

Syrian defense minister's literary effort reconciles Hitler and Stalin

by Laurent Murawiec

In 1981, Syria's Defense Minister Mustafa Tlas published a book in Arabic entitled *The Matzah of Zion*, which is devoted to "demonstrating" that Jews commit "ritual murder" in the normal course of their religious practice. This places him very squarely in the tradition of the most famous fraud of the 20th century, the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a forgery created and circulated by old Russia's all-powerful political police, the Okhrana, and of that other 20th-century best seller, Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. The connection is that Soviet intelligence started its work in the Arab world at the point—and with the same networks—that the Nazi Abwehr left off.

Of course, Syria is a Soviet client-state, whose army is entirely armed and trained by the Soviets, and Tlas himself is a Soviet agent. Tlas exemplifies Moscow's preferred type of Arab agents, who share Russia's hatred for the West and the Russians' rabid anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism is institutionally rampant not only in the Soviet Party leadership and the KGB, but also in the Red Army, whose recently deceased chief of the Main Political Directorate—the chief political commissar—Alexei Yepishev, was known to be the mainstay of official Soviet anti-Semitism.

Demonstrating that the Syrian military is no stranger to scholarship, Tlas's ambition is to present a doctoral dissertation at the Sorbonne in Paris, on the theme: "Marshal Zhukov's strategic method" in World War II. In an interview with the German weekly *Der Spiegel* [No. 39, 1986, Sept. 22], Tlas added that Zhukov's strategy was replete with lessons valid for Syria's standoff with Israel on the Golan Heights.

Another lesson he may have learned from Stalin's top general, concerns Georgii Konstantinovich's pathological anti-Semitism. To this day, General Milshtein of the GRU and the Palme Commission confides that he cannot understand how a Jew like himself could have been allowed by Zhukov to have been a major on his staff during the 1941 Battle of Moscow.

The Russian army, which plays so important a role in training and controlling the armies of several Arab countries,

has a long tradition in anti-Semitism. The present regime is the proud continuer of the Russian version of the "Final Solution," "one-third of the Russian Jews will die, one-third assimilate, and one-third be expelled," a formula coined by the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Pobedonostsev, in the late 19th century.

In the last decades, the Politburo in Moscow was promoting the efforts of a prominent member of the Russian New Right, one Emelianov, a lecturer for the official *Znanye* [knowledge] Society, who toured the Soviet Union, addressing Communist Party educational meetings on the "international Judeo-masonic conspiracy," quoting liberally from the notorious forgery known as the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* to prove his case. Emelianov has reprinted the Protocols and had it published in the U.S.S.R. with official sanction. Internationally publicized, his efforts and doctrines operated as a rallying flag for the international anti-Semitic riff-raff—including the Islamic ones—which Moscow was busy recruiting.

Before the 'Protocols'

Tlas's earlier literary exertion appeared five years ago in the form of his book, *The Matzah of Zion*, a book which purported to narrate and analyze the "Damascus Affair" of 1840, when two local Jews were charged with the ritual murder of a Christian. Challenged on the preposterous report, Tlas told an interviewer, "My book concerns an incident which took place in 1840. It is vouched for by historical archives, which can be consulted." To quote from his book directly:

. . . Al-Badari Touma al-Tabushi fell into the hands of the Jewish community [of Damascus] and fell their victim. They wanted his blood to knead their ritual bread. This act of violence was by no means the first. The West suffered many such acts. Czarist Russia, in its times, was a victim of such acts. . . . The crime which killed Al-Badari was not the first, nor was it the last, undeniably. . . . A discovery even more re-

volting than the crime itself [was] the Jews' religious beliefs, their destructive perversions which are rooted in their dark hatred for the whole of mankind and all religions. . . .

The warning came from the mothers [to their children]: "Beware of moving away from home. The Jew could come by, throw you into a sack to kidnap you, kill you and take your blood to make his Zionist bread. [sic]"

My intent in publishing this book [is] to shed light on some secrets of the Jewish sect through the doings of some of its members and the blind, hateful fanaticism inspired by their doctrine as well as the implementation of the teachings of the Talmud. . . .

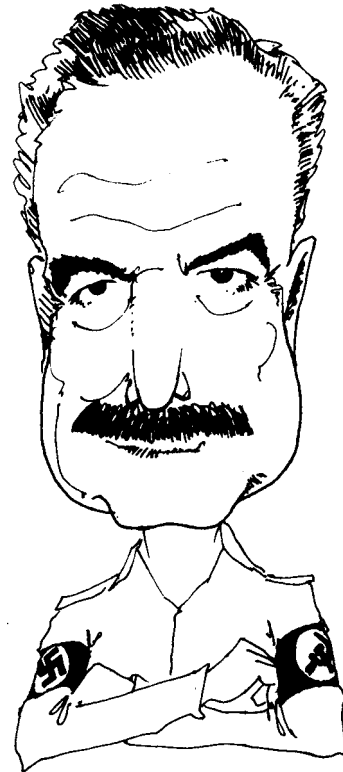
Such ravings should suffice to consign their author to a mental institution. He is, however, in a commanding position in international terrorism and, as defense minister, is currently coordinating with the Soviets the Syrian military buildup threatening Israel, which in turn threatens to provoke a new Middle East War. As an author, Tlas cannot claim

Orthodox priest Lutostanski gave Czar Alexander III a long treatise on "ritual murder." The official Moscow newspaper *Novoye Vremia* published a study by historian Nikolai Kostomarov on the Jews' "ritual crimes" in the Ukraine. The top expert in Jewish affairs for the Russian Orthodox Church's Holy Synod, Jakob Brafman, went further; his books, *The Book of the Kahal* and *Local and Universal Jewish Brotherhoods*, were a great landmark in the development of the notion of an "international Jewish conspiracy." These were the inspiration for the hundreds of pogroms that killed thousands in Russia in the decades thereafter.

The official ideologue of the Imperial Court, Fyodor Dostoevsky, advocated launching a crusade against the Jews, while praising to the heavens "the Great Aryan Race," and debated at length the question of ritual murder in the *Brothers Karamazov*. Leo Tolstoy praised Houston Stewart Chamberlain, son-in-law of Richard Wagner and later one of Hitler's mentors, for his doctrine of the racial superiority of the Aryans. Dostoevsky was an apologist for the superiority of the Blood and Soil of Mother Russia, and identified with the established authorities. Tolstoy, who passed for an anarchist contemptuous of all establishments, fully shared in the same doctrines. And the terrorist "left-wing" organization *Narodnaya Volia* [the People's Will] was caught red-handed in bloody-minded anti-Semitic propaganda in 1881: Revolutionary proclamations they put out started with the words: "Help us! Arise! Vengeance against the lords! Loot the Jews! Kill civil servants!"

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion

Undeniably, the masterpiece of modern anti-Semitism is the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, the permanent reference for all tales of "international Jewish conspiracy." The chief



of the powerful World Muslim Congress, Maarouf Dawalibi, formerly the secretary to the Nazi Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, and more recently the founder of "Islam and the West," a joint venture between Muslim fundamentalists and the Club of Rome, is the publisher of countless editions of both the *Protocols* and *Mein Kampf*. General Tlas received similar teachings from his home-baked Muslim Nazis and Soviet Russia.

The first known edition of the *Protocols* appeared in mimeographed form in 1897 in Russia under the title of *The Ancient and Modern Protocols of the Meetings of the Elders of Zion*, and remained utterly unnoticed. In 1903, the anti-Semitic Russian daily newspaper *Znamia* (*The Flag*) serialized it under the self-explanatory title, "The Program for the Takeover of the World by the Jews." In 1905, a protégé of the Czar's entourage, one Sergei Nilus, included the text in his kookish book, *The Big in the Small—Anti-Christ as a Coming Political Event*. The silly concoction would have continued its path through obscurity had it not been for the fact that Nilus's protector, Vladimir, Metropolitan of the Orthodox Church in Moscow, ordered that sermons be held on Oct. 16, 1905 in no fewer than 368 churches in the city, quoting from the so-called *Protocols*. One day later, the Russian media gave it immense publicity—starting with the *Moskova Vedomosti* newspaper, edited by a former left-wing terrorist Leo Tikohmirov, a convert to far-right Orthodoxy run by the Czar's political police, the Okhrana.

any originality, since the “Damascus Affair” of 1840 was the subject of what is probably the founding document of modern anti-Semitism, the 100-page confidential report commissioned by Russian Czar Nicholas I and written in 1844 by Russian academic Vladimir Dahl, who boldly asserted that “some” Jews, and “some” Jewish sects did indeed practice ritual murder. Dahl and his imperial master were starting a tradition, which was to become the mainstay of Russian (and Nazi) anti-Semitism.

By January 1906, the mass-based fascist party of Russia, the Union of the Russian People (better known nowadays under its nickname of the “Black Hundreds”), launched a new, printed edition of the *Protocols*, under the title “The Enemies of the Human Race.” The second-worst wave of 20th-century anti-Semitic persecution was launched—to be surpassed only 30 years later by the Okhrana’s pupils of the Nazi Party.

The text of the so-called *Protocols* came from a book published in Brussels in 1864 by a third-rate French scribbler by the name of Maurice Joly, under the title, *A Dialogue in Hell between Montesquieu and Machiavelli*, or, *The Policy of Machiavelli in the 19th century, Seen by a Contemporary*. Joly, a part-time anarchist and full-time mediocrity, had placed in the mouth of his Machiavelli a grandiose plan for the takeover of the universe, and a world dictatorship run by a secret elite. Nothing in the book was anti-Semitic, or even referred to the Jews.

The powerful head of the Paris-based Foreign Agency of the Okhrana, Piotr Rachkovsky, was one of the chief “Jewish experts” of the secret police. He had been the Okhrana’s eyes and ears at the first Jewish newspaper printed in Russia, *Russkii Evrei (The Russian Jew)*, and, as a former leftist, was experienced in agitation work. A leading member of the Russian Princes’ and Church Princes’ secret society, the Holy Druzhina, which ran conspiracies and counter-conspiracies among revolutionaries, and later spawned the Black Hundreds, Rachkovsky received the text from some of his agents in Paris political-literary salons, and commissioned his professional forgers with a rewriting job: The utterances of the Montesquieu character were excised from Joly’s book, Machiavelli’s own pronouncements were spiced with the words “Jews,” “Hebrew,” etc., and translated into Russian paragraph by paragraph, line by line, word by word. The awkward plagiarism was then transmitted under conditions of “great confidentiality” to the Procurator of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church P. P. Stepanov, who passed it on to the scribbler Nilus—a creature of the Orthodox monks at the Optyna Pustyna monastery who also “handled” Dostoevsky and Tolstoy—and Black Hundreds leader Butmi.

Nilus was slated to become the Czar’s own confessor. His own views of the *Protocols* were expressed to a friend: “Let us admit that the *Protocols* be a forgery. But can God not use them in order to uncover the injustice that is being prepared? Is it not possible that God, out of respect for our

faith, transform bones for the dogs into miraculous relics? He can therefore place in a lying mouth the annunciation of the truth.” Rachkovsky’s assistant Harting was later to comment: “And say that we forged the *Protocols*! What a great coup!” while the former chief of the Russian secret police Prince Lopukhin confessed in 1920 that “in [Russia’s] government layers, it was very well known for a long time that the *Protocols* were forgeries fabricated abroad by Rachkovsky and his agents.”

How powerful an impact on overall Russian Czarist policy-making the *Protocols* and the conspiracy behind their publication were is demonstrated by a secret memorandum to Tsar Nicholas II, penned in January 1906, by his foreign minister, the Baltic-German nobleman Count Lambsdorf, in which the latter proposed to hinge the whole of Russia’s foreign policy on “a new Holy Alliance,” similar to that of 1815, and aimed at destroying the “international Judeo-masonic conspiracy.” The Czar personally annotated the document thus: “*Negotiations must start immediately*. I entirely share the views expressed here.” Even though the diplomatic initiatives that followed failed to concretize the desired alliance, the anti-Semitic effort successfully contributed to creating a host of international contacts and networks which constituted something of a “White International,” one most auspicious for enhancing Okhrana penetration of Western elites and secret services.

From the Okhrana to the Nazi Party

Anti-Semitism was a crucial policy-tool for the dominant force of the Czarist regime, within Russia and outside. Within, it was a special unit of Okhrana which turned out, from the basement of the Petersburg police headquarters, millions of proclamations and leaflets calling for pogroms, and signed by the Black Hundred mother-organization, the Union of the Russian People. The head of the unit was one Captain Komisarov, who was later to be Rasputin’s Okhrana controller, yet later a prominent friend of the Nazis—and an agent to the successor organization of the Okhrana, the Bolsheviks’ Cheka/GPU. “We can get any pogrom going,” he boasted, “one with ten participants, one with ten thousands, it’s as you wish.” The pogroms were the lever to organize the Russian masses into a fascist-like movement. Outside Russia, the contacts established through the *Protocols* conspiracy were to prove no less useful.

French historian Henri Rollin, who investigated the matter before World War II, reports that “all the Russians who in 1919 were propagating in Germany the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, were the advisers to Hitler in matters of anti-Semitism and the struggle against Bolshevism, were veterans of the Union of the Russian People and the Brotherhood of Saint Michael the Archangel,” a sub-branch of the Black Hundreds. He adds that “among the Russians who surrounded Hitler at his beginnings, one person exerted a considerable influence in foreign policy matters was von Taube, former

[Imperial Russian] Senator, former member of the Imperial Council, and suspected . . . to have drafted the Lambsdorf memorandum.”

Tsarina Alexandra's personal copy of the Nilus edition of the *Protocols* had been found in the house where the imperial household had been before being butchered by the Bolsheviks. A swastika had been drawn on a wall. Out of those circumstances, the Black Hundreds element in the White armies fighting in the Russian civil war, created a cult of the swastika, and turned the *Protocols* into the obligatory reading for their officer corps, which enabled the White troops to massacre, in the Ukraine alone, 60,000 Jews. Admiral Kolchak, who led the White troops in Siberia against the Reds, made it his bedside reading; so did General Krasnov, one of the founders of the secret "White" society, the Brotherhood of the Russian Truth—a successor to both the Holy Druzhina and the Black Hundreds. And when the remnants of the White armies went to the West after their military defeat, they brought the as-yet-unknown *Protocols* in their luggage.

An intimate of the late tsar, Col. Fyodor (Theodor) Winberg, a German-Russian Baltic officer, who was central to the Russian emigration in Berlin and Munich, gave a copy of the book to a German officer, Capt. Mueller von Hausen, who reprinted it in the Berlin newspaper *Auf Vorposten* in December 1919, using the *nom de plume* of Gottfried zur Beek. Winberg's own journal, the Russian-language *Sveta Luch* (*The Ray of Light*), reprinted the *Protocols*. In the muddy waters of postwar Berlin and Munich, the émigré Russians became, under the pretext of a "crusade against Bolshevism," chief advisers to the incipient Nazi Party as well as the myriad sects and organizations which shared in the common doctrines of Aryan racism and imperialism. The Brotherhood of the Russian Truth, as a central émigré coordinating body, and especially its German-Baltic element, were invading the milieu which was generating the Nazis. Alfred Rosenberg, who was from Riga in Russia and who was to become the official ideologue of Nazism, after completing his studies in revolutionary Moscow under Lenin, retransmitted his Russian experience to Hitler's mentor Dietrich Eckhardt. Young Hitler's "brains," the little-known Max-Erwin von Scheubner-Richter, also a Baltic German, advocated "copying the Bolsheviks in the conquest of power." And Colonel Winberg advocated the Russian-German alliance which Hitler and Stalin were to achieve in 1939. In August 1921, the young Nazi Party and the Russian émigrés of the Brotherhood, were holding a common Congress in Munich—which was dominated by the theme of the Lambsdorf memorandum, the international Judeo-masonic conspiracy. Later, the Brotherhood was to be integrated into the apparatus of the Gestapo, the SS intelligence service (the SD), and the international intelligence apparatus, the Welt-dienst.

In the meantime, the Russian émigrés had fully reintegrated the ranks of Holy Mother Russia through the agency

of The Trust, Cheka chief Felix Dzerzhinsky's vehicle for the penetration of the West. Black Hundred leader Shulgin was writing paeans to Stalin's purging of the Jews. The *Protocols* as a Trojan Horse had fulfilled its assigned function: The Third Reich was being in good part integrated into the Third Rome.

During the Third Reich, a great deal of activity was devoted to recruiting Middle Eastern agents, such as the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin al-Hajj Husseini. In 1932, the Nazis helped Antoine Saadeh, the founder of the Syrian People's Party, set up shop in Berlin, and ran the formal establishment of his party—in Berlin rather than Damascus!—in 1936. The wife of Hafez el-Assad, Anita Maklouf, now chairs this old Nazi party, while her husband dabbles in pro-Soviet Arab Socialism. After the war, as is well-known, many a prominent SS man found a refuge in, especially, Syria, which still shelters Alois Brunner, one of the top hatchetmen of the Final Solution under Adolf Eichmann. The anti-Semitism blooming triumphantly in the Soviet Union in the postwar period—such as in the Purge Trials in Eastern Europe and the 1952-53 "Doctors' Plot" in Russia—provided the most natural pathway for reunification. When Mustafa Tlas expounds his delirious doctrines, that is the fraudulent and bloody tradition that speaks through the lips of this *Golem*.

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