to light, like a streak of lightning, on a single line containing the word Jew . . . a heart which bled in all the ghettos of the world . . . wherever the Jew was oppressed, that is, in a sense, everywhere."

<sup>168</sup> *ibid.*, p. 84: "Everything was set in motion to make him die quietly of hunger."

<sup>169</sup> If it were not for Péguy's memoir, "Le portrait de Bernard Lazare," prefixed to the posthumous edition of *Le Fumier de Iob*, we would know little about Lazare. Hagani's biography is based to a large extent on Péguy, while it was only with the latter's help that Lazare himself was able to publish his work on the Jews of Rumania. The saddest part of this sad story is the fact, pointed out by Péguy, that the only man who really appreciated Lazare's greatness and love for Jewry, even though he regarded him as an enemy, was Edouard Drumont.