

CALMING THE WINDS OF WAR

PROBLEMS OF POLISH-JEWISH RECONCILIATION

1. Overcoming the war of hate
2. Cultural differences between Poles and Jews
3. Soviet role in Polish-Jewish antagonism
4. Nazism as an alibi for Germany
5. Memory revision process among victims

A study by Iwo Cyprian Pogonowski

of

POLAND, COMMUNISM, NATIONALISM, ANTI-SEMITISM

by Michael Chęciński

New York: Karz-Cohl Publishing, 1982

(updated with later references)

1 Perpetuation of hatreds of war

World War II was a war of institutionalized hate. It is sometimes called the war of hate. Both, the German-Nazi and the Soviet states institutionalized hatred as the core of their political system. Nazis committed genocide in the name of race hatred while the Soviets murdered millions in the name of class hatred. Unfortunately state policy based on hatred did not end with the death of Hitler and Stalin. As a veteran of 64 month of imprisonment in Gestapo prisons and concentration camps I feel still imprisoned by the endless cycle of anti-Polonism and anti-Semitism which is still going on in 1996. It is a legacy of the 2nd World War and the Soviet Cold War against the United States and its allies. It is hampering Polish-Jewish reconciliation. In Polish-Jewish relations the intensity of anti-Semitism has been on the decline, however with the progress of time anti-Polonism has markedly increased.

The increase in anti-Polonism is partly due to the process of revision of collective memories among Jewish victims of the Holocaust and of Jewish media. There is a lack of recognition of the Soviet role in Polish Jewish relations. The tactics to

exonerate Germany by providing it with an alibi of a nebulous "Nazism." The responsibility for the Holocaust is shifted from Germans to primarily to the Poles in Jewish perception. This is reflected in the change of popular Jewish fashion from demeaning anti-Polish jokes to building an image of "Polish accomplices of the Holocaust."

This study is a quest for Polish-Jewish reconciliation. It deals primarily with the results of Soviet institutionalized hate on Polish-Jewish relations. For this problems the book by Michael Chęciński is an important source of information during the Cold War period. The eruption of violence in Kielce in 1946 is considered to be the turning point in Jewish exodus from East-Central Europe, a great deal of this study is concerned with Soviet role and the truth about this tragic bloodshed. Soviet anti-Jewish and anti-Polish tactics used during the war and in subjugation of the satellite states are described with ample quotations from Chęciński's book. It is noticed that all along Polish-Jewish relations are harmed by the double standard used when dealing with the Soviet role in the war of hate.

The double standard in dealing with the Soviet role in perpetuation of the endless cycle of anti-Semitism and anti-Polonism results in the failure of Holocaust courses and museums to honor the lessons of the Holocaust, which teaches about the evils of prejudice and stereotyping. This especially true in the notorious case of the "Kielce pogrom." An open discussion of the problems of Polish-Jewish reconciliation should help to end the vicious circle of anti-Semitism and anti-Polonism and to bury the legacy of hate left by the Nazis and the Soviets.

2 The legacy of Nazi-Soviet partnership

The American public is aware that Soviet Union fought Germany together with the United States. Very few Americans are aware of nearly two-year-long Nazi-Soviet partnership which lasted until German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941. Since German declaration of war on the United States in 1941 till the beginning of Cold War in 1945, the Government of the United States censured reports on Soviet genocidal policies giving priority to the war effort and cooperation with the Soviets against Germany. Catholic Relief Services acting as a "people-to-people agency of mercy" observed and described some of the war time pro-Soviet acts of the United States which resulted in mistreatment of Poles and betrayal of Poland. (Eileen Egan, *Catholic Relief Services: The Beginning Years*, CRS, New York, 1988)

In retrospect it is obvious that the pre-war Soviet government was aware that the essence of the policies of the Nazi-German government at all times was the implementation of the doctrine of *Lebensraum*, or a huge German living space which, eventually, was to include the great agricultural lands of the Slavic two-thirds of Europe, located mainly in Poland and the Soviet Union. After Germany and Japan signed the Anti-Cominform Pact in Nov. 1936, the Soviets feared the possibility of a two-front war at the time when Stalinist purges were severely weakening the Red Army.

Japanese attacks on Soviet territory started in 1938 near lake Chasan and continued in 1939 in Mongolia. At the same time the government of the Soviet Union was aware that the German drive towards a war for *Lebensraum* at any cost resulted in steady progress towards an eventual signing of a common defense treaty by Great Britain, France, and Poland. By encouraging and eventually joining in an attack on Poland, the USSR could entangle the Germans for years on the western front in a war of attrition, while the Soviets could annex half of Poland, the Baltic states, and Romanian Bukovina. The very fact of German cooperation with the Soviet Union would also constitute a betrayal of Japan by Germany at a time when the Japanese were in combat with the Red Army in Mongolia.

The conclusion of German-Soviet treaty of Aug. 23 and moves leading to German-Soviet treaty of friendship of Sept. 28, 1939 were known to the Japanese who had reliable intelligence of on Berlin-Moscow negotiation from Poland and other sources. Thus, the betrayal by Germany and failures of Japanese army on the battle field drove Japan to negotiate an armistice with the Soviet Union. It was signed on Sept. 15, 1939, two weeks after Germany attacked Poland on Sept. 1. As soon as the government of the Soviet Union disengaged itself militarily in the Far East, it issued on Sept. 16, 1939 an order to the Red Army to invade Poland. The Soviet forces of about one million invaded Poland on Sept. 17, 1939 carrying white banners on their tanks. By that time the Germans were already at war with Great Britain and France, neither of which felt strong enough to declare war on the Soviet Union, in retaliation for the Red Army's invasion of Poland. As the Soviets got out of combat with Japan they deflected the Japanese forces against the United States and the European colonies in Asia. In their calculations the Soviets did not expect the fall of France in 1940.

The origin of the Soviet mass murders and deportation of Poles and Jews goes back to September 28, 1939 when the German-Soviet Boundary and Friendship Treaty was signed. It contained secret provisions for the mutual extermination of potential Polish opponents of both Germany and USSR. Both governments were to take all the necessary measures to contain and prevent the emergence of any hostile action directed against the territory of the other side. Germany and USSR would liquidate any signs of agitation within their own territories and inform each other of measures taken to achieve this aim.

The Soviets implemented their program by executing 21,857 members of Polish leadership community. Katyn, with graves of 4443 discovered by the Germans in 1943, became just a symbol of the mass execution of members of Polish intelligentsia in the spring of 1941. At the same time Nazi- German parallel operation code name *Aktion AB* (*Auserordentliche Befriedungsaktion*) consisted of execution of 20,000 Polish professionals both Christians and Jews.

3 Double perception of Nazis and Soviets

In the Jewish perception Hitler's ideology of hate, which produced the Holocaust, overshadows Soviet policy of hate. Poles remember that they lost more men killed by the Germans but experienced longer lasting Soviet policies of mass murder, deportation and subjugation by terror. As a result Polish and Jewish memories of the war and of the Cold War oppression of Poland are entirely different. Also there is a noticeable double standard in treating Nazi-German and Soviet crimes against the Jews in Holocaust study programs and in Holocaust museums. Examples of this double standard is the treatment of numerous Soviet crimes during Soviet-German alliance in postwar period such as the staging of violence at Kielce in 1946.

Totalitarian states of Nazi-Germany and the Soviet Union exploited the accumulation of grievances in central Europe. Ever since the international crime of partitions of Poland, which was done by stages between 1772-1795, the population of the collapsed Polish state was deprived of cultural self-determination until 1918. Thus, the 19th century in East-Central Europe was a period in which Austria, Germany, and Russia oppressed several ethnic minorities and fomented antagonism among them as a part of a "divide and rule policy." Already in 1903 Gustav Mahler, a Czech composer familiar with the European political scene, predicted that the next ten decades will be a "century of death."

During the second half of the 20th century anti-Semitism has been dramatically exposed in the United States as a product of prejudice and is officially considered to be a primitive aberration. Unfortunately anti-Polonism is still fashionable.

Not long ago Ann Lenders wrote that the Pope John Paul II is a "Polack." Eventually she apologized. Nobody, however, apologized for 30 years of demeaning anti-Polish jokes in America. In process the Poles were stereotyped as anti-Semites and it is common to hear that "Poles hate Jews." This kind of stereotyping formed an institutionalized way of imprisoning Poles and Jews in a vicious circle of anti-Polonism and anti-Semitism. For this reason it would be helpful to consider briefly the pre-war Polish-Jewish cultural relations.

Isaac Bashevis Singer (1904-1991), a winner of the Nobel Prize in literature, recognized a longstanding separation between Jews and Poles in Poland. He wrote an article titled "Jews and Poles Lived Together for 800 Years But Were Not Integrated." The article appeared in the New York-based Jewish newspaper *Forverts* on Sept. 17, 1944 under the pen name Iccok Warszawski. He wrote: "Rarely did a Jew think it necessary to learn Polish; rarely was a Jew interested in Polish history or Polish politics." Referring to the Second Polish Republic (1918-1939) he continued "Even in the last few years it was still a rare occurrence that a Jew would speak Polish well. Out of three million Jews living in Poland, two-and-a-half million were not able to write a simple letter in Polish and they spoke [Polish] very poorly. There were hundreds of thousands of Jews in Poland to whom Polish was as unfamiliar as Turkish." He later wrote in *Forverts*, March 20, 1964 "My mouth could not get accustomed to the soft consonants of [Polish] language. My forefathers have lived for centuries in Poland but in reality I was a foreigner, with separate language, ideas and religion. I sensed the oddness of this situation and often considered moving to Palestine." (The above quotations are from Chone Shmeruk's *Isaac Bashevis Singer and Bruno Schultz* published in the *Polish Review*. Vol. XXXVI, No. 2, 1991: 161-167.)

Culturally and linguistically, Bashevis Singer was typical of Polish Jews in central Poland and eastern borderlands ruled by Russia during the partitions (1795-1918). Isaac Bashevis Singer is recognized by many as the Shakespeare of Yiddish literature. Born near Warsaw, he was steeped in Yiddish and did not know any Polish until the age of 15. Until then, the Polish language was as unfamiliar to him as Chinese. He also was a product of the atmosphere created by the partitions during which Polish-Jewish relations changed from previous common allegiance to the Polish state into political competition exploited by partitioning powers.

In Lesser Poland, annexed by Austria and called by it "Galicia," Polish schools survived longer during the partitions. The knowledge of Polish was much more common there, even among Orthodox Jews. Bruno Schultz (1892-1942) was among Jewish members of the Polish intelligentsia in Drohobycz, in eastern Galicia, as southeastern Poland was named by the Austrians. He wrote exclusively in Polish and was a prize-winning writer (Golden Laurel, Polish Academy of Literature, 1938) and graphic artist. The Yiddish press started publishing his prints in 1930. Bruno Schultz had more formal training than Bashevis Singer and was brought up in more cosmopolitan atmosphere. His language was Polish; he belonged to a generation of Polish Jews brought up in Polish. Bruno Schultz was a product of three interacting cultures, Polish, Jewish and German. Besides Polish, he knew German and no doubt understood the colloquial local Yiddish, which is a dialect of high German and was the "lingua franca" of Polish Jews.

Bruno Schultz was murdered by a German officer in a street in his native Drohobycz, where he taught high school (1924-1941). Had he accepted help from his Polish friends and left the Drohobycz ghetto, he could have survived. Generally, the Jews who spoke Polish well had by far a better chance to survive than the Orthodox Jews, who spoke only Yiddish well.

In the Jewish religious community some familiarity with Polish was necessary only for those Jews who had direct dealings with Poles in order to make a living. The fact that the vast majority of Polish Jews either did not speak Polish or spoke it very poorly contributed to the tragic situation of Jews in Poland under German occupation during World War II. A constant fear of being recognized by an inability to speak Polish like a native accompanied most Jews during the German genocide of Jewish people in Poland. Poor Polish language skills, next to "Semitic" appearance and circumcision, was among the characteristics by which Germans were able to recognize Jews during the Holocaust.

Jews in northwestern and western Poland did not speak Yiddish. Their language was German. Before World War I most of them migrated west. The few who remained in western Polish provinces represented a very small percent of the Polish Jewry. These Jews used the German language as their own. However, their knowledge of German did not help them during the war. Most of them were murdered by the Germans, during the German genocide of the Jews in 1941-1944.

In America few people realize that the World War II (1939-1945) was the greatest tragedy of Poland ever since the first Polish dynasty started to consolidate the Polish state in 840 A.D. The Jewish Holocaust, happened against the backdrop of destruction of the Polish state and mass murders inflicted on the Polish nation and its leadership community to a much greater extent than was suffered by any other country invaded by Nazi Germany. It was followed by 45 years of Moscow domination and the Cold War during which Poles and Jews were repeatedly used against each other by the Soviets in endless cycle of anti-Polonism and anti-Semitism.

The need to overcome wartime hatreds is urgent. The world saw this recently when Germany opened a Pandora box of ethnic hatred when it successfully pushed for the partition of Yugoslavia. Germany gave official diplomatic support for the breakup of Yugoslavia in opposition to the policy of the United States and other NATO countries. The horrors of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia followed. Moscow could have easily obtained the conditions that stopped the NATO bombing before the first bomb was dropped. Apparently compromising NATO as violator of its own rules and those of the United Nations was a desirable outcome for Russian diplomacy. This reminds us that the war in human relations is far from over. In contrast there is an opportunity now to break out of the vicious circle of anti-Polonism and anti-Semitism. In order to do that we have to take a fresh view and focus on honest Polish-Jewish communication.

German-Nazi hatreds were thoroughly and openly discussed in West Germany. Being a free part of Germany during the 45 years of the Cold War, it was able to clearly recognize the German guilt in bringing on the world the horrors of the wartime racial culminating in genocide. Unfortunately, it is much more difficult to achieve clarity in the history of mutual transgressions (real and imagined) of the victims of the Second World War and Soviet policies of the Cold War. As a result today there is ample evidence of more mutual hatred among Jewish and Polish victims of totalitarian terror than any ill feelings of both towards their common oppressors Germans and Russians.

During the Cold War and up till the present time I have been aware of many nasty scenes made in public places in the United States and in Canada by Jewish individuals who vented ill feelings towards persons speaking Polish accusing them of being guilty of the Holocaust. I am not aware of anything similar happening to people using German language in public. Scenes of this kind continue to happen between Jews and Poles who were born long after the war. One way to end mutual hatred of Poles and Jews is to quit taking out on each other their frustrations.

There is a fear of some that the Holocaust and its lessons might be forgotten. There is a fear that the end of the hatreds of war would bring de-actualization of the sufferings of the Holocaust. The dilemma of those that try to keep the memory of the Holocaust alive by cultivating the hatred against fellow victims is that they undermine the credibility of their message and violate the lessons of the Holocaust which dramatically condemn all forms of prejudice.

Communication and understanding is needed to come out of the vicious circle of anti-Polonism and anti-Semitism. A study of the period covered in Chęciński's book can help us to understand the burden of Soviet domination and Cold War on Polish-Jewish relations.

4 Jews in the Stalinist terror apparatus

Chęciński's book covers important events in postwar history of Poland as seen by an intelligence officer, in fact an insider of the Soviet terror apparatus in Poland, in which he served for 10 years. He is a witness to history, who could observe from a close range the perfidy of Soviet machinations in Poland. As a Jew who survived the Łódz Ghetto, Chęciński was naturally very sensitive to Soviet policies which fomented and used anti-Semitic excesses in the satellite empire to serve Soviet strategic purposes of the time. Chęciński's book shows Soviet methods used to bring the destruction of law and morality to Poland and other satellite states. That was the essence of Sovietization.

There was an obvious connection between the degree of anti-Semitism and the Soviet domination of Poland. Some of the material covered in Chęciński's book has been updated since he wrote it fourteen years ago. He was aware of the traditional crude Russian anti-Semitism and brutal contempt expressed in the proverb: "Jews must be kept quiet as water and as low as grass." Soviet terror towards the Jews had its roots in czarist times. Thus, for example, the most damaging anti-Jewish publication ever produced was written by terrorized Jews who were working for the Russian secret police (the Okhrana) in St. Petersburg. It was the forgery known as "*The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*" which Hitler and other anti-Semites used extensively.

Soviet terror apparatus in Poland included the so called Polish military counterintelligence. It was initially integrated with the Soviet *Smersh* (Death to Spies) organization directed against the German spying and subversion. However, when the front crossed the prewar Polish territory Smersh was used increasingly against Polish resistance to Soviet domination. In November 1944 Polish section of *Smersh* became renamed *Informacja*, in which col. Chęciński later served for 10 years. *Informacja* remained under close supervision of Smersh and was at first headed by Soviet col. Nicokai Kozhushko. Soviet officers assigned to the Polish army were considered vulnerable to Polish influence and were under close surveillance by a special *Informacja* department.

At the time of most intensive terror, between 1944 and 1955, Smersh working through the *Informacja* prepared political trials in military courts in Poland under the guise of the military persecutor's office. Tortured witnesses were "prepared" for these trials and later were secretly executed *to remove any trace of the provocation* (p. 57). In that period of the 120 officers serving in the *informacja* only about 18 were Polish born. The 18 were Jewish, the rest were Soviet citizens, some of them Jewish. It was Soviet policy in Poland to change Yiddish names of Jews in their service into Polish sounding

names, often of well known Christian families.

Chęciński describes how Stalin ordered the NKVD to prepare a civilian network of police terror and repression, called the *Bezpieka*, to work in parallel with the *Informacja* in Poland. *Polish intelligentsia boycotted the security service, which was treated with universal contempt as an instrument of foreign domination* (p. 61). Thus, NKVD, despite its deep-rooted anti-Semitism, *could not do without Jews. Jewish officials were often placed in the most conspicuous posts; hence they could easily be blamed for all regime's crimes* (p. 62). The Soviet strategy of using people with striking Semitic features as executioners of Soviet policy in Poland was also aimed at deflecting the anti-communist feelings into anti-Semitism. In 1945 upper echelons of the terror apparatus was staffed mainly with Jews.

Soviet difficulty in establishing communist regime in Poland originated in the weakness of the communist movement in prewar Poland. Polish resistance movement of about half a million included less than five percent of communist led Peoples's Army. Communist movement was much weaker in prewar Poland than in Czechoslovakia, for example.

5 Creation of double memory of Poles and Jews

Superposition of the Soviet terror on the psychotic condition of mutual attitudes of Polish gentiles and Jews formed during the horrors of Nazi-German occupation resulted in great suffering of both people. German-Nazi and Soviet terror created double memory in which the same facts are remembered entirely differently by both sides of the Polish-Jewish dilemma. Typically both tend to turn away from the problem, both vehemently deny that the problem even exists, and both can be easily led to cruel deeds ranging from physical violence to defamation.

An example of defamation of Poles is the large exhibit of the Kielce riots in the Holocaust Museums. It is understood by the viewing public as the "Polish phase of the Holocaust" long after Hitler was dead and a year and a half after the Soviets occupied and controlled that area. The display includes no information how the riots were provoked and how they were permitted to last for nearly nine hours in the presence of large security forces controlled by the Soviets. There is no information that Poland was under Soviet military occupation in 1946 and that many of victims were riddled with bullets while the lynching mob had no guns. When I asked Mr. Nowakowski in Washington Holocaust Museum about this deficiencies of the exhibit, he answered that we still do not know everything about the Kielce violence. In that case, why to display such misleading exhibit?

6 Soviet aims in the Middle East

In the scope of Soviet Cold War policies the Middle East was very important. It is well known that after World War II the Soviets systematically used to their advantage the desire of Zionist Jews to fight for the establishment of the state of Israel. Soviet foreign minister, Andrei Gromyko introduced a motion in the United Nations to create and recognize the State of Israel as early as March 1947. Bernard Lewis (of Columbia University) (*Semites and anti-Semites*, New York, 1986) as well as other Jewish historians claim that until creation of the State of Israel the only source of weapons for the Jews fighting for their independence was Soviet Union and its Czech ally. Early in 1996 the President Ezra Weisman of Israel officially thanked Moscow and Prague for these weapons, while visiting the Czech Republic and Germany.

The Soviet postwar aim was blockade the supply of the Arab oil to the United States and the rest of the West. Soviet first step was to get rid of the British mandate in Palestine and play a more active role in the strategically vital Middle East while consolidating their grip on the newly acquired satellite empire. Towards this end the Soviets committed numerous acts of terror to pressure Jews to emigrate out of the satellite states to be able to join the struggle for Israel. For this purpose the Soviets have opened the Iron Curtain for Jews only and let hundreds of thousands of Jews cross to the west. However, once out of Soviet control, only about one third of Jewish emigrants were willing to go to Palestine. About two third preferred to remain in the West and go to the United States, France, and other western countries. This fact caused the Soviets to maximize Jewish emigration by staging pogroms in all satellite states in order to deliver the largest possible number of able bodied men (many of them trained soldiers) to the Palestinian battlefield where Jews were short of manpower.

7 "Jewish anti-Semitism"

Chęciński documents the intimidation of the Jews in Soviet service to the point that he talks about "Jewish anti-Semitism" when the Soviets made their Jewish underlings do damage to the Jews, their culture, religion, and practically eradicate Yiddish, the Jewish national language in central and eastern Europe. In this sense Soviet treatment of Jews is similar to devilish Nazi German program in which the Jews exterminated Jews (see Gerald Reitlinger *The SS - Alibi of a Nation 1922-1945* Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1981). Death of Stalin prevented full blown massacre of the Jews in the Soviet Empire. However, while he was alive he was always ready to sacrifice Jewish lives for his purposes and to use the Jews in process of killing other Jews as he did with other people. The violence provoked in Kielce on July 4, 1946 is an example. Chęciński's description of these terrible events is very valuable. Unfortunately, Moscow has not open its files and did not make public the reports of NKVD/KGB col. Natan Shpilevoy and G.R.U. high ranking officer Mikhail Dyomin, the two man who planned and supervised the Kielce riot. What is possibly worst the local security files have been burned.

8 Anti-Jewish riots under Soviet occupation

It was typical that the communist government installed by the Soviets in Poland helped to execute the Soviet scheme in Kielce. During the first two postwar years a dozen of anti-Jewish riots were organized throughout the Soviet satellite empire and in Czechoslovakia, which was quickly becoming a Soviet satellite. In each case the Soviet controlled security forces were instrumental not only in initiating the riots but also in keeping them going for extraordinarily long time. Police organized violence against Jews had an old tradition in Russia, where attempts were made to reduce the area settled by Jews and foment anti-Semitic feelings in the gentile population. These Russian policies resulted in massive Jewish emigration by the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century to western countries, in particular to the United States. Similar anti-Jewish policies were used in Romania.

The year 1946 saw an intensification of Soviet sponsored anti-Jewish violence. After several anti-Jewish riots in Poland and about a month after the nearly-nine-hour-long riot in Kielce, on August 2 and 3, 1946, a two-day anti-Jewish riot was staged in Bratislava and in nearby Žilina during a convention of the Slovak association of former guerrillas controlled by the Soviets. Scores of Jews were injured, Jewish apartments sacked. In Žilina alone 15 Jews were severely wounded.

The Bratislava riot served its purpose to frighten the Czechoslovak Jews so that they would depart. The Soviets did not have any need to compromise any Czech resistance to communist takeover as was the case in Poland. Soviet news

release of the pogroms in Hungary followed the policy used in Slovakia. Of the Hungarian riots the best known is that of May 1946 in Kunmadaras where 3 Jews were killed and scores wounded. Actually the 1946 wave of anti-Jewish riots under Soviet occupation was preceded with an earlier similar wave in 1945 in all areas which the Soviets have occupied and converted into their satellite empire. Thus, the earliest was on May 2, 1945 in Kosice, Czechoslovakia, to be followed on September 24, 1945 in Velke Toplocany in eastern Czechoslovakia, where it was perpetrated by uniformed police and military under the Soviet control. It lasted 6 hours and wounded 49 Jews. The riot engulfed neighboring villages. Anti-Jewish riots followed in Czechoslovak towns of Chinorany, Krasno on the Nitra River, Nedanovce, etc. No show trials were staged after all the pogroms in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Ukraine. An exception was made of the riot of the July 4th, 1946 in Kielce which was advertised as much as possible in the media.

I had a chance to discuss with Israeli judge Sara Dotan the testimony of Jewish victims and witnesses of the Kielce pogrom during the preparation of the rapport fifty years later by post-communists who traveled from Poland to Israel. Judge Sara Dotan was present during all proceedings in Tel-Aviv and told me that she was most impressed by the insistence of the witnesses that the murders in Kielce were committed by uniformed men and by Catholic priests. She believed what she heard. I tried to suggest that "the priests" were in reality men wearing military shirts with white strip, similar to the Roman collar, and for the purpose of deception wore civilian coats and pants in order to appear to be a civilian mob. In reality these men were a part of the terror apparatus and not priests at all.

9 Jews in socialist terrorism

Soviet machinations succeeded in converting the image of Jewish victims of German-Nazi genocide into the image of Jewish oppressors. This was very noticeable in Poland, where there was a steady flow of news and often well substantiated (if sometimes exaggerated) rumors of executions of anti-communist Poles by Jewish executioners serving in the Soviet-controlled terror apparatus. Krystyna Kersten in her book *Poles, Jews, Communism* published in Warsaw in 1992 describes this unfortunate development when Soviet policies created the impression that Jews were the main agents in the subjugation of the satellite countries to the communist system.

Immediately after the war the main communist propaganda slogan was anti-Semitism = enemies of the "socialist" regimes = reactionaries or supporters of capitalistic exploitation. It was used successfully to obscure the reality of subjugation of Poland by the Soviet Union. This kind of Soviet manipulation of anti-Semitism created a dilemma even for the Church. The proper wording of Church's condemnation of anti-Semitic crimes could not omit the fact that the Church was in opposition to Soviet tactics in Poland.

The Church clearly stated that the provocateurs and perpetrators of the murder in Kielce must be absolutely and without any reservations condemned in the light of God's and human laws and that all rumors about Jewish ritual murders are lies (July 7, 1946, Bishop Teodor Kubina). Czesław Miłosz, Nobel price laureate for Polish literature, called these tactics "socialist terrorism." Among victims of the Soviet or socialist terrorism were many Polish democratic leaders who were neither anti-Semitic nor reactionary.

10 Eruption of violence in Kielce

Most of Jewish tenants at Planty street no. 7 had permission to be armed because they worked for the Soviet terror apparatus in Kielce. The same building housed an armed "Kibbutz" composed mainly of people who recently arrived from the USSR, were undergoing military drill, and on occasions paraded through the town. Other tenants were Jews arriving from the Soviet Union, German prisons, and from hiding in forests or in homes of Polish gentiles. At the time there was still a fresh memory of Poles who were executed by the Germans for sheltering Jews (while for similar actions in Denmark, for example, only a minor fine was imposed by the Nazi-Germans). Obviously such memories were bitterly contrasted with postwar experience when Jews were seen as the main agents of Soviet terror in Poland.

11 Violation of Yalta agreements

Poland presented the most difficult problems during the postwar consolidation of the Soviet satellite empire. For this reason the Soviets exploited cynically the recent memory of Nazi-German genocide of the Jews, which happened mostly on the territory of occupied Poland or Polish provinces annexed by Germany during World War II. Auschwitz, Birkenau, Chełmno, etc. were located on the land annexed by the German Reich. The Soviets wanted to present Polish resistance to the communist takeover in the worst possible light and to divert the attention of foreign journalists from Soviet tampering with elections in Poland and from numerous brutal acts directed at Sovietizing Poland. Indeed, during this period, over 100,000 Poles lost their lives, including some 1,000 Jews. In spite of the fact that many people wanted to leave after the Soviet takeover, the Jews were the only people who were permitted to emigrate in large numbers from the Soviet satellite empire.

Early in his book, Checinski identifies a highly educated Soviet intelligence agent, Mikhail Aleksandrovich Dyomin vel Demin (P. 25-26), who was assigned in 1946 to Kielce in rural central Poland. This rural location was hardly consistent with his qualifications. Apparently, Dyomin's assignment was to bolster the Soviet pressure on the Jews to emigrate and at the same time to create a dramatic diversion to draw attention from Soviet falsification of a crucial election in Poland. At stake was control of Poland, the most important Soviet conquest in World War II. Dyomin's assignment was most sensitive, because the Soviet Union was at the time violating Yalta agreements which guaranteed free elections in Poland. Yalta, the corner-stone of the post-war Soviet empire, had not been (and never was) ratified by the United States Congress. The executive agreements of Yalta could have been scrapped by the United States then the sole owner of a nuclear arsenal.

Mikhail Dyomin was assigned as the Soviet advisor to District Office of Public Security in Kielce headed by mjr. Władysław Spychaj-Sobczyński (1904-1987, member of the Communist Party since 1924, graduate of the NKVD school in Kubishev in 1944, a veteran of long NKVD service. It should be noticed that there was no anti-Semitism in the prewar Polish Communist Party, however Spychaj-Sobczyński came back after his Soviet training a confirmed anti-Semite).

According to the deposition of the widow of col. Wiktor Kuźnicki, the chief of police in Kielce, a man fitting the description of Dyomin delivered to Kuźnicki's apartment the money (in foreign currency) for paying off the agents provocateurs needed for the eruption of violence. Dyomin interrogated witnesses of the riot and two weeks later he disappeared from Kielce (where he arrived three month before the outbreak of the riots). Dyomin was stationed in the Soviet Embassy in Tel-Aviv in 1964-67 as a specialist in Jewish questions and in 1969 started his assignment in the Soviet Embassy in West Germany. In the American literature he was described as a high-ranking officer of Soviet military intelligence, the

12 The Soviet staged riot

The Soviets were the main beneficiaries of the scandalous events which they alone were in position to stage while utilizing their satellite regime in Poland. It is unthinkable that the Warsaw government, fully controlled by the Soviets at the time, could plan and act independently on any foreign or domestic policy issues. The plan was to stage a bloody pogrom in order to produce a mass exit of Jews from Poland (to fight against the British in Palestine, cause warfare in the Middle East, and eventually disrupt oil supplies to the West) and also to divert the attention of the American and British correspondents gathered to observe the national referendum. Efforts were made to allow Jewish rather than gentile journalists to cover the Kielce riot.

By being able to use the security forces to stage the riot, the Soviets were able to let the riot to go on for nearly nine hours under the eyes of a massive concentration of security forces. The victims were to be Jews, in order to put the Polish people in the worst possible light in world opinion in the wake of the Jewish Holocaust.

Soviet agent provocateurs prepared for the use of the accusation of ritual murder by arranging for actual disappearance of a number of gentile children from Kielce area for weeks before the planned date of the riots. The most primitive inhabitants were fed rumors about Jewish rituals murders, others suspected sexual perverts rather than any political provocation. There were many reasons for tension. At that time there was a strong resentment of disproportional Jewish participation in the leadership of the Communist terror apparatus. This resentment facilitated the spread of rumors of ritual murders among uneducated people. The problems of restitution of property to prewar owners midst horrible housing shortage caused by war damages also contributed to tension. Poland at the time was permeated with feelings of despair because of loss of national independence, helplessness after the betrayal by the Western Allies, and deep frustration.

Many returning people found themselves in a situation similar to that shown in the film *Doctor Zhivago*, when the hero was prevented by squatters from returning to his own home. Generally, the law of May 6, 1945 on the return of abandoned property was observed and within 21 days property rights were restored to the returning owners in 99% of the cases. (S. Meducki and Z. Wrona, *Anti-Jewish riots in Kielce, July 4, 1946: Documents and Materials*, Kielce Historic Society, Kielce 1992. Unfortunately, in the real life, not only brutalities but sometimes crime and murder threatened some of the returning property owners whether they were Jewish or gentile. If the Kielce records are correct it still would be enough to spread fear if 0.01% of the returning property owners met with foul play.

On July 3, 1946, following a script of a slander of ritual murder, a cobbler and secret police informer Walenty Błaszczuk, code name "Przelot," reported to the police that his eight year old son Henryk was missing. The boy was apparently taken out of town on July 1, 1946 by Antoni Pasowski (a Jewish agent of the Office of Public Security, the *Bezpieka*). The boy was taught to say that he was abducted and held in the Jewish compound at 7 Planty street. On July 4, 1946, the boy returned home and went with his father to the police station to cancel the missing child report and to tell the story of his abduction. Henryk Błaszczuk claimed that he never uttered a word during the events of July 4, 1946 and that his father, Walenty, did all the talking. Then the boy, Henryk Błaszczuk, was manipulated by Pasowski to point at a passing Jew as his abductor who supposedly held him in the basement of a Jewish compound (it turned out the compound did **not** have a basement).

Meanwhile the first murder, execution style, was committed on Dr. Seweryn Kachane the president of the local Jewish

committee, by uniformed men of the counterintelligence the *informacja*. These men were in control of the main crime scene at Planty no.7. Dr Kachane was murdered by an *Informacja* officer who shot him in the back of the skull.

13 Weapons in Jewish compound

At 10 AM on the 4th of July, 1946, in Kielce, Soviet controlled military and police personnel including five officers of the *Informacja* initiated the fire exchange and the killings. As mentioned before the Police tried to enter the Jewish compound in which Henryk Błaszczak claimed to have been imprisoned and barely escaped death. Jewish occupants defended themselves with automatic gun fire. One officer and two soldiers were killed, several uniformed men were wounded. The pogrom began when uniformed security officers entered an apartment house at 7 Planty Street, Kielce, on July 4, 1946. The amount and type of weapons stashed inside the Jewish compound indicated that this arsenal was there in preparation of the pogrom. The details of the provocation apparently did not develop exactly as planned.

At a critical moment, after the gun fire from the Jewish compound the security officers attacked and began shooting captive Jews and expelling them out of windows into the street. Some of those not killed by the security officers were injured or killed by soldiers dressed as a civilian mob. Official records give 39 Jewish murder victims and 70 to 80 injured. Bullets fired by armed Jews entrapped in the Jewish compound killed two Polish Gentiles. Bullet wounds were discovered in many of the murdered Jewish victims. Bullets could originate only from the uniformed police, soldiers, and functionaries of the security forces other people did not have any guns. Murders were apparently committed during the pogrom by common criminals who robbed and murdered their victims. After 6 PM the pogrom was stopped by a single Russian officer. 39 Jews 2 two Polish Christians were dead. Other deaths followed as some of the wounded were dying.

14 Why the riot was staged on the 4th of July, 1946

The Soviet staged pogrom brought on the Polish nation the shame of the vicious violence by member serving in the terror apparatus. The violence could have been easily stopped at any time the way it was ended. The Soviet scheme to disgrace Polish resistance to the communist takeover of Poland worked in world press. Arthur Bliss-Lane, then the American ambassador to Poland, was among those aware that the 4th of July, 1946 pogrom was staged to overshadow the Soviet election tampering in Poland and to serve Soviet schemes in the Middle East. The American Ambassador also noted that its purpose was to discredit Polish opposition to Sovietization "especially among Jewish circles in the United States." (Arthur Bliss-Lane, [I Saw Poland Betrayed](#), New York: 1948, P. 249). In spite of U.S. Embassy reports, the Soviet aims were achieved. Even the date of the riot was chosen to coincide with American national holiday when many people did not go to work and could react fully to the dramatic news of a bloody riot.

There was another important event scheduled for July 4, 1946. The Nuremberg trials were to hear Soviet prosecutor's speech accusing Germans of mass murder in Katyn forest of thousands of Polish officers. Soviet accusations had little chance to be accepted. No doubt, it was a convenient moment to compromise the Poles with an outrageous act of anti-Semitism to discredit any Polish voices that could rightly claim that the Katyn crime was perpetrated by the Soviets and not by the Germans.

The court in Nuremberg rejected Soviet accusations of the Germans. 50 years later, in 1991 Mikhail Gorbachov

admitted that the Katyn murders were committed on the order of the Soviet Politburo as a part of execution of 21,857 members of Polish leadership community captured by the Soviets. However, simultaneously with the admission of the killings, the Soviets immediately started inventing Polish crimes such as mass murder Red Army's soldiers taken prisoner in the Battle of Warsaw in 1920, in which Polish victory ended Lenin's attempt to bring communism to Germany and Western Europe.

The staging of the murders in Kielce in 1946 not only was useful to the Soviets in connection with their policy in the Middle East and in the proceedings of the Nuremberg trials, but also in order to make the Poles appear guilty of mass murders of Jews. This propaganda was used in retaliation for Polish pronouncements that the Soviets committed the murders at Katyń.

The issue of Katyń was used earlier by the Soviets as an excuse for breaking diplomatic relations with Polish Government-in-Exile in London which was represented in Moscow's propaganda as collaborating with the Germans in that matter.

Considering the provocation of the ghastly violence in Kielce one must ask the classical question *Qui Bono?* Obviously Soviet Union had everything to gain and nothing to lose by those events at the time when the Soviets were interested to prevent any understanding between Polish and Jewish communities and wanted to make the Jews in their service as anti-Polish as possible.

15 How could the riot last nearly nine hours

Study of the files of the Regional Military Court in Kielce indicate that the local police could have easily prevented the riot during the first two hours of the pogrom. During the first two hours of rioting, Jewish victims were murdered by men in police and military uniforms. At noon the first wave of the pogrom abated. Near the Jewish compound were commanding officers of the military and police forces in Kielce. With them was Soviet NKVD col. (Natan vel. Nicolai) Shpilevoy. No action was taken to stop the riot. The commander of Soviet garrison in Kielce, col. A. Kupryj refused to get involved in the riot. Apparently Kupryj, an ethnic Pole, learned too much about the NKVD provocation and he was shortly court marshaled and shot.

Next, local steel plant workers were brought by agents provocateurs to the scene of the pogrom to strengthen the impression of riot by a mob. No serious effort was made to stop the riot while protracted discussions were carried on by col. Shpilevoy, mjr. Sobczyński-Spychaj, head of local security forces, and the secretary of local communist party J. Kalinowski. The office log of mjr. Sobczyński-Spychaj contains notes of his telephone conversation with the Minister of Public Security Stanisław Radkiewicz and Jakub Berman, at the time the main Soviet agent in the ruling Polish Politburo, in charge of all security matters. The above mentioned officers acted to protract the pogrom. They rejected a plea from local District Attorney to coordinate efforts to save the surviving Jews and start police investigation of the crimes being committed. At that point it became clear that a Soviet controlled riot was in progress. The pogrom which was started by Soviet-controlled uniformed men was permitted to last nearly nine hours.

16 Mob tried by a military court

Basically the murders and other crimes connected with the July, 4, 1946, pogrom in Kielce were within the jurisdiction

of the local civilian court. Instead, an NKVD court pretending to be the Military District Court, was selected to try the cases resulting from the pogrom. The show trial was preceded by Soviet style investigations, during which tortures were often used to extract confessions from people who were not present at the crime scene on 7 Planty street. The role of uniformed men who inflicted bullet wounds in the majority of Jewish victims was excluded from the investigations and trials of the rioters.

17 Government observers

The trial records did not include the fact that Hilary Chełchowski and Wacław Buczyński, the two observers of the pogrom, were sent by the Central Committee of the ruling Communist Party from Warsaw to Kielce at least half an hour before the pogrom was started (see: Wiącek, Tadeusz: *The Secrets of the Pogrom of Kielce* Kraków, 1992, pp. 97-8). The two high-ranking officials did nothing to stop the nearly-nine-hour long pogrom. These facts were never brought up during the trials. The official report of the two men dated July, 7, 1946 gave false details of the provocation that resulted in steel-plant workers joining the pogrom. The report mentioned that the 600 steel workers of the steel mill Ludwików were told that eleven Christian children (who were recently reported missing) were victims of Jewish ritual murder in Kielce.

18 The show trial

A show trial was conducted from the 9th to the 11th of July 1946. While acknowledging that organized provocation had occurred (P. 23), the Military District Court did not reveal who was responsible. Twelve men were tried and nine were sentenced to death. The prosecutor Golczewski, Polish Jew known as an old NKVD hand, was violating all normal legal procedures during the trial. He did this with full approval of military judges. At one point during the trial Golczewski went as far as to threaten a defendant with implied physical harm when the man was complaining about tortures inflicted upon him during the interrogation.

The entire show trial was a mockery of the law. It was a Soviet style show trial conducted in Poland to fulfill political and propaganda purposes. The very conduct of the show trial was a proof of the complete Soviet domination of life in Poland. It was absolutely impossible for anyone else than the Soviets to stage the pogrom in which security forces directly participated for nearly nine hours. The sentries who were posted around the riot area did prevent Catholic priests from reaching the places of lynching and when they were trying to stop the violence. Because of Moscow's control over Polish political scene the global Soviet policies determined the events in Poland and this explains why a high-ranking intelligence officer, and a Jewish specialist like Dyomin was sent to Kielce, and stayed there only long enough to supervise the staging of the riots, then to interrogate witnesses, and depart immediately as soon as his short assignment was completed.

All speculation that Polish communist provoked the pogrom on their own initiative without knowledge of Moscow is a sheer fantasy. It is like blaming the Bulgarian underlings of the KGB for the attempt to assassinate the Pope without orders from Moscow. Equally foolish is the idea that the Zionists provoked the pogrom on they own. It is true that the Soviets have helped the Zionist in their fight against the British mandate in Palestine. However, at all times the Soviets were ready, as Chęciński testifies, to turn their Jewish collaborators and executioners into victims.

During the first phase of Sovietization of the satellite empire Moscow used Jews extensively in Poland, Hungary, and Romania. Later, in the fifties, the Soviet policy changed and in order to strengthen the national character of satellite regimes

they ordered reduction of Jews in government service. This phase began with the show trial of Slanski and other Jewish members of the government of Czechoslovakia described in Chęciński's book is discussed later.

The show trial in Kielce never explained how it was possible that an officer and a patrolman were killed when the Jews in the compound were supposed to be the unarmed victims? How was it possible that so many weapons were kept in the Jewish compound when the possession of fire arms was punishable by death? Was it true that submachine guns, rifles and hand grenades were sent to the Jewish compound by the commanding officer of the secret police in Kielce, mjr. Władysław Sobczyński-Spychaj? How was it possible that in broad daylight killing frenzy could go on for nearly nine hours and the communist terror apparatus that was used to torture and murder people on daily basis all of a sudden was helpless to stop the pogrom? Why was there such a hurry to put on the show trial so much so that there was no time to discuss in court the genesis and the beginning of the pogrom? Why were the bodies of victims riddled with bullets? Why did the government observers start on the trip from Warsaw to Kielce nearly an hour earlier before the beginning of the riot? Who gave the signal for the steel workers and sawmill workers to leave their work places and join the riot? Why none of the workers was put on trial?

The lack of answers to these questions suggests that the purpose of the show trial was to hide the Soviet staging of the riots in Kielce. There was noticeable bungling by Soviet agents who forgot, for example, to cut off the telephone line to the Jewish compound and permitted the frightened Jews there to make unscheduled and confusing telephone calls, which actually resulted in fatal consequences for them. While the Jewish compound at 7 Planty street was equipped with machine guns, rifles and grenades in addition to handguns carried by those Jews who served in the communist terror apparatus, these weapons were supposed to serve for defense against the street mob stirred up with the ritual murder accusation against the Jews. The residents of the compound were armed but were not told what to do if a uniformed patrol would want to enter the compound. They opened fire which resulted in an attack by uniformed men who broke the resistance of armed Jews in each apartment and shot dead most of the inhabitants of the Jewish compound.

19 The second trial behind closed-door

Those weaknesses of the show trial created a need to announce arrest of the officers who "did not show enough resolve during the riot." Military and police officers associated with the pogrom were arrested and were given very light sentences. The immediate inspirator of the pogrom Antoni Pasowski, the Jewish agent of the Public Security, who triggered off the riots was never tried. Henryk Błaszczuk was not asked to testify. Mjr. Sobczyński-Spychaj, the head of the Kielce Security Forces was promoted to head the passport office in Warsaw as soon as he was released.

According to testimony of Józef Świątko, Sobczyński-Spychaj was the Soviet agent who was parachuted to Poland during the war and brought with him instructions for the communist underground to collaborate with the Gestapo in betraying to the Germans the organization of the Polish Home Army controlled by the Polish Government-in-Exile in London. As the head of passport office he persecuted Jewish applicants for passports. He was reported to have used foul language and threw a number of persons down the stairs. At Soviet request Sobczyński-Spychaj was promoted to the rank of colonel and was nominated the head of personnel office of the Ministry of Defense. He was rewarded for his performance in fomenting and dragging the Kielce provocation for nearly nine hours.

Widespread awareness of the Soviet provocation of the riot caused protests against the death sentences to be carried out against people who never were at the crime scene. Demands were made for a full investigation into the affair. Catholic clergy, including then absent Bishop Kaczmarek, the opposition parties as well as General Władysław Anders and the leadership of Polish political emigration were named as anti-communist conspirators behind the pogrom. Those accusations were echoed widely in the West by Jewish organizations. The show trial could not substantiate any of these charges.

The hurriedly organized show trial did not give any chance to the defense lawyers to prepare themselves. There was, however, plenty of time to bring a large crowd of Polish and foreign newsmen, preferably Jews horrified by the bestiality of the pogrom. The communists counted on the ignorance of foreign reporters of Soviet show-trial techniques and they assumed that Polish newsmen would be completely intimidated. Nevertheless, it was obvious to all that all elements proving that the riot was staged were excluded from the trial. It was becoming clear that for the Soviets anti-Semitism was a convenient political and propaganda tool used to identify anyone smeared with anti-Semitism as a fascist and probably guilty of collaboration with the Nazis during the war. Where the show trial failed miserably was in its effort to find a single proof of the alleged complicity of General Anders in the pogrom.

20 Disbelief, pain, shame

In Poland the radio and newspaper propaganda stories of the details of murders in Kielce caused first disbelief, then pain and shame that Polish mob could be capable of such horrible atrocities and brutal killing frenzy no matter whether the crimes were provoked by the Soviets or not. Soviet spin that a successful provocation was involved worked on the public. Throughout Poland meetings were held condemning the pogrom of Kielce as a horrible disgrace. Mikołajczyk, the leader of the opposition peasant party, immediately condemned the pogrom. His condemnation was censored out of the media. The demand for a parliamentary investigation of the pogrom was rejected by the communist government. The government promised formation of an investigation commission composed of all political parties. It never materialized.

Polish motion picture about the Kielce pogrom entitled "The witnesses" illustrated the feelings of pain and shame inflicted on the Polish society by the pogrom. Many realized that the Soviets succeeded in damaging the good name of the Polish people by cynically staging the vicious pogrom and equally cynically playing up the card of anti-Semitism. To illustrate Soviet use of anti-Semitism in Poland I quote extensively the book of col. Checiński later in this review.

21 Perpetuation of the Soviet version

The Soviet propaganda version of the Kielce pogrom is still current even today in the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. where oversized exhibit is understood by visiting public as the "Polish phase" of the Holocaust. Earlier, on March 23, 1981, The Los Angeles Times published a letter by I. Eisenberg, which followed the Soviet propaganda line perfectly.

It received a prominent headline quoting from the letter, "I Still Care for Poland, but Sometimes I Wonder Why." Following the writer's name was the notation, "Known to the L. A. Times." Its apparent purpose was to undermine the opinion about the Solidarity movement and spread the notion that the Poles deserved anything the Soviets had in store for them. This letter later appeared in other papers coast-to-coast. The Los Angeles Times refused to print a rebuttal by this reviewer and stamped mail to Eisenberg in care of the newspaper "unknown to the L. A. Times." Ironically the Los Angeles area saw its own share of mob frenzy and bloody riots. No one would venture an opinion about the whole of American culture and society based

solely on those events.

Official proclamations of the Catholic Church of July 7 and 11, 1946, condemning the murders and the murderers were censored out of the communist controlled press in Poland. The proclamations repeated Church's position on the matter of Jewish ritual murders of Christian children: "All statements about perpetration of ritual murders are false. No one in Kielce and Częstochowa and anywhere else in Poland was harmed by the Jews for religious and ritual reasons. The perpetrators of the crime in Kielce must be absolutely and without reservations condemned as criminals in the eyes of all God's laws and all human laws." A few days earlier, on July 5, 1946, a report of the Italian Embassy in Warsaw included the following answer of a Polish Jew to a question why did he decide to emigrate from Poland. His answer was: "It was possible to live in Poland as long as the Jews took care of the trade and non-Jews ruled. Now that the Jews are governing in Poland and the non-Jews are trading, it is better to emigrate."

In February 1996 the new post-communist foreign minister of Poland Dariusz Raseti as his first diplomatic move issued an apology to the Jewish World Congress for Polish anti-Semitism in Kielce riots 50 years ago. He said it was during the chaos of Polish "civil war" (pacification by the NKVD). It is an identical statement with Soviet propaganda at the time. There was no civil war in Poland. There was Soviet occupation. There was the Soviet pacification program and Polish communists were used by the Soviets to fight the remnants of Polish wartime resistance against the Germans. The communists were supplied with Soviet equipment and fought at the side of the Red Army under orders of the NKVD.

Krzysztof Kąkolewski correctly wrote on February 29, 1996, that an apology is proper in the name of Polish communist Soviet collaborators who executed the NKVD provocation, unleashed the bestiality of their terror apparatus, and made a long-lasting harm to the good name of Poland.

Raseti's apology predated the release of the report of on the investigation of the Kielce violence by the Central Commission of Crimes Against the Polish People. The report to issued on the 50th anniversary of the 1946 riots was not objective and not well documented after the 1989 fire of the Secret Police file in Kielce. During the fire firemen were prevented from fighting it. After the fire secret police agents burned at the city dump remaining documents left after the fire died out. The most important documents concerning the provocation at Kielce are in the huge Moscow collection of KGB files. Soviet Ministry of Defense had then some 10 million files. Soviet General Staff was known to have even greater number of files including the GRU or the main intelligence directorate. There is some freedom of access to these documents and western scientists were able to study some of them. However, it is a tedious and difficult task which requires competent researchers, who must know what to look for and where and be prepared to make hand written copies as there are no copying machines easily available in Moscow archives. It is dubious whether the crucial reports on the Kielce riots made by NKVD col. Natan Shpilevoy and GRU officer Mikhail Dyomin will ever be published.

22 A turning point

Czecinski believes that the despicable pogrom staged by the Soviets in Kielce was *a turning point marking the beginning of the end of an organized Jewish community in Poland* (p.35) and in the rest of the postwar Soviet empire. The painful problem of anti-Semitism in Poland absolutely does not deserve to be treated as anything comparable to Nazi or Soviet anti-Semitism. Thus, it is gratifying that a number of recent books, and especially the one here reviewed, may help to set the record straight. They include, in addition to Checinski's book, Lawrence Wechsler's Solidarity: Poland in the Season of Its

Passion, and Stewart Stevens's The Poles, in which the author suggests that *an anti-Semitic Pole is likely to be friendlier to the Jews than a pro-Israeli Englishman* (p.310).

In contrast, William Styron, discussing his book, Sophies Choice, said that the situation of Jews in Poland before World War II was comparable to that of the blacks in the U. S. south (reported in *U. S. News and World Report*, January 28, 1980). Apparently Styron did not know that in 1938, when 9% of Poland's population was Jewish, 14% of the members of the Polish parliament were Jews. In the 1920s, free Poland admitted more than three quarters of a million Jewish refugees from the Soviet Union, permitted them to settle and immediately granted them full Polish citizenship.

Historically, Polish-Jewish ethnic friction was insignificant as compared with Polish-Ukrainian conflicts, now almost forgotten despite the ethnic cleansing during World War II in which the number of Polish victims is estimated at half a million killed by Ukrainian extremists collaboration with Nazi-Germans. Looking further back, Poland was a haven for European Jewish community during the first 800 years of its existence, before the partitions. B. Litvinoff wrote *...Poland saved Jewry from extinction* (In late medieval and early modern times) *The Burning Bush: Anti-Semitism and World History*, London: Collins, 1988

The preservation of Jewish identity in Poland made possible the establishment of the modern state of Israel. This view is complemented by the comments of Dr. Salo Wittmayer Baron, professor emeritus of Jewish history, who spoke at a conference on Polish-Jewish relations at Columbia University (March 7-10, 1983). Professor Baron, perhaps the most distinguished authority on Jewish history in the world today, stated that *there were only two countries in Europe in which Jews did not experience severe persecution--Poland and Italy*. (Kulisiewicz, *Perspectives*, April, 1983).

23 Spread of Anti-Polonism

Professor Baron's views are apparently not widely known among free-world Jews, given the prevalence among them of slanderous claims concerning Polish treatment of Jews. For example, it is not unusual to hear from Jews in France or in America that Poles killed more Jews during World War II than the Germans or that at least the Germans have atoned for their crimes while the Poles have not. In spite of the untruth of these beliefs and the fact that many more Christian than Jewish Polish citizens were killed by the Nazis and Soviets, they have been abetted or perpetuated by television programs such as "Holocaust," "The Winds of War." These included anti-Polish propaganda clearly aimed at assassination of the Polish national character. Needless to say, this has been highly beneficial to the Soviets in their efforts to discredit Polish resistance to Sovietization.

The origins and effects of these anti-Polish attitudes in the West are not sufficiently considered in Checinski's book. However, Checinski states correctly that *the genuine democratic and liberal elements in Polish society ... shouldered the main burden of combating anti-Semitism imposed by the Soviets* (p.35). The Catholic Church in Poland opposed the hatred which weighed heavily over Polish society under the Soviet regime. The Church's opposition to anti-Semitism was considered to be a part of the struggle against the communist ideology of hatred and violence.

24 Soviet waves of anti-Semitism

During the infamous Doctor's Plot of 1953 the Soviets tried to organize in Poland a special Jewish internment camp for *Zionists and hostile elements* (p. 41). Polish colonel Franciszek Mroz selected to head the camp, refused to accept the assignment (p.42). Death of Stalin ended the camp project and a huge wave of persecution of Jews in the Soviet Union. Earlier Stalin ordered execution of members of Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee. Among the victims were at least 238 writers in Yiddish language, 106 actors, 19 concert musicians, 87 painters and sculptures. The waves of anti-Semitism engulfed the Soviet Union and its satellite empire.

The Soviets kept on assigning to Jews in Poland *the role of...both executioners and... victims* (p.47). The Soviets appointed Jews to most visible government positions in numbers out of any proportion to the percentage of Jews in Polish population. Also Jews *indeed played a prominent role in the civilian security service* (p.57) thus helping the Soviets to prove later that Jewish Communists were mostly to blame for years of terror and lawlessness in postwar Poland (p.57), while *Polish intelligentsia boycotted the security service, which was treated with universal contempt as an instrument of foreign domination* (p.61).

Throughout the book Michael Chęciński displays impressive personal knowledge of an alert insider. He acquired it in 20 years of service in Communist military in Poland of which last 10 years in military counter intelligence the *Informacja*. He left Poland in 1969 and via Israel and arrived at Harvard University Research Center where he finished writing his book here reviewed.

25 Soviet policy in Poland

Chęciński's book makes a sad reading as the facts of the Soviet NKVD/KGB operations aimed at complete subjugation of Poland are unfolded by the author. Chęciński writes that *unlike other... states under Soviet domination, in Poland armed resistance to the Soviet sponsored regime indeed brought the country to the brink [of a genocide]; as it was those killed in resisting... (Soviet takeover of Poland) are estimated as high as 80,000 to 200,000* (p.64). *When the 'take-over stage' was completed and the (Soviet-sponsored) regime had been consolidated, the 'mobilization stage' - i.e... terror began... as a sequence of victimizations that began with active enemies and then moved to political partners... and finally to members of Communist party, the state, military, and police hierarchies* (p.66) in an endless cycle of terror.

Soviet policy in Poland was *to uncover and destroy even the slightest suspicion of heresy or independent thinking. And when heresy was called for but none was discovered... it was invented.* For this operation the Soviets established in 1949 in Poland the Tenth Department of the Ministry of Public Security, the *Bezpieka* (p.67) and appointed almost exclusively Jewish Communists to organize it and to head it (p.70). Soviet government did not trust the members of prewar Polish Communist Party which in 1934 had 9,000 to 10,000 members (about one-quarter were Jews). In 1938 it was officially dissolved by the Soviets acting through Comintern. The real reason was not insufficient subordination to the Soviets but the infiltration of the party by Polish intelligence.

26 Revenge of Holocaust survivors

Only Soviet trained intelligence agents were trusted by the Soviet government among Polish prewar Communists; and among those *the Jews... were... considered less susceptible to the lures of 'Polish nationalism, to which even impeccable*

Polish Communists were not thought immune (p.71). In 1945 the Soviets recruited to the Office of State Security very large number of Jews, who were not communists before the war. Many Holocaust survivors were assigned to carry out Soviet policy of de-Nazification in the former German territories which Poland was to annex on the basis of the Potsdam Agreement in compensation for provinces lost to the Soviet Union in 1939.

1,255 former Nazi camps were used to hold German nationals, including ethnic Poles, citizens of Germany, 99 percent of them were noncombatants, just innocent civilians. Under the guise of de-Nazification members of pro-Western Polish resistance and their families were processed together with the Germans. In a brief period of time between 60,000 and 80,000 people died in the de-Nazification camps. Starvation diet, typhoid fever, and mistreatment caused the high death rate. Torture was commonplace. Officers of the *Bezpieka*, Jews who themselves survived unimaginable suffering at German-Nazi hands were now used by the Soviets to inflict the same on others.

Former CBS News bureau chief in Spain and journalist for forty eight years John Sack spent seven years doing research and conducting interviews in Poland, Germany, Israel, and the United States to cover this story of Jewish revenge. On November 21, 1993 CBS program *60 minutes* presented an interview with Mr. Sack and footage of survivors interviews with the survivors who testified to torture and killings in those camps. German citizens interviewed had Polish names. Polish woman, Dr. Dorota Boreczek, former inmate of the Swientochlowicze camp, testified that she was arrested and tortured together with her parents. Her father, member of Polish Home Army was executed. See: John Sack, *An Eye For An Eye*, Basic Books, Division of HarperCollins Publishers. 1993

27 The Tenth Department

Soviets committed many crimes against Jews. Swiedlov, Zinoviev, Kamieniev, Radek, Trotsky and others were murdered. Despite his persecution of Jews Stalin was not branded as an anti-Semite. Stalin's terror apparatus in Polish police state was staffed mainly with Jews. *There were no traces of Jewish solidarity among the Jewish staff of the Tenth Department. Many of them had not only sadistic inclinations, but also various personal grudges against their future victims, both Polish and Jewish (P.71). They practiced Jewish anti-Semitism ... to save their own skins (p.72)* in early 1950s. Files of pre-war Polish police fell into Soviet hands and were used to blackmail people into collaboration. The Soviets maintained direct and separate control of the terror apparatus, the military and Communist party in Poland.

When Gomulka (life long Soviet collaborator, graduate of Moscow's International Lenin School) opposed Stalin for tactical reasons and was to be arrested on July 1951 'the dirty job was given to the Jews' (p.74- namely to Jozef Swiatlo, who defected to the West in 1953). Gomulka was not put on a public trial because he could reveal facts about wartime Soviet collaboration with Gestapo in killing of Polish Communist leader Marceli Nowotko (P. 15) and helping Gestapo operations against the Polish Home Army (Armia Krajowa).

28 Witch-hunt of Zionists and the "nationalist" trend

When In Poland Soviet 'witch-hunt' against 'Polish nationalists' was in progress ... the turn of the Jews had come in Czechoslovakia. Of fourteen prominent Communists who went on trial in Prague eleven were Jews (including Slansky and other 'Zionist conspirators')(P. 76). It was the beginning of the next phase in Soviet tactics which were to be used

throughout the Soviet satellite empire. Anti-Semitism was used by Andropov as one of the main tools in subjugation of the captive people of East-Central Europe.

Chęciński's book shows how Moscow held tight reins on its satellite empire. He shows the consistence and continuity Soviet policies in all satellite states. Soviet policy of elimination of Jews from satellite governments intended to make those governments more "national," blame the Jews for crimes of the Soviet takeover period and also to assume pro-Arab look as Moscow was playing now the Arab card in cold war against the West led by the United States. Thus, Soviet global Cold War strategy tuned openly anti-Semitic in the satellites and the Middle East.

Soviet policy in the satellite countries was uniform, as Chęciński points out. However, Bulgaria was different at first. Holocaust did not extend to Bulgaria. Sizable number of Bulgarian communists lived in Russia since the Bolshevik Revolution and they formed government without engaging Jews in all ministries except culture. Ministry of culture was a Jewish domain even more completely in Bulgaria than in the other satellites. In Bulgarian towns there was a lot of mixed marriages between Orthodox Bulgarians and Jews, while the Muslim-Turks lived separately ever since Bulgaria was a part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire. By the time the Czech show trial and execution of Rudolf Salsman-Slansky in 1952 the Bulgarians were still spared Soviet anti-Semitic machinations. That came in full strength in the sixties when the Soviets openly supported the Arab states against Israel. There is a consensus among Bulgarians living in the United States that intense anti-Semitism was brought to Bulgaria by the Soviets for the first time since Jews were allowed by the Turks to settle there after the expulsion from Spain in 1492.

In Slansky's trial *the Soviets used as 'the missing link' an American Communist Noel Field, who hoped to serve the cause of world revolution, while in fact he was a dupe of the Soviet secret police and as such, he was considered expendable. By falsely accusing Field of being an American spy, the KGB was able to use him as 'evidence' in the biggest international provocation ever against Communists in Eastern Europe (p.78).* Slansky was similarly sacrificed in Czechoslovakia as were the Jewish security agents killed together with other Jews in Poland, whenever it suited Soviet objectives.

29 Turning executioners into victims

It was clear that the (Jewish) executioners were about to become victims (p.80). After serving their usefulness, they were to be killed (p.81) in 1953. While in Czechoslovakia 'handful of Jewish Communist dignitaries were expendable ... in Poland the situation was different: Communists had come to power on the tips of Soviet bayonets and were desperately short of well-qualified as well as politically reliable cadres' (p.89). However, already in 1949 Stalin said: "Can't the Sarmatians [Poles] rule in Poland! Must the Jews rule?" (P.90). By mid 1952 on Stalin's orders at least 25 Soviet Jewish writers and cultural leaders were secretly murdered (p.91)

On the international scene since 1954, political upheavals in Egypt and Syria provided a long-awaited opening for Soviet intervention in the Middle East... Anti-Zionism thus became useful foreign policy tool and in Soviet practice anti-Zionism came to be synonymous with anti-Semitism (p.92). The Soviet investment in weapons to for Jewish opponents of the British mandate in Palestine as well as Soviet policies of evicting Jews from the satellite countries was about to pay off. Now the Soviets could, in turn, play the role of friends of the Arabs, with the aim of disturbing the flow of oil from Middle Eastern oil fields to the west. The Arabs defeated by Israel became dependent on Soviet support and Soviet Union became full fledged

Cold War challenger threatening the United States and other western countries in the Middle East.

When Moscow ordered rearmament for the Korean war ... the reign of terror was spreading, and jails (in Poland) were overcrowded with tens of thousands of innocent prisoners - former civil servants, and army officers, veterans of the anti-Nazi underground, peasants defending their wretched property, workers refusing to starve, young people conscious of their national heritage, even Communists accused of deviation or heresy...(In Polish armed forces) nineteen army, navy, and air force officers were executed in May 1953, while the primate of the Roman Catholic Church, Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, was arrested on September 26, 1953 by two Soviet officials of the KGB (p.92).

After Stalin's death in 1953 Moscow's policy in Poland was to turn Jews into scape goats to overcome political crisis while propagating populist demagoguery and relying heavily on anti-Semitism. The earlier image of Jews as Soviet agents in control of Poland was replaced with an anti-Semitic drive against the Jews as guilty of Stalinist crimes, many of which Jewish executioners actually committed in Poland. Prewar Polish leader of extreme nationalistic and anti-Semitic fringe, Bolesław Piasecki, first used by the Soviets to undermine Church's influence, now became a more useful tool for Soviet control over Poland.

Piasecki was sentenced to death in 1944 by Soviet NKVD court. On the death row he was pardoned by Soviet NKVD gen. Iwan Serov in return for becoming Soviet agent in Poland. In 1953 the new phase of Soviet rule in Poland was to have more nationalist character with Piasecki's help. The number of Jews in the government was to be reduced. Eventually, the Jewish members of the Soviet terror apparatus in Poland took a vengeance on Piasecki by murdering his only son, a teenager (on January 22, 1957). The assailants, all known to the authorities, were allowed to leave for Israel.

30 Infiltration of Jewish community

Soviets ordered the infiltration of [what remained of] the Jewish community by the secret police. The fact that virtually the entire staff of the Jewish Section of the Ministry of Public Security consisted of Jews and that the Political Department in the Ministry of Public Security ... was headed mainly by Jewish Communists, had no bearing on the situation whatsoever (p.93). It was a period when Soviet anti-Semitism intensified. Unfortunately, many people did not see the sinister use of anti-Semitism as a tool of Soviet control over Poland.

Swiatlo's revelations and Krushev's speech of February 1956 pierced the bubble of lies and sham, unmasking the Communist regime (in Poland) for what it really was: a brutal and corrupt tyranny imposed from abroad upon unwilling people (p.95).

Most conspicuous security men were 'aliens' - Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, ethnic Germans, and, of course Jews (many of whom considered themselves to be a separate ethnic group with its own language). One monopolistic political center in the Kremlin governed directly and separately the security organs and the Communist party apparatus in Poland (p.96).

31 1956 purge

In 1956 purge the Soviet policy was to stop (in Poland) all criticism of 'Soviet comrades' and blame only their Jewish subordinates. Meantime... the majority of the population ... remained hostile to the Communist regime and to Soviet domination (under) police terror... (they) could do no more than offer passive resistance to their growing exploitation and the lowering of their living standards ... four fifth of all those gainfully employed were below the official subsistence level. During the Poznan uprising in June 1956 they found opportunity to express their frustrations ... crowd armed with weapons that had been seized from the police ... stormed public buildings ... security men were lynched and killed without mercy (p. 104) to quote Chęciński.

Polish intellectual opposition pleaded for a 'likeable socialism' ...long before the slogan 'socialism with a human face' was coined in Czechoslovakia. A period of democratization came when Communist party apparatus split into Moscow favored 'Boors" versus "Yids" (P.105) or Jewish Stalinists who were to blame for all Poland's disasters in the last decade. (p.107). The anti-Semitic (Soviet) propaganda of the Boors of the Natolin faction was generally not well received in the country. Usually Jewish leaders of the Yids of Pulawska faction ... branded as anti-Semite anyone who dared to remind them of their past misdeeds. Their claim to immunity because of Jewish origin was ... wide spread and contributed to anti-Jewish resentment in later years. However, it is remarkable... how small an impact the Notolin anti-Semitic propaganda had on the Polish population. When Soviet press attache Masiennikov complained that too many Jews (were) in Polish mass media - Polish journalists replied that Jews were almost totally assimilated... and (mentioned) that Marx was Jewish. Maslennikov answered that Marx had a German mother and had himself converted to Christianity!(p.109).

In February 1956 Boleslaw Bierut (an Ukrainian made by the Soviets Poland's head of state) was murdered in Moscow *allegedly because, as an old ... NKVD hand, he knew too much and thus could be embarrassing for the new Kremlin masters.*(p.109). Moscow wanted to replace him with someone else. Bolesław Bierut was one of a number of communist dignitaries who mysteriously died while visiting Moscow. They were such personalities as Togliatti of Italy, Wilhelm Pieck of East Germany, Maurice Thorez of France; Klement Gottwalt of Czechoslovakia, Georgiy Dimitrov of Bulgaria, and others.

32 Soviet use of anti-Semitism to isolate Poland from the West

Gomulka's appointment as first secretary (in 1956) marked the end of short-lived genuine democratization (p.120). Chęcinski feels that Ochab was the genuine hero of the Polish October. Edward Ochab like Stanislaw Kania 25 years later were the only two leaders in the whole international Communist movement who voluntarily made way for an other man ... believing it was in the best interest (of their people). Hungarian crisis ... with no Ochab on the scene, was to turn into a blood bath. (p.120). Gomulka with his old NKVD ties resumed Soviet anti-Semitic policies even though he was married to a Jewess Liwa Szoken (p.143). He rebuilt the terror apparatus and used riot police (recruited from sentenced criminals and blackmail victims). It was renamed ZOMO.

The Jews, as well as the Polish population generally, deeply resented the cynical abuse of anti-Semitism... (p.126). Catholic weekly Tygodnik Powszechny in March 1957 stated the "anti-Semitism is irreconcilable with Catholicism' (p.127). Anti-Semitism was a Soviet inspired diversion to strengthen their hold over Poland. (p.128). It a crucial part of the Soviet program to isolate Poland from the West

Gomulka's popularity was due to his imprisonment and to the short-lived universally felt economic boom which resulted

from the 'thaw' in which 90% of collective farms disappeared and farmers freed from forced collectivization intensified agricultural production. There was increased productivity in industry, thanks to an increase in wages, more opportunity for private enterprise, and foreign credit (p.124). Typically Gomulka did not want to owe his power to 'the mob in the streets' and frequently blackmailed Polish population with "threats of Soviet intervention"(p.124).

In 1957 repatriation of Polish nationals from forced labor camps in USSR up to 40,000 were Jews, who soon were applying for exit visas *almost all of them nourished an understandable hatred of Communism experienced at its worst. Many of them* (spoke Yiddish and) *had no attachment to Polish language or culture* (p.129). *While 40,000 to 50,000 Jews left Poland in 1957-58 exodus, some 30,000 decided to stay and throw their lot with their gentile countrymen, who remained generally sympathetic* (p.130). *The Soviet leadership continued to flood Poland with successive waves of anti-Semitism* (p.131) in the czarist tradition of *bringing about a disruption of the brotherhood between Jews and Christians in Poland* (P. 134).

33 1960 purge of the Jews

In 1960 *another purge began in the security service: Jews were being kicked out because they were Jewish, Poles because they were too friendly with the Jews or because they would not vociferate against Jews'* (p.149). *Totalitarian police state in Poland was based on 'preventive action' against enemies as "an instrument of widespread terror and blackmail"*(p.150).

In 1961 the public opinion polls conducted by the communists indicated growing crisis of confidence in Gomulka's government after the thaw which started in 1956. Without Stalinist terror people were openly complaining that the thaw did not live up to expectations of improved economical and psychological conditions of life.

By 1963 the number of secrete informers employed by the secret police alone reached 250-300,000. Mieczyslaw Moczar (born Nicolai Demko of Ukrainian descent, was in 1939 recruited by NKVD for the referendum on incorporating Poland's north-eastern provinces into Soviet Byelorussia (p. 156), *former minister at Internal Affairs he initiated "special training courses for informers'* (P.151). *Police faction totally subservient to KGB centered around general Moczar under the name of 'Partisans'. Soviet leaders began grooming Moczar as Comulka's potential successor* (p. 159). This illustrated the illegitimate nature of Soviet Empire which had no free elections and have been holding captive nations. This basic illegality led to brutal power struggles and crises of succession.

Moczar played a decisive role in anti-Nazi resistance veterans association: Union of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy (ZBoWiD), which served 'the police faction as a front organization' (p. 163).

There were no ... *inhibitions restraining police faction with regard to anti-Semitism. ...anti-Zionist propaganda provided Moscow with a useful instrument in her pursuit of expansion in the Middle East: Jewish Communists having been a major asset in the imposition of Communism in Poland immediately following WWII, had come to be considered a handicap for Communism* (p.165).

34 Planned elimination of Jews

Under Andropov's orders *From 1962 on, the Jewish Section of the Ministry of Internal Affairs began preparing for total elimination of Jews. Card index file of all "hidden' Jews, which included totally assimilated Poles of Jewish origin,*

converts and their offspring, mixed marriages, as well as Poles with Jewish relatives or connections was prepared. ...all senior Jewish officials (were placed) under police surveillance. Yiddish newspaper Folks-Sztyme was placed under direct police control (p.166).

Unfortunate anti-Polish slanders by such talented writers as Leon Uris (Exodus, Mila 18 etc) ... *published in the West were systematically utilized in anti-Semitic propaganda of the Moczarite press, long before the 1967 Six Day War in the Middle East. The Soviets were using Moczar and others to overthrow Comulka; pseudo-nationalism and anti-Semitism became... the instruments to extinguish the last vestiges of (Polish) national independence (P.171).* The same Moczar bragged earlier how much he liked to see the members of the wartime Polish Home Army to be buried six feet underground.

35 The passive resistance

In the sixties the Polish people fought systematic Sovietization with passive resistance. Moczar goaded Gomulka to outbid his own chauvinistic and racist demagoguery (p.177). Ryszard Strzelecki, Moscow's top man in the Polish Politburo, following Soviet orders, favored the police faction lead by Moczar, who set up the security service as the supreme watchdog of ideological orthodoxy.

In March 1964 eminent writers and scholars protested party's cultural policy in the 'Letter of the 34' addressed to Prime Minister Cyrankiewicz (p.178). Simultaneously, a great campaign was launched against intellectuals and Jews (p.179). Prof. Leszek Kolakowski was expelled from the party for condemning Gomulka on Oct.21, 1966 for a decade of increasing repression, lack of democracy, intolerance of opposition and excessive bureaucracy (p.180).

36 The anti-cultural revolution of the "Moczarites"

"Moczar's boys" or the "young guard" of the Polish "anti-cultural revolution" consolidated their grip on the security forces; then infiltrated the party apparatus at all levels and terrorized the Civil service and managerial classes; and then proceeded to divide and disarm the potential opposition of the intelligentsia. Armed forces were to serve as testing ground (p.190). Especially since in 1956 "the navy and the air force ... were ready to combat any Soviet intervention (p.194) and the army organized the ...defence of Warsaw (P.197).

Wooing Arab nationalist the Russians insisted on the total expulsion of the Jews and other unreliable officers. The purge was conducted "under the close guidance of Soviet liaison officers ... (p.199) ... The anti-Jewish purge ordered by Moscow ... (included) officers who never revealed their Jewish origin, many "pure blood" officers were suspected because of their foreign sounding names, dark hair, or crooked noses (p.201).

One non Jewish officer was unmasked as a 'Jew' because he entertained a group of Canadian Jews visiting their hometown (p.202). Col. Henryk Krupski was cashiered because during the war his wife had adopted a Jewish baby saved from the Holocaust; his daughter of pure 'Aryan' blood had been refused employment ... (p.204).

A major was shown evidence that his wife's grandmother had converted to Christianity in order to marry a peasant boy... Faced with the alternative of divorcing her or giving up his army career, the major resigned his commission (p.205)

After the Six Day War the Polish population including many officers on active duty did not conceal their joy at the ignominious defeat of Russia's Arab allies (p.205). Marshal Marian Spychalski's Catholic wife was falsely accused of visiting her family in Tel-Aviv, volunteering for service in the Israeli army and betraying various state and military secrets. Gen. Woiciech Jaruzelski replaced Spychalski as minister of national defence (p.206).

37 The Six Day War in 1967

In April 1968 with the effectiveness of anti-Semitic campaign confirmed, the police faction (under Moczar who acted under direct orders of Juri Valdimirovich Andropov, the head of KGB, nad later Brezhnev's successor) could shift its attention to Gomulka himself (p.207). Communist anti-Semitism introduced ... entirely new features on the Polish scene. The Polish democratic and socialist movement had a long proud record of uncompromising struggle against all forms of racist and nationalist discrimination and persecution, particularly against anti-Semitism, which has been used to "divide and rule" Poland ever since the time of czarist oppressors ... now state-sponsored anti-Semitism, therefore, was a qualitatively new phenomenon, an offshoot of the Soviet Russian yoke imposed upon an unwilling nation since 1944 (p.209).

No wonder that the Six Day War in June 1967 produced the spontaneous reaction, reflecting at one and the some time ten centuries of Polish-Jewish coexistence, natural sympathy for the underdog, and the hate towards the Soviet Union; also: 'Our Polish Jews have thrashed the Russian Arabs', on humanitarian grounds most of the people were glad that Israel escaped extermination at the hands of the Arabs (p.212).

38 Anti-Semitism brought in the open

In the power struggle between Gomulka and Moczar anti-Semitism was brought in the open under orders of Juri Andropov the head of the KGB. The atmosphere that the police faction ... created resembled that of the Chinese cultural revolution. The Soviets were ... trying to equate Israel's actions with Stalinist and Nazi crimes (P.214) and Moczarites were fabricating evidence that all Jews - Communists included - in fact belonged to Israel's Fifth Column (p.215). ... hanging over every Pole's head was the threat of denunciation ... all those deemed inconvenient or expendable were included on a list exposing their real or imaginary Jewish origin or Jewish connections... 'evidence' was supplied from police files ... indicating close connection with the KGB...(of Moczar's faction). The main aim was the prevention of any demonstration of solidarity with the persecuted, the political isolation and intimidation of active or potentially liberal elements, and the total paralysis of all honest people, both inside the party and among intellectuals, who were liable to oppose a bid for power by the police faction of Moczar (p.218). The original blueprint ordered by Moscow ... called for a series of show trials against Jewish ... 'Zionist' plot to seize power: the police faction could then call a state of emergency and place an alternative leadership in power (P-221).

Polish youth reared on romantic traditions and ideals rebelled not only against sham and hypocrisy but also against social injustice and the institutional privileges of the new class:(however, many) first generation migrants from the countryside and small towns,(were) obedient careerists devoid of any ideological motivation and deeply imbued with crude anti-Semitism, xenophobia and chauvinistic nationalism (P. 111).

Phrases like 'Everyone sent here from Moscow is either a jackass, a fool, or a spy' were greeted with spontaneous applause and standing ovations during performances of nineteenth century drama by Adam Mickiewicz entitled 'The

Forefathers". When the play was closed on January 30, 1968, students protested (p.228).

Attempts were made to stir anti-Semitic feelings among students in order to split the protest movements (p.229). Punitive action (first in Polish history) was taken against those protesting against Jew-baiting ... while authors of anti-Semitic propaganda remained unpunished, in direct violation of Poland's constitution and penal code (p.230). The riot police made unprecedented show of force. Police faction using the security apparatus was bent on creating atmosphere of imminent coup d'etat (P-231).

39 The Czech spring in 1968

On April 12, 1968, Moczar made a serious mistake when in a televised interview 'he focused on disaster wreaked by the Jews on 'People's Poland' and blamed the Russians "for giving to the Jews monopolistic right to leadership which lead to persecution of patriotic Poles by Soviet-backed Jewish Communists. The Soviets retaliated by switching their support back to Gomulka (p.233). Gomulka then urged the Soviets to stamp out Dubcek's crisis in Czechoslovakia before the 'pest' is spread to Poland(P.235).

The Czech liberalization was used by the Soviets as a pretext to invade Czechoslovakia. Under the cover of a police action in defense of Brezhnev's doctrine the Soviets moved atomic weapons to the Bavarian border. The Soviets thought that their police action would be considered as less alarming to NATO than an unexplained movement of heavily armed troops to the Czech-German border.

40 Bloodshed on the Baltic in 1970

In 1969 Michael Chęciński left his position in the *Informacja* and emigrated to Israel. He was no longer a direct witness of Soviet manipulation of the political situation in Poland. Nevertheless his opinions on that subject are worth quoting.

In December, 1970, the workers (provoked by the KGB) revolted in the Baltic ports and Gomulka was toppled from power. Short-lived duumvirate of Gierek-Moczar followed (p.235). Moczar lost his bid for total power (as Soviet viceroy). Gierek won and his team never repudiated Moczar's anti-Semitic campaign nor rehabilitated its victims (p.235).

Years of Soviet-sponsored anti-Jewish propaganda, under the thin guise of 'anti-Zionism' made inroads into the previously internationalist and anti-racist policies of the Western Communist parties and finally drove them to position of outright anti-Semitism (P. 252).

41 Reaction to secret police terror

The triumph of the secret police precipitated a series of social upheavals in Poland resulting in the Solidarity movement in 1980. Soviet goal of (Sovietizing) Polish society failed dismally (p.259)

Chęciński hoped that *the Polish Pope, John Paul II, in June, 1979, initiated a new chapter in Polish-Jewish relations*

all over the world by reminding his countrymen that the Polish Jews were an integral part of Polish history and Polish fate (p.260). Papal visit to a synagogue in Rome was unprecedented. The Polish Pope spoke respectfully about Jews as elder brothers of Christians. Later he was willing to offend the feelings of his countrymen by removing Catholic nuns from the vicinity of the main camp in Auschwitz where some 70,000 Poles were murdered. It was miles away from the Jewish killing fields of Auschwitz-Birkenau, where several Polish villages were destroyed by the Nazi-Germans to make room for the death camp.

Chęciński's hopes did not materialize. In 1996 American press reports on the 50th anniversary of the Kielce riots still wrote fantastic reports of Jewish victims that had their throats cut by Polish mob when "Polish police looked on." Not a word that most victims were shot dead (there are no reports about throat slashing). However, Chęciński's study is a factual presentation of the relations of Poles and Jews under conditions created by the Soviets in postwar Poland. His book here reviewed is extensively quoted because Chęciński was an insider of Soviet controlled terror apparatus. He gives a factual account of relations of Poles and Jews in Poepke's Poland.

42 The propaganda use of the 1946 Kielce riot

Against the backdrop of Chęciński's testimony, and other reports it has been a serious abuse to present the 4th of July 1946 pogrom in Kielce as an integral part of the Holocaust as it is done in the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C.

Representatives of the Museum refer to the victims of the pogrom as "Holocaust survivors." Mainly they were people who survived the war in Soviet Union and arrived to Poland after the arrival of Soviet army. In large numbers Jews were recruited into the communist terror apparatus and participated in the Sovietization of Poland and in Soviet ordered executions of Poles. In this regard, it is pertinent to quote Simon Wiesenthal on his eightieth birthday: "I know what kind of role Jewish communists played in Poland after the war. And just as I, as a Jew, do not want to shoulder responsibility for the Jewish communists, I cannot blame 36 million Poles for those thousands of {wartime} extortionists (*szmalcownicy*).

43 Important facts missing in Holocaust Museums

The historic importance of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact of September 28, 1939, should be properly understood. The cooperation of both signatories, resulted in widespread extermination of the Polish leadership community. In the spring of 1940 in the Auserordentliche Brefriedungsaktion 20,000 Polish professionals were murdered including a large number of Jews. The parallel Soviet operation started on October 3, 1939 with an NKVD order to select members of the Polish leadership community from among 452,536 Polish prisoners taken by the Soviets (according to their own records). In the Spring of 1940, Soviet security forces executed 21,857 Polish officers, professionals, clergymen, business leaders, etc., under direct orders of Stalin and the entire Politburo (dated Feb. 12, 1940). About 1000 Jews were among the victims including the Chief Rabbi of the Polish Army, Major Baruch Steinberg (1897-1940). I can only wonder why this earlier and much larger mass murder of Jews by the Soviets is omitted, whereas the events controlled by the Soviets in Kielce are prominently depicted, despite the fact that they had no connection with the Holocaust perpetrated by Nazi Germany.

The Holocaust Museum does not give facts about the Polish campaign after which the Nazi-Germans proceeded with mass murders of Jews and Poles. At the beginning of World War II against world's most modern German army and the

words most numerous Soviet army Poland mobilized about one and half million men of which some 900,000 were in combat equipped with 2840 artillery pieces, 475 tanks, 600 airplanes and 18 warships. When the Polish campaign ended in October 1939, 97,000 Polish soldiers died of wounds while additional 100,000 were not mortally wounded. The Germans captured 587,304 Polish soldiers, the Soviets 452,536, while 82,300 were interned in Hungary, Romania, Lithuania, Latvia, and Sweden. Within these numbers Polish Jews represented less than five percent. These numbers are given in Edward Kospath-Pawłowski's *Polish Army in World War II* (Warsaw 1994).

In 1939 two million Polish Jews lived in the territory controlled by Nazi Germany and one and half million in the territory controlled by Soviet Union. During the hostilities a massive flow of refugees, including Jews, moved east in front of the advancing Germans. Once the battles were over in October 1939, many Jewish refugees started to register with the German representatives for return to their homes. The Germans turned to the Soviets the lists of Jews who wanted to return to German occupied Poland. Some three hundred thousand of Jews were included in the huge deportation to Soviet Union of more than a million Polish citizens. As the Soviet forces returned to Poland hundreds of thousands of Jews returned with them. These Jews did survive the Holocaust inside the Soviet Union. Does this make them "Holocaust survivors"? Among the 41 victims of the Soviet staged pogrom in Kielce most were people who have been in Soviet Union during the war.

43 The fiction of the "Polish phase" of the Holocaust

The damage to the credibility of the Holocaust Museum

Polish objection is not to the fact that Nazi and Soviet destruction of Polish people, Polish lands and Polish cities is not sufficiently often mentioned in the media and in academic scholarship. Polish objection is the defamation of Poles as they endured Nazi occupation, and then Soviet occupation which together lasted for over fifty years. This defamation is accomplished by inaccurate or tendentious presentations of Polish history.

One example of this tendency is the display in the Holocaust Museum in Washington, presenting the events in Kielce in 1946, which brought about deaths of both Jews and Christians, as a Polish-run 'Kielce pogrom,' a fitting conclusion to the Holocaust which after all happened on Polish soil, and so by implication must have happened with at least partial approval of the Polish people. In the context of the famed "Polish anti-Semitism," whose manifestations are tendentiously displayed in many books and movies, this seems entirely logical and appropriate to the uninformed public in the United States. For this reason Chęciński's book is important to shed light on both Polish anti-Semitism and Jewish anti-Polonism.

From the Polish point of view, and I daresay from the point of view of historical facts, the Kielce riots were staged by the Soviet NKVD who held nearly total power in Poland from the moment the Red Army occupied Poland until approximately 1947. They had nothing to do with the Holocaust, nothing to do with the Poles, and nothing to do with the Nazis. They had everything to do with the methods by means of which the Soviet police and army helped Stalin to persuade the Western powers that Poland should remain a colony of the Soviets, rather than being allowed to return to freedom as did other Allied nations. Those who organized this pogrom hoped that, after the eruption of violence in Kielce got publicized in the West, Western politicians would become favorably disposed to the argument that 'Polish anti-Semitism' could only be tamed by the Soviets, that allowing Poland to become free would cause another wave of anti-Semitism, that Jews again would be murdered in Poland.

Therefore, the suggested interpretation of Kielce events shown in the Holocaust Museum in Washington strikes Polish Americans as historically untrue, tendentious and bent on defaming the Polish nation. The Kielce events had nothing to do with the Nazi engineered Holocaust. It had everything to do with the Soviet-engineered strangulation of the Polish nation. It is one of the hundreds and thousands of murders and torture sessions designed by the Soviets to break the Polish desire to return to freedom.

The erroneous presentation of the events of Kielce as a "Polish part" of the Holocaust may be designed to perpetuate the slanderous notion that together with the Germans, the Poles are guilty of the genocide of the Jews. Murder of the Jews was for the Germans a triumph of their traditional eliminatory anti-Semitism. German eagerness to commit face-to-face murders is well described by D.J. Goldhagen in his book *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* Knopf, 622 p. 1996. Such murders would have been inconceivable without the German traditional preconception of the Jews, which Polish culture did not have. Polish anti-Semitism might have been prejudicial and at times, between the two world wars. There never was in Poland a shared belief that Jews should be literally eliminated as was the German tradition shown so well by Daniel Goldhagen in *Hitler's Willing Executioners*

Besides eliminatory anti-Semitism the Germans practiced eliminatory anti-Polonism. Inspired by German *Drang nach Osten* and Social Darwinism Chancellor Bismarck likened the Poles to wolves which should be "shot to death whenever possible." In 1861 Bismarck declared, "Hit the Poles till they despair of their very lives ... if we are to survive, our only course is to exterminate them." (Werner Richter, *Bismarck*, New York: Putnam Press, 1964. p. 101)

It is a grave injustice to the Polish people, one of the main victims of Nazi-German mass murders to be shown in the Holocaust Museum as perpetrators of a imaginary Polish phase of the Holocaust in form of the 4th of July 1946 riot in Kielce, provoked by the Soviets year and half after the Red Army occupied that area of Poland, long after collapse of Nazi-Germany. As despicable as were the killings of some 40 Jews and two Christians there, the events of Kielce belong to the Soviet and not German chapter of history. Their inclusion is a serious mistake which undermines the credibility of the Holocaust Museum in Washington and of other similar institutions where the Kielce riot is shown as a part of the Holocaust.

44 Germans, Nazis, and property restitution

D.J. Goldhagen's book *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* is very important because it sets the record straight. So far the talk about the Nazis was a device used to exonerate the German people, to dissociate them from the Holocaust, and to expand the perpetrators to include non-German ethnic groups, Poles in particular. Poles and Jews under German occupation never used the term "Nazi;" they talked about what the Germans were doing to them. An overwhelming majority of Germans supported Hitler but not all his supporters were members of the Nazi Party.

During the spring of 1996, the president of World Jewish Congress K. Sultanik indicated in Warsaw that Poland should follow the German example in restitution of Jewish properties. He assured the Poles that he does not consider them of being guilty of the genocide of the Jews. As a first step Jewish communities in Poland are regaining the ownership of their buildings used for religious purposes. The war damage done to the properties on the present Polish territory was followed by communist expropriations. The fact is that prewar property owners and their descendants living in Poland have not been able to reverse the postwar communist expropriations. I hope that the matter of prewar Jewish properties will not be the

reason for of a new wave of accusations of the "Polish guilt in the Holocaust" especially when the value of Jewish properties in prewar Poland are estimated in many billions of dollars.

The idea that Poland the main victim of Nazi-German aggression and terror is to follow the postwar West German example of reparations to the Jewish victims of the Holocaust is insulting to the Poles by putting them together with Germans as perpetrators of the Holocaust. It reinforces the double perception in which many Jews believe in "Polish participation in the genocide of the Jews" while the Poles know that it is a slander against the Polish nation, a victim of German-Nazi and Soviet aggression.

45 Polish-Jewish reconciliation

Polish-Jewish reconciliation after the German-Nazi and Soviet period requires an honest treatment of the history of Polish-Jewish relations. Poles and Jews should help each other to get out of the vicious circle of the psychosis of anti-Semitism and anti-Polonism of the generation that lived through the Cold War. Unfortunately, prestigious people in the Jewish communities in the West and in Israel teach the young Jews about the "Polish participation" in the Holocaust. Thus, anti-Polonism is more common among young Jews than is anti-Semitism among the young Poles. Holocaust courses and Holocaust museums should avoid misrepresentation of the Poles. Please, notice the following examples:

From the standpoint of the Poles visiting the Holocaust museums, the most controversial item among the permanent exhibits is the mural depicting Soviet-staged pogrom in Kielce, Poland, in 1946. The July 4, 1946 incident was staged and supervised, not by Poles, but by NKVD Colonel Shpilevoy and GRU officer Mikhail Dyomin. Poles are shocked to note that many visitors to the Holocaust museums leave with the perception that the Soviet-staged pogrom was a "Polish" continuation of the Holocaust.

The wording crediting the Polish government for donation to the Holocaust Museum in Washington of the German railroad car used for transport of Jews to death camps is confusing and should be clarified. The present wording resulted in a reference to the "Polish death car" in the Washington Post. In contrast, the exhibit of the Danish boat used to smuggle Jews to Sweden carries a positive message with respect to Denmark. In any case, the exhibited car is certainly of German, not Polish, origin, having the markings of the German state railroads including the home base of Karlsruhe. (Why didn't the Washington Post refer to the "Nazi death car"?)

Prominent in the Holocaust courses and museums' bookstores is a two-volume rendition of the Holocaust by Art Spiegelman under the title *Maus* with an accompanying CDROM disk. This presentation depicts Germans as cats, Jews as mice, and Poles as swine. Jews are shown as putting on the masks of swine to signify that they had to pretend to be Christians in order to get help from Polish gentiles. The dialogue includes such statements such "Whatever you do, do not go to Sosnowiec because the Poles are still killing Jews there." Needless to say, the equating of Polish people with swine is inflammatory and obviously offensive to Poles who visit the bookstores, to say nothing of the references to Poles killing Jews. No ethnic or racial group should be treated in such a manner, especially at a federally supported museums dedicated to the memory and lessons of the Holocaust.

In contrast to the issues just raised, people familiar with the factual record might surmise that Holocaust Museums'

omission of materials favorable to the Poles has been systematic. For example, I believe that the December 10, 1942, appeal to the other allied governments by the Polish government-in-exile, led by Władysław Sikorski, should be prominently displayed. It was the only demand by a head of one of the allied governments that the allies stop the Nazi genocide in Poland by bombing railroads, gas chambers, and crematoriums. Indeed, the failure of the Allies to bomb Auschwitz was discussed by the President's Commission on the Holocaust.

An equally prominent position should be given to the appeal of Jewish leaders in Nazi-occupied Poland addressed to the allied leaders. It described realistically the ongoing genocide and the actual situation in Poland. It was delivered to London in November of 1942. The Museum might also display Nazi posters listing Polish citizens executed for sheltering Jews. (There is a famous one dated March 29, 1942). In this regard, it would also be helpful to present a tally by nationality of the people recognized for saving Jews by the Yad Vashem Memorial along with information to the effect that in Poland this action was punished by death of the entire Christian family, whereas in Denmark it resulted only in a monetary fine.

The destruction of Czech village of Lidice (May 27, 1942) is usually properly mentioned while similar destruction of about 300 Polish villages is omitted.

The exhibits showing the beginning of World War II should show more about the country chosen by Hitler for the genocide of the Jews. They should show that against world's most modern German army and the words most numerous Soviet army Poland mobilized nearly one and million men of which some 900 were in combat equipped with 2840 artillery pieces, 475 tanks, 600 airplanes and 18 warships. When the Polish campaign ended in October 1939 97,000 Polish soldiers died of wounds while additional 100,000 were not mortally wounded. The Germans captured 587,304 Polish soldiers, the Soviets 452,536, while 82,300 were interned in Hungary, Romania, Lithuania, Latvia, and Sweden. All of these numbers, of course, included Polish Jews. These numbers are given in Edward Kospath-Pawłowski's *Polish Army in World War II* (Warsaw 1994). At that time two million Polish Jews were in the territory controlled by Nazi Germany and one-and-half million in the territory controlled by Soviet Union

I also suggest that the Holocaust courses and museums should inform the public about the Jewish and non-Jewish Polish victims of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact of September 28, 1939, which, with the cooperation of both signatories, resulted in widespread extermination of the Polish leadership community. In the spring of 1940 in the Auserordentliche Befriedungsaktion 20,000 Polish professionals were murdered including a large number of Jews. The parallel Soviet operation started on October 3, 1939 with an NKVD order to select members of the Polish leadership community from among 452,536 Polish prisoners taken by the Soviets (according to their own records). In the Spring of 1940, Soviet security forces executed 21,857 Polish officers, professionals, clergymen, business leaders, etc., under direct orders of Stalin and the entire Politburo (dated Feb. 12, 1940). About 1000 Jews were among the victims including the Chief Rabbi of the Polish Army, Major Baruch Steinberg (1897-1940). I can only wonder why this earlier and much larger mass murder of Jews by the Soviets is omitted, whereas the events controlled by the Soviets in 1946 in Kielce are prominently depicted, despite the fact that they had no connection with the Holocaust perpetrated by Nazi Germany.

Thus, I believe that the underlying principles of the Holocaust Memorial Museums and Holocaust Courses should contrast the Nazi Holocaust with the historic achievements of European Jews, particularly the great Polish Jewish community. This is especially important for the American Jews, of whom some 90% originate from the lands which belonged to Poland

before the partitions (1772-1795). It is also important for the Poles.

World War II (1939-1945) was the greatest tragedy of Poland ever since the first Polish dynasty started to consolidate the Polish state in 840 A.D. The Nazi Holocaust of the Jews, the most monstrous crime in history, happened against the backdrop of destruction of the Polish state and mass murders inflicted on the Polish nation and its leadership community to a much greater extent than was suffered by any other country invaded by Nazi Germany.

Poland was the most important country in the history of Jewish Diaspora. Jews prospered in Poland, grew in numbers so that by the end of 18th century 80 percent of all Jewish people lived in the Polish Commonwealth and became a self-governing nation of one million people. Jewish cultural achievement in freedom of Poland includes the fact that for hundreds of years Polish Jews were the largest single group in Europe who knew how to read, write, and count. Jewish scholarship in the lands of pre-partition Poland flourished. Modern Jewish legal and governmental culture as well as an educational system, philosophical concepts and religious beliefs evolved in Poland during the 16th, 17th, and 18th century. The autonomous Jewish parliament known as Congressus Judaicus (1581-1764) was described by Heinrich Graetz as the "unique event in the history of Jewish Diaspora." The Congressus Judaicus in Poland was the only Jewish parliament in the history of the Jews between the Sanhedrin of the Biblical times and Knesset of the modern State of Israel.

Isaac Lewin an historian associated with the Agudah Israel World Organization wrote in 1985: Under the spiritual leadership of the Congressus Judaicus (Vaad Arba Arazot) the spiritual life of Polish Jewry late in the 16th and during 17th century attained an uncommonly high level. Thanks to the works of Polish rabbis, Jewish ritual and religious laws governing civil and matrimonial life have been accepted by European Jews to the present day. Indeed, without a doubt, the 16th and 17th centuries were the period of spiritual hegemony of Polish Jews in world Jewry.

A thousand years of Jewish history in Poland ended with the Nazi-German mass murders. The Jews reacted with a heroic effort and established the State of Israel while Poland, betrayed by the West lost its sovereignty and became a satellite state of the USSR. Unfortunately the Jewish-Arab conflict resulted in destabilization of the Middle East and an alliance between American industrial-military complex with radical Zionists in power in Israel, who acquired nuclear weapons and defend their nuclear monopoly of the region at all cost and treat the Palestinians the way Germans treated the Jews in ghettos during WWII.

Richard Pipes, of Harvard University, wrote in the introduction to I.C. Pogonowski's book, *Jews in Poland*, published on the fiftieth anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising: "It must never be mistakenly believed that the Holocaust was perpetrated by the Poles. Nor must it be ignored that three million Poles perished at German hands."

Professor Israel Gutman, of the Yad Vashem Memorial, an Auschwitz survivor, and the editor of the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* (1990), stated that the percentage of Poles who collaborated with the Germans was "infinitesimally small."

Poland, Communism, Nationalism, Anti-Semitism by Chęciński contributes to our knowledge about the damages to Poland and to Polish-Jewish relations caused by the Soviet postwar policies. These facts are related by an insider who worked inside the terror apparatus used to subjugate Poland. As a survivor of the Łódź ghetto Chęciński was alert to Soviet use of anti-Semitism and made an important contribution to our understanding of methods used to establish the communist

regime in Poland and the need for Polish-Jewish reconciliation. The inclusion in the Holocaust courses and museums of the above shown historic perspective would help in the Polish- Jewish reconcilliation.

The World War II disaster that was suffered by European Jews and in particular by Polish Jews should serve as a lesson to future generations. It is urgent, while survivors are still alive, to review the record carefully in order to correct errors and omissions which could distort the history of the greatest Jewish tragedy since Roman times. Errors and omissions, if left uncorrected, could be used by revisionists to support their claim that the Holocaust never happened and by those who would attempt to distort the reality of the Holocaust.

We must uphold the basic lesson of the Holocaust, namely, that bigotry or prejudice with respect to a racial or ethnic group easily leads to demonizing it and to character assassination. The very credibility of the Holocaust courses and Holocaust museums is at stake if any traces or shadows of the sins just mentioned could be seen there. If negative generalizations concerning the Polish people are permitted to dominate the impressions that people carry out of Holocaust courses and museums, we have failed to honor the most essential lesson of the Holocaust.

It is a fact that many Americans and other westerners have been led to believe in Polish complicity in the genocide of the Jewish people. The Poles are aware of this fact and naturally are unhappy about continuing propagation of such notion. The circumstances surrounding the Holocaust were ones of terrible hatred and insensitivity to Jews supported by a foundation of bigotry and stereotyping. Because of the resulting suffering, there is a special obligation today to avoid racial or ethnic stereotyping of any people. Those of us who survived the brutal actions of Nazi Germany and Soviet Union owe it to the future generations to preserve the actual facts of these horrors and their true context. Only the truth will break the endless cycle of anti-Polonism and anti-Semitism among Jews and Poles.

CALMING THE WINDS OF WAR

SOCIALIST TERRORISM

DESTRUCTION OF LAW AND MORALITY

FROM A BLOOD LIBEL AGAINST THE JEWS

TO A GENOCIDE LIBEL AGAINST THE POLES

JEWS AND POLES:

FROM THE SLANDER OF RITUAL MURDER

TO THE SLANDER OF GENOCIDE

SOVIET CONVERSION OF THE IMAGE OF POLISH JEWS

FROM PITIED VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST

INTO HATED OPPRESSORS

CONNECTION BETWEEN ANTI-SEMITISM

AND

SOVIET DOMINATION OF POLAND

PROBLEMS OF POLISH-JEWISH RECONCILIATION AFTER THE HOLOCAUST AND SOCIALIST TERROR

SOCIALIST TERRORISM

DESTRUCTION OF LAW AND MORALITY

FROM A BLOOD LIBEL AGAINST THE JEWS

TO

A GENOCIDE LIBEL AGAINST THE POLES

JEWS AND POLES:

FROM THE SLANDER OF RITUAL MURDER

TO THE SLANDER OF GENOCIDE

SOVIET CONVERSION OF THE IMAGE OF POLISH JEWS

FROM PITIED VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST

INTO HATED OPPRESSORS

CONNECTION BETWEEN ANTI-SEMITISM

AND

SOVIET DOMINATION OF POLAND

The Holocaust Memorial Museum could be a valuable platform for presentation of the historic truth of the Holocaust. It was and will be visited by millions, some of whom will carry for the rest of their life their impression of its exhibits. Unfortunately some others are listening to the propaganda of people who deny the facts of the Holocaust. As a veteran of over five years of Nazi prisons and concentration camps, I want to join with the Holocaust Memorial Museum in counteracting present and future efforts of some to revise history and claim that there was no Holocaust.

The World War II disaster that was suffered by European Jews and in particular by Polish Jews should serve as a lesson to future generations. It is urgent, while survivors are still alive, to review the record carefully in order to correct errors and omissions which could distort the history of the greatest Jewish tragedy since Roman times. Errors and omissions, if left uncorrected, could be used by revisionists to support their claim that the Holocaust never happened and by those who would attempt to distort the reality of the Holocaust.

We must uphold the basic lesson of the Holocaust, namely, that bigotry or prejudice with respect to a racial or ethnic group easily leads to demonization and character assassination. The very credibility of the Holocaust Memorial Museum is at stake if any traces or shadows of the sins just mentioned could be seen there. If negative generalizations concerning the Polish people are permitted to dominate the impressions that visitors carry out of the Museum, we have failed to honor the most essential lesson of the Holocaust. A review of the treatment of Poland and Polish people in the Museum's exhibits can help us in this matter and explain why there have been complaints in this regard in the Polish-American press.

From the standpoint of the Polish-American community, the most controversial item among the Museum's permanent exhibits is the mural depicting Soviet-staged pogrom in Kielce, Poland, in 1946. The July 4, 1946 incident was staged and supervised, not by Poles, but by NKVD Colonel Shpilevoy and GRU officer Mikhail Dyomin. Dyomin later served in the Soviet embassy in Tel-Aviv and was recognized there by Jewish immigrants from Kielce. This is recounted by a survivor of the Łódź ghetto, Colonel M. Chęciński (*Poland, Communism, Nationalism, Anti-Semitism*. New York: Karz-Cohl Publishing, 1982)

Given these and other circumstances, which I will relate, Polish Americans are shocked to note that many visitors to the Museum leave with the perception that the Soviet-staged pogrom was a "Polish" continuation of the Holocaust. It is well known that the Soviets systematically used to their advantage the desire of Jews to fight for the establishment of the state of

Israel. The Soviet aim was to get rid of the British mandate in Palestine and play a more active role in the oil-rich Middle East. Towards this end they committed numerous acts of terror to pressure Jews to emigrate and join the struggle for Israel. At the same time the Soviets wanted to present Poles in the worst possible light and divert the attention of foreign journalists from Soviet tampering with elections in Poland and from numerous brutal acts directed at Sovietizing Poland. Indeed, during this period, about 100,000 Poles lost their lives, including 1,500 Jews.

The critical events in Kielce began when uniformed security patrol entered a compound at 7 Planty Street, where Jewish tenants included members of the Communist Party and Jewish employees of the Soviet controlled security apparatus lived. Ownership of firearms was permitted for a number of residents of the compound. The pretext for entry was the need to conduct an inventory of these weapons. Once the guns were collected, the uniformed security men shot the disarmed victims and proceeded to throw them out of windows into the hands of a mob. The mob had been assembled by Soviet agent provocateurs who spread inflammatory rumors concerning activities within the compound. In all, 41 Jews and 3 Christians were brutally murdered and 80 were injured.

Similar atrocities were committed by the Soviets in other parts of their empire, also in 1946. A bloody pogrom in Hungary, four pogroms in Czechoslovakia, and pogroms in Romania occurred in addition to the pogrom in Kielce. Museum visitors, however, learn only about the hideous events of Kielce and many misinterpret the exhibit as "the Polish phase" of the Holocaust. This kind of perception leads the present generation of Jews in America to view the Poles as somehow as guilty of the Holocaust as the Nazis. The fact that the Poles were not guilty of the genocide of the Jews is reportedly rejected by many members of the American Jewish community. The Museum's depiction of the Kielce atrocity reinforces this belief.

Though the depiction of the events in Kielce is the most troubling aspect of the Museum for Polish-Americans, other features of the Museum's exhibits and ancillary units deserve some comment in this regard. For example, the exhibit entitled "Terror in Poland" implies that the terror may have been committed by the Poles. This exhibit should be entitled Terror in Nazi-Occupied Poland or Nazi Terror in Poland. Then Museum visitors unfamiliar with history should not conclude that Poland somehow supported or contributed to the described terrors.

The wording crediting the Polish government for donation of the German railroad car used for transport of Jews to death camps is confusing and should be clarified. The present wording resulted a reference to the "Polish death car" in the Washington Post. In contrast, the exhibit of the Danish boat used to smuggle Jews to Sweden carries a positive message with respect to Denmark. In any case, the exhibited car is certainly of German, not Polish, origin, having the markings of the German state railroads including the home base of Karlsruhe. (Why didn't the Washington Post refer to the "Nazi death car"?)

In the Museum's bookstore there is a two-volume rendition of the Holocaust by Art Spiegelman under the title *Maus* with an accompanying CDROM disk. This presentation depicts Germans as cats, Jews as mice, and Poles as swine. Jews are shown as putting on the masks of swine to signify that they had to pretend to be Christians in order to get help from Polish gentiles. The dialogue includes such statements such "Whatever you do, do not go to Sosnowiec because the Poles are still killing Jews there." Needless to say, the equating of Polish people with swine is inflammatory and obviously offensive to Polish-Americans who visit the bookstore, to say nothing of the references to Poles killing Jews. No ethnic or racial group should be treated in such a manner, especially at a federally supported museum dedicated to the memory and lessons of the Holocaust.

In contrast to the issues just raised, people familiar with the factual record might surmise that the Museum's omission of materials favorable to the Poles has been systematic. For example, I believe that the December 10, 1942, appeal to the other allied governments by the Polish government-in-exile, led by Władysław Sikorski, should be prominently displayed. It was the only demand by a head of one of the allied governments that the allies stop the Nazi genocide in Poland by bombing railroads, gas chambers, and crematoriums. Indeed, the failure of the Allies to bomb Auschwitz was discussed by the President's Commission on the Holocaust. An equally prominent position should be given to the appeal of Jewish leaders in Nazi-occupied Poland addressed to the allied leaders. It described realistically the ongoing genocide and the actual situation in Poland. It was delivered to London in November of 1942. The Museum might also display Nazi posters listing Polish citizens executed for sheltering Jews. (There is a famous one dated March 29, 1942). In this regard, it would also be helpful to present a tally by nationality of the people recognized for saving Jews by the Yad Vashem Memorial along with information to the effect that in Poland this action was punished by death of the entire Christian family, whereas in Denmark it resulted only in a monetary fine.

The destruction of Czech village of Lidice (May 27, 1942) is properly mentioned while similar destruction of about 300 Polish villages is omitted.

The exhibit showing the beginning of World War II and the end of Hitler's "peaceful conquests" should indicate that against world's most modern German army and the words most numerous Soviet army Poland mobilized nearly one and a half million men of which some 900,000 were in combat equipped with 2840 artillery pieces, 475 tanks, 600 airplanes and 18 warships.

When the Polish campaign ended in October 1939 97,000 Polish soldiers died of wounds while additional 100,000 were not mortally wounded. The Germans captured 587,304 Polish soldiers, the Soviets 452,536, while 82,300 were interned in Hungary, Romania, Lithuania, Latvia, and Sweden. All of these numbers, of course, included Polish Jews. These numbers are given in Edward Kospath-Pawłowski's *Polish Army in World War II* (Warsaw 1994). At that time two million Polish Jews were in the territory controlled by Nazi Germany and one and a half million in the territory controlled by Soviet Union

Finally, I suggest that the Museum might inform the public about the Jewish and non-Jewish Polish victims of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact of September 28, 1939, which, with the cooperation of both signatories, resulted in widespread extermination of the Polish leadership community. In the spring of 1940 in the Auserordentliche Befriedungsaktion 20,000 Polish professionals were murdered including a large number of Jews. The parallel Soviet operation started on October 3, 1939 with an NKVD order to select members of the Polish leadership community from among 452,536 Polish prisoners taken by the Soviets (according to their own records). In the Spring of 1940, Soviet security forces executed 21,857 Polish officers, professionals, clergymen, business leaders, etc., under direct orders of Stalin and the entire Politburo (dated Feb. 12, 1940). About 1000 Jews were among the victims including the Chief Rabbi of the Polish Army, Major Baruch Steinberg (1897-1940). I can only wonder why this earlier and much larger mass murder of Jews by the Soviets is omitted, whereas the events controlled by the Soviets in Kielce are prominently depicted, despite the fact that they had no connection with the Holocaust perpetrated by Nazi Germany.

The Museum can rise to its ultimate purpose by showing objectively the circumstances of the Holocaust. With respect to Holocaust events that occurred in Nazi-occupied Poland, objectivity requires avoidance of presenting practically everything Polish as a negative backdrop. It is generally unknown in America that the number of Christian Poles killed in World War II exceeded three million. This point aside, many Americans have been led to believe in Polish complicity in the genocide of the Jewish people. The Polish-American press is aware of this fact and naturally is unhappy about continuing

propagation of such notion. The circumstances surrounding the Holocaust were ones of terrible hatred and insensitivity to Jews supported by a foundation of bigotry and stereotyping. Because of the resulting suffering, there is a special obligation today to avoid racial or ethnic stereotyping of people and that is the basis of my requests. Those of us who survived the brutal actions of Nazi Germany owe it to the future generations to preserve the actual facts of these horrors and their true context. Those people who in the future will carry forth our message of "never again" will expect nothing less from us.

Main references: Encyclopedia of the Holocaust, ed. by Israel Gutman (New York and London, 1990); Gerald Reitlinger, *The Final Solution* (New York, 1968); Leni Yahil, *Holocaust. The Fate of European Jewry* (Oxford, 1990)

APPENDIX III

Is Polish Anti-Semitism Special ?

Henryk Grynberg

Henryk Grynberg is a poet, novelist and essayist who left Poland in 1967 because of anti-Semitic campaign following the Six-Day War and now lives in the United States. This article was published in the Midstream, Monthly Jewish Review -- August/September 1983.

The common phrase "traditional Polish anti-Semitism" is a platitude with very little historical justification. Anti-Semitism came to Poland as part of Western culture and civilization. The word "pogrom" is Russian and the phenomenon is Western

European, originated by the crusaders who massacred Jewish communities while marching to free the Holy Land from the "infidels". The blood libel, first used against the Jews in 12th-century England, triggered the "pogrom" of York. It was also a Western idea to accuse the Jews of "desecrating the Host," or poisoning Christian wells. When a Polish prince (Bolesław Pobożny) issued a charter for the protection of Jews on his territory (1265), he did so primarily to protect them from attacks by their Christian neighbors of German origin or descent who were also settling on Polish lands bringing with them their religious intolerance and -- as Abba Eban writes in My People -- "their custom of political oppression."

Nothing anti-Semitic was ever invented in Poland - almost everything came from a centuries-old Western European tradition. There was very little new even in the Nazi Nuremberg Laws. Jewish book-burning was pioneered in France by Louis IX (in 1242); he was considered a "moral authority" among contemporary European rulers and a "patron of scholarship," and eventually became a saint. Another tradition which has reached our times is burning Jews alive: all the Jews of Jerusalem were burned alive in the main synagogue after the city was finally "liberated" by the Crusaders in 1099. Pope Innocent III introduced, in 1215, still another anti-Jewish tradition which reappeared in the 20th century: laws forcing the Jews to wear special badges in public, and forbidding Jews to live in the same house as Christians or to hold offices giving them control over a Christian. These medieval inventions were revived in the Age of Enlightenment by Pius VI, who issued his own "Edict Against the Jews," which provided for yellow badges, the censorship of Jewish books, a ban on Jewish shops outside the ghetto, and even introduced a ban on tombstones in Jewish cemeteries -- the latter is practiced in some countries even today with the same purpose: to create the memory of any Jewish presence.

Europeans had a habit of making pogroms also during their "progressive" or patriotic uprisings. This was the case during the Munzer peasant battles in Germany, Chmielnicki's revolt in the Ukraine, and the White and Red Guard campaign during the Russian Civil War, not to mention the acts committed by the Ukrainian peasant army lead by Makhno. True, some pogroms were committed by the Polish troops of Stefan Czarniecki during his uprising against the Swedes (mid-17th century), but in all the pogroms through Polish history up to World War II, fewer Jews were killed than in one such slaughter in Prague -- then considered an important center of Western culture -- in 1389, when 4,000 Jews were put to death by a fanatical mob. The Chmielnicki pogroms are often misunderstood by those with no knowledge of Eastern European history: it is true they happened on "Polish territories" (the entire Ukraine was a part of the Polish empire in those days), but the pogrom took place in the Ukraine and were perpetrated not by Poles but exclusively by Cossacks and Ukrainian peasants (people often mistakenly assume that Chmielnicki was a Pole because of the Polish sound of his name). In fact, the Polish armies, who were at war with them, were the sole defenders of the Jews, for the Jews and Polish nobility were allies against a rebellion which viewed them both as enemy.

Jews were commonly invited by Western European rulers to develop trade and business, and then, after native Christians have learned and mastered those trades themselves, a vocal majority would cry: "Jews have taken over our trades and business!" That example was merely followed by Poland, where such cries could be heard until World War II.

During the Dreyfus affair, it was France who set the example for anti-Semitic behavior typical of a modern European society. Crowds beat up Jews in the streets of Paris, plundered Jewish stores, shouted "Death to the Jews!", wrote petitions demanding the expulsion of all Jews from France; the nationalist press urged that all Jews be fired from their jobs. Herzl as an eye-witness stressed in his diary that all this was happening in "republican, modern, civilized France, one hundred years after the Declaration of the Rights of Man." If similar moods and slogans were to be observed in Poland in 1936-39 and 1968-70, it should be pointed out that they were not manifestations of any "traditional Polish anti-Semitism," but rather a letter-perfect copy of the French tradition, with the exception of the irrational element: in Poland, "treason" was assumed a priori - without any pretexts of mock-trials.

When speaking of Paris -- the capital of European culture for at least two centuries -- one should remember also that in that

famous city, on July 16-17, 1942, the French police handed over 13,000 Jews to the Germans. Jews were taken out of hiding places, not just rounded up in a ghetto. I doubt if there were 13,000 cases of Jews being handed over to the Germans throughout the German occupation in Poland. Many thousand more were seized in unoccupied France (under the Vichy regime) in August, 1942. Michael R. Marrus and Robert O. Paxton, in their book Vichy France and the Jews, stressed the fact that the Vichy legislation of October, 1940, "Status des Juifs" went beyond the German regulations of that time. The authors also point out that when the Italians (then German allies) occupied part of southern France, they felt they had to protect the Jews there from the Vichyists. And yet it is not the French but Poles who are singled out as "collaborators" in the Nazi extermination of Jews.

The anti-Semite needs anti-Semitism in order to project his own vices onto somebody else; to be able to blame someone else for his own failures (a device needed by individuals as well as by governments and whole political, social, and philosophical systems); to work off his frustrations (as husband and wife use each other); anti-Semitism is at times as necessary as a dog is for an Englishman or a German (who feels he has to be someone's master). Deprived of any other virtues or merits, an anti-Semite sees his not-being-Jewish as a decided virtue and therefore he denies any positive qualities in Jews, refuses to grant any praise or recognition to Jews, and sees their success as a result of some deceit or swindle -- not a fruit of talent, genius, or courage. Thus an anti-Semite cannot tolerate the emancipation of Jews and equality with Jews, or the existence of an independent Jewish state with equal rights and in free competition with other nations. "Not being a Jew provides them consolation for not being a state councillor," said Ludwig Borne about the German anti-Semites of the early 19th century. The fact that Jews are the chosen people for such a psychological device is no more than the product of certain historical and religious circumstances.

Anti-Semitism is an anomaly of the human mind, and its most characteristic symptom is the confusion of cause and effect. Russian anti-Semites still justify their hatred for the Jews by accusing them of being enemies of Old Russia who worked for the downfall of the Tsarist regime. They do not take into account the "Pale of Settlement" and 600 other anti-Jewish laws of that regime, the Okhrana's (tsarist police) anti-Semitic campaigns at the turn of the century, and the Bailis blood-libel trial as manifestations of Tsarist Russia's hatred for the Jews and perhaps an explanation for a reciprocation of feelings.

Polish anti-Semites say that Jews hated (or still hate) Poland, supporting such accusations with the argument that many Jews welcomed the Soviet army in Lvov, Vilna, and BiałyŹystok in 1939, and some even put on red arm-bands and turned Poles over to NKVD (Soviet secret police). But they do not mention the official state anti-Semitism in Poland during 1936-39, which was no less insulting and abusive than the Nazi propaganda of that period (from which it was derived). The Jews of so-called Poland B might have felt alienated, as did the Ukrainians, Lithuanians, and Byelorussians (many of whom exhibited joy at the arrival of the Soviet forces), who all felt mistreated by the Polish state of the late 1930s. There were Communists in all those ethnic minorities who quickly donned red arm-bands, and there were as well scoundrels who collaborated with the Soviet secret police -- but such people were also to be found among ethnic Poles.

One thing is certain: the Jews were not happy with the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact and it was not the Jews who weakened the Polish state before its most difficult test. The state was weakened by the policies of the colonels, who chose the extreme nationalists and anti-Semites as their political base at a time when -- as the American historian Edward D. Wynot, Jr. put it: "it required the good will and the united front of its citizens and allies alike." Their goal was the supremacy of ethnic Poles and the Roman Catholic Church in a country where one-third of the population was comprised of ethnic and religious minorities.

Wynot in his article, "A Necessary Cruelty: The Emergence of Official Anti-Semitism in Poland, 1936-39" (The American Historical Review, October, 1971), reminds us that Roman Dmowski's (the founder and leader of the Polish anti-Semitic National Democracy) "long and intimate involvement in Russian political circles had left an indelible stamp upon his political

thinking" and made anti-Semitism "a cornerstone of his party's policy." And yet it is Polish and not Russian "traditional anti-Semitism" that is so often brought up in discussions by Western historians and amateurs alike.

Dmowski was also one of those who reversed cause and effect in a typically anti-Semitic fashion. He wrote that "the whole tradition" of European society is alien to the Jew and "opposed to everything with which the Jewish soul has become imbued in the course of immutable generations." Dmowski completely ignored the fact that the "tradition" of European society included the rejection, isolation, and persecution of the Jews. He accused "the Jew" (always in the singular, as if an abstraction) of having "an aversion for the entire past of European nations" as if that past never included the Crusaders, the Inquisition, papal edicts, and its own general aversion of the Jews. As if those European societies and their Church had never displayed any hatred of the Jewish faith, Dmowski accused "the Jew" of "harboring hatred toward their religions" (a typical example of the anti-Semitic system of projection). (Roman Dmowski, Epitotic myŚli konserwatywnej w Polsce, Warsaw, 1914.)

In his "Necessary Cruelty," Wynot himself confused cause and effect in stating that "the tendency of most Jews to resist assimilation with the Poles and to retain unaltered their distinctive dress, speech, and dietary and living customs... offered a strong temptation to anyone seeking to isolate this group as a possible hostile element within the Polish body politic." It was not the Jews who resisted assimilation -- although the anti-assimilationist mood was significant -- but the closed class society of Gentiles (branded as "caste society" by a Polish sociologist, Alexander Hertz). The Gentile caste society in Poland impeded or rendered impossible effective Jewish assimilation; perhaps this is the only Polish contribution to the whole anti-Semitic spectrum. Wynot also missed another point: In spite of their assimilation did not the anti-Semites isolate the Jews "as a possible hostile element" in the German and French body politic? And what about Soviet Russia, where unassimilated Jews are a real scarcity -- is the "temptation" to isolate Jews as a group any weaker there? And what about the situation in Poland in the late sixties? (Such "temptations" can be seen there even today.)

It may be true that the distinctive dress and speech of the Jews simplified the execution of programs, but it did not cause them. According to Wynot, 69 Jews were killed and 800 wounded in the pogroms which took place in Poland in 1936. No doubt some of the pogroms were encouraged by the June speech of Premier Sławoj-Skłodkowski to the parliament, in which he affirmed "economic struggle" between Poles and Jews. In an underdeveloped country such "economic struggle" often means that store-owners are beaten by mobs. But then what was the point of beating up Jewish university students? Was this a "cultural struggle" of some sort? That was certainly no inducement to assimilation, but an active resistance against those Jews who did not "resist" assimilation.

In 1937, the Christian Democrats (Chadecja) called for "the de-Jewification of cities, commerce, industry, and the professions, as well as the removal of those Jewish influences injurious to Polish culture." The last part of this appeal meant removing assimilated Jews from Polish life (university students who beat up their Jewish colleagues had understood it quite clearly). The Polish Christian Democrats somehow did not realize that the removal of "those Jewish influences" -- especially those indirect ones -- would be impossible without also removing most of the Christian influences which formed the basis of Polish culture. But the knowledge of religion, Jewish or Christian, has always been limited in Poland.

The colonels of the late 1930s frequently overstepped their areas of competence and entered territories not easily accessible to the military. Colonel Adam Koc, for example, made statements on the "instinct of cultural self-preservation" and appealed for a "deep sense of citizenship" and an "uncompromising bond between one's life and the State." During that period of the cult of the State and Nation (always spelled with capital letters) Colonel Jan Kowalewski, when asked if a Jew could join the Camp of National Unity (OZN), answered that "genuine membership in the Polish Nation must be proven by a sacrifice of blood, voluntarily shed, or other proof of sacrifice laid down on the altar of the Fatherland and the actions of an entire lifetime.

..." Which meant that a Jew could only be admitted to the Polish Nation posthumously (while for a Gentile thief from the "famous" Czerniakow neighborhood it was enough to be born in order to be member of the Polish Nation). A civilian intellectual, Cat-Mackiewicz, conceded that the call for the removal of the Jews was cruel, but he justified it as a "necessary cruelty" (hence the title of Wynot's paper). Among the spokesmen of OZN, only Stefan Starzyński, the mayor and, later, heroic defender of Warsaw, stood by the constitutional rights of the Jewish population, demonstrating his understanding that society is based on law and constitution, not on metaphysics (especially amateur metaphysics), and that the undermining of the constitutional base leads a society and its state to inevitable catastrophe.

Once unleashed, metaphysics slipped out of control. The Falanga extremists organized a series of anti-Jewish riots, including bombings, in 1937. Their street posters proclaimed, "A Poland Free from Jews Is a Free Poland," and called for an anti-Jewish crusade. The Jews tried to employ rational arguments, explaining that they were not only sellers but consumers as well and to destroy them economically meant also destroying a major market for many "genuinely Polish" products, particularly those of the peasants. The Polish Jews, at that time, still did not comprehend the irrational nature of the anti-Semitic mind and thus did not realize that rational argument was of no use.

It was Hitler who executed the program of the Polish anti-Semites, removing the Jews from Polish cities, commerce, crafts, industry -- from Polish life. They were liquidated as a class -- to use the Marxist-Leninist terminology. But how easy is it for a national economy to replace a class of experienced middlemen who serve an indispensable role between manufacturer and consumer, between one manufacturer and another, between the town and the country? It proved to be difficult and prolonged even with the favorable conditions provided by democracy and free-market capitalism. Therefore it should come as no surprise that Poland eventually proved to be the weakest link in the much better than might have been foreseen from the OZN-ND political affair of the late 1930s.

Poland's World War II record is better than that of many of the other occupied countries. Just as the term "traditional Polish anti-Semitism" is historically a great exaggeration, the accusation that Polish society collaborated with the Nazis in the extermination of Jews is equally unjust. In fact most other occupied nations collaborated to a greater degree. There is absolutely no basis to the theory that Poland was chosen for the Holocaust because of "Polish anti-Semitism." It was chosen because it contained the largest concentration of Jews in Europe and because the territory itself was conveniently isolated by the war situation. In both absolute and relative numbers, more Jews were murdered by Austrians (the Nazi core in charge of the death camps and concentration camps), Rumanians (the Bucharest pogrom of 1941 and the extermination of Jews in Bessarabia and Odessa), Ukrainians, Lithuanians, and Latvians (police detachments engaged in the liquidation of Warsaw, Białystok, and Vilna Ghettos), Croats (particularly on Serbian territory), and Bulgarians (also on occupied Yugoslav lands). Very few historians seem to recall the fact that 100,000 Slovakian Jews were deported to the Majdanek death and concentration camp (it had a double function) by an action requested and even petitioned (in writing, to Berlin) by the autonomous Slovakian authorities, who finally, after getting Berlin's permission, executed the deportation with their own police forces.

Polish anti-Semitism, which never displayed such a murderous component as in the above examples, was never any nastier than French, Russian, Hungarian, or Argentinean anti-Semitism. To stigmatize the Poles in this case is very much like the irrational stigmatizing of Jews by anti-Semites. Accusations against the Poles resulted partly from the fact that Poland became the site of the largest extermination of Jews. That fact causes one to remember all the cases of blackmail and betrayal which took place there, although they were less numerous than in other countries, not only in relation to the number of Jews,

but often in absolute numbers (as in the case of Paris and Vichy). Poland got a bad name once again in the late sixties when anti-Semitism, as in the 1930s, became a card in a political gamble. In both cases anti-Semitism was bid for: the competition for power demanded more anti-Semitism and the government gave in to that pressure in order not to leave such an effective and popular weapon in the hands of its rivals. In both cases, the blows fell on the Jews. The anti-Semitic campaign of the 1960s seemed even more morbid since there were very few Jews left in Poland, and more shameless, coming, as it did, after the Holocaust and at the site of the Holocaust. Yes, the anti-Semitic campaigns of the 1930s and 1960s were the most compromising episodes in the history of Polish-Jewish relations, but not so behavior of the Poles during the Holocaust (Poles outnumber other nationalities among the Righteous Gentiles at Yad Vashem) and those episodes still do not make Poland traditionally more anti-Semitic than most other nations.

This is especially obvious now, when the "Jewish question" comes up with increasing frequency and under code names. Until recently, it used to be an "internal affair" (as *Gazeta Polska* stressed in 1939), but in today's more confused world the Judeo-centric obsession and anti-Semitic pathology have assumed an international dimension, appearing under the euphemism of the "Middle East problem," then with increasing frequency as the "Palestinian question," and may soon become an "Israeli question," with the clear implication that something has to be done about Israel, whose existence is, symptomatically, a hindrance to so many states and nations. This disease is the more ominous in that it is now spreading throughout the post-Holocaust world, which knows its potential for cruelty and ruthlessness, while the "bothersome" Jewish state is a creation of a refuge for those who miraculously escaped from the international murderers. Pathology like this on an international scale is very dangerous especially in a world prone to inflection and mental plague because of extreme centralization and the technology of communication and information -- the latter always accompanied by misinformation.

Neither the past nor the present of such a world justifies stigmatizing the Poles.

SUMMARY

Main ideas:

1. Overcoming the war of hate
2. Cultural differences between Poles and Jews
3. Soviet role in Polish-Jewish antagonism
4. Nazism as an alibi for Germany
5. Memory revision process among victims

Subtitles:

- 1 **Perpetuation of hatreds of war**
- 2 **The legacy of Nazi-Soviet partnership**
- 3 **Double perception of Nazis and Soviets**
- 4 **Jews in the Stalinist terror apparatus**
- 5 **Creation of double memory of Poles and Jews**
- 6 **Soviet aims in the Middle East**
- 7 **"Jewish anti-Semitism"**
- 8 **Anti-Jewish riots under Soviet occupation**
- 9 **Jews in socialist terrorism**

- 10 **Eruption of violence in Kielce**
- 11 **Violation of Yalta agreements**
- 12 **The Soviet provocation**
- 13 **Similarity with Crown Heights riot**
- 14 **Weapons in Jewish compound**
- 15 **Why the provocation on the 4th of July, 1946**
- 16 **How could the riot last nearly nine hours**
- 17 **Mob tried by a military court**
- 18 **Government observers**
- 19 **The show trial**
- 20 **The second trial behind closed-door**
- 21 **Disbelief, pain, shame**
- 22 **Perpetuation of the Soviet version**
- 23 **A turning point**
- 24 **Spread of Anti-Polonism**
- 25 **Soviet waves of anti-Semitism**
- 26 **Soviet policy in Poland**
- 27 **Revenge of Holocaust survivors**

- 28 The Tenth Department
- 29 Witch-hunt of Zionists and the "nationalist" trend
- 30 Turning executioners into victims
- 31 Infiltration of Jewish community
- 32 1956 purge
- 33 Soviet use of anti-Semitism to isolate Poland from the West
- 34 1960 purge of the Jews
- 35 Planned elimination of Jews
- 36 The Six Day War in 1967
- 37 Anti-Semitism brought in the open
- 38 The Czech spring in 1968
- 39 Bloodshed on the Baltic in 1970
- 40 Reaction to secret police terror
- 41 The propaganda use of the 1946 Kielce riot
- 42 Important facts missing in Holocaust Museums
- 43 The fiction of the "Polish phase" of the Holocaust, The damage to the credibility of the Holocaust Museum
- 44 Germans, Nazis, and property restitution
- 45 Polish-Jewish reconciliation

