

Russian chauvinism—the real danger of a fascist resurgence today

by Luba George

The revolution in East Germany has touched off a chorus of howls in Great Britain, alleging that the “danger” of a “Fourth Reich” looms in a “reunified Germany.” The British campaign is worse than a Big Lie. It is hypocritically covering up the fact that a dangerous fascist Reich is indeed in the process of being formed—in Russia. Beyond that, the insidious British campaign, by attacking a free, reunified Germany, is attacking, among other things, the continent’s and the free world’s very ability to contain and nullify the threat of the Russian fascist Reich. A look at what’s going on inside Russia underscores this.

Although chauvinism, racism, and anti-Semitism are not the only, or even the principal, features that define a fascist movement, they are among the most hideous aspects of the Nazi ideology, justifying mass persecution and murder under a regime of fascist economy austerity.

‘Smell of blood in the air’

Many Soviet Jews who had hoped to emigrate to the U.S. were shocked and desperate over the new American immigration rules which greatly limit the number of Soviet Jews to be admitted. The new regulations come at a time when Russian anti-Semitism has reached a frightening level. “I don’t think the U.S. action is just,” Pavel Mogilevsky, a 30-year-old would-be emigré, told the *Jerusalem Post* on Oct. 24. “There is a smell of blood in the air in the Soviet Union today, and just at the time of maximum danger for the Jews, the U.S. closes its gates.”

Anti-Semitic propaganda of the crudest forms is on the rise, including leaflets threatening Jews with physical extermination in Moscow and Leningrad. According to the Soviet periodical *Argumenti i Fakti* (No. 33, 1989), the wide distribution of these leaflets has caused alarm throughout the Jewish communities. This is what Mogilevsky was referring to when he told the *Jerusalem Post* that until now he had had “no desire” to go to Israel because “I don’t want to live in a warlike situation . . . but, I will definitely to get to Israel now. Every Jew must get out of this country while he can.”

As Soviet historians Sergei Rogov and Vladimir Nosenko pointed out earlier this year, according to *Sovetskaya Kultura*’s Feb. 8 issue, anti-Semitism and Russian chauvinism—

encouraged through “influential patronage” by top Soviet officials through the KGB, military, and other networks—had been a key factor in the decision of “tens of thousands”—in fact over a quarter of a million—Soviet Jews to emigrate. In 1988 the number of Jewish émigrés reached 18,965, compared to about 8,000 the previous year and a mere 914 in 1986. There are some 2.5-3 million Jews in the U.S.S.R., and a major exodus is expected in the next three to five years, say Jewish sources. According to the U.S. National Conference on Soviet Jewry, the emigration total for 1989 stands at 51,336, exceeding the previous high of 51,320 in 1979. In October alone, 9,450 Jews emigrated, and for 1990 a new record, greatly surpassing 1989, is expected.

The mass Russian chauvinist organization Pamyat was officially registered shortly after Mikhail Gorbachov came to power in 1985. Since then, Pamyat’s prominent lecturers—such as Dmitri Vasiliev, Evgenii Evseev, Vladimir Begun, Aleksandr Romanenko, V. Yemeljanov—have been openly spreading their anti-Jewish venom, telling millions of Russians all over the U.S.S.R. that “Jews and Latvians” were guilty of murdering the last Russian Czar in 1918; that “Jewish physicians” poisoned Lenin in 1924; that the chief of Stalin’s secret police, Lavrenti Beria, was half-Jewish and, in the course of the “Great Terror” in the late 1930s, executed 85% of the top military leadership in order to undermine Soviet defense capability; and that the same “half-Jewish” Beria suffocated Stalin with a pillow in 1953; and so on and so forth. (For Pamyat’s origins and supporters, see *EIR* Jan. 8, 1988 and July 28, 1989.)

Under conditions of growing food shortages and ensuing famine, Russians are also being told by Pamyat that the Jews are out to ruin Russia. Gorbachov’s *perestroika* (restructuring) program, they say, is being “sabotaged” by the “rootless cosmopolitans.” Most of the “rootless cosmopolitans” under attack by Pamyat happen to be some of Gorbachov’s top “reformers” and architects of *perestroika*. These include the economist Abel Aganbegyan, whose real name, they say, is “Hoffmann,” and who they say is not an Armenian at all, but a “Jew” and Freemason (reported by Julia Wishnevsky, “Soviet Media Sound Alarm over Anti-Semitism” *Report on the U.S.S.R.*, No. 9, 1989, pp. 7-9).

Early this year, a mass rally took place at the Moscow

Sports Palace, organized by the editorial boards of Russia's most virulent Russian nationalist and anti-Semitic journals, *Moskva*, *Molodaya Gvardiya*, and *Roman Gazeta*, among others. Participants in the rally carried banners proclaiming, "No to Rootless Cosmopolitans!" and showing St. George slaying a serpent. The "serpents" identified by the participants included, from the past, Stalin's "Old Bolshevik" Trust opponents—namely Leon Trotsky, Yakov Sverdlov, and Nikolai Bukharin, plus the sole Jewish member of Stalin's Politburo, Lazar Kaganovich. The present-day targets are a "who's who" of the "Great Reformers" of Gorbachov's *perestroika*: Alexander Yakovlev, Tatyana Zaslavskaya, Abel Aganbegyan, Nikolai Shmelyov, Vitali Korotich, Leonid Abalkin, Boris Vasiliev, Andrei Nuikin (a leading member at the Institute of Cinema Arts), and many others. Wishnevsky reports in the same location cited above, that the journals *Znarya* and *Ogonyok* and the newspaper *Moscow News* were depicted as reptiles toadying to the "decadent West."

The anti-Jewish frenzy has reached such a point that today Pamyat and other extremists express their views at open-air mass meetings with shouts of "Kill the Jews!" An approaching, violently anti-Western, anti-Semitic mass Slavophile transformation in the Soviet Union was heralded in two statements made in the United States by Boris Yeltsin, the would-be Russian Mussolini. Yeltsin endorsed the "mainstream" of Pamyat, and declared that "in the coming period," in the U.S.S.R. "5-7 million will die in a bloody conflict," whose main features would be inter-ethnic.

While Yeltsin was touring the United States in September, the most important coalition of Russian nationalist and anti-Semitic groups since the "Black Hundreds" of Czarist times was launched. A new "United Council of Russia" was founded, uniting all regional and national organizations, including the new Pamyat-linked "united fronts," "interfronts," and "intermovements," along with the new "United Front of Russian Workers," itself founded only a week earlier in the Urals city of Sverdlovsk. These new mass Russian extremist organizations have drafted platforms which go beyond anti-Semitism and demand the crushing of national movements in the non-Russian republics, which movements are portrayed as tools of "international monopolies." As their speeches in Sverdlovsk, covered in *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, reveal, these organizations reflect an anti-Gorbachov and anti-Western groundswell among ethnic Russians. The demand is for an end to *perestroika* which, they maintain with some justification, is leading the country inexorably toward physical economic breakdown, and for a break with Moscow's Western partners and the scrapping of joint East-West ventures.

Only Russian nationalism allowed to grow

To counter the growth of non-Russian pro-sovereignty movements in the U.S.S.R., there has been a clear policy by Soviet authorities to allow the growth of Russian chauvinist

organizations as well as outright neo-fascists. Their growth has been accompanied by growing threats against Jews and vandalism against Jewish homes and businesses. Russia's leading nationalist newspapers and magazines, such as *Molodaya Gvardiya*, *Nash Sovremennik*, and *Moskva*, have gone on a rampage of denunciations against the non-Russian nationalists. "For decades, our republics improved their well-being at the expense of Russia," said Apollon Kuzim, leader of Pamyat's "sister" organization, "Otechestvo" in an interview with *Literaturnaya Rossiya*.

The monthly *Nash Sovremennik* (No. 11, 1988) published a letter to the editor from Vladimir Begun, a "Belorussian" of shady background, attacking the Baltic nationalist centers, including the establishment in Estonia of a "Jewish nationalist center." He said it was "unforgivable" to what degree "Zionism" was allowed to thrive in the U.S.S.R. Begun told his readership that such an association may be turned into a gang whose only purpose would be "to follow and to kill other men and women," strongly implying that it was part of a "secret organization" existing "in Europe, Israel, and many other localities."

Aside from the Baltic republics, similar campaigns have been waged by Pamyat and affiliated organizations in other non-Russian republics with large Russian minorities, where there has been large-scale anti-Moscow unrest. Pamyat has tried to channel popular rage against the system into focusing on the Jewish minority as scapegoat. For example, in recent months, mysterious leaflets have appeared in Ukraine and Moldavia urging discrimination and "action" against Jews.

Pamyat's united front of Russian workers

The shock of the July strike wave throughout the U.S.S.R. brought about the founding of the umbrella organization called the United Front of Workers of Russia (UFWR). Its founding conference was held in Sverdlovsk Sept. 8-9, attended by 110 delegates representing 29 Russian cities and also Russian groups in Moldavia, Tadjikistan, and the three Baltic republics. Their stated goals: struggle against the "cosmopolitans"—i.e., the market-oriented and pro-Western forces who are "selling out to the West"—and increasing the number of worker representatives in the Soviet parliament. They strongly oppose the nationalist movements in the non-Russian republics. The UFWR members include workers from the Baltic and Moldavian republics who had already organized strikes by tens of thousands of people in August and September, to protest against new laws aimed at strengthening the republics' sovereignty. According to Belorussian sources, another Pamyat-linked "workers' front" is about to be sprung on Minsk in the very near future.

The pre-founding inaugural meeting of the UFWR in Leningrad in June 1989 was attended by Leningrad then-regional party boss, Yuri Solovyov, and Nina Andreyeva, the notorious Stalin glorifier and anti-cosmopolitan author of letters to leading leading Soviet papers that have caused

uproars since March 1988. The proceedings were covered on Leningrad television, where one of the organizers of the UFWR, shipbuilding engineer Anatoli Ryzhov, denounced Politburo member Aleksandr Yakovlev for “destroying Russian ideology,” adding that *perestroika* has so far allowed only the intelligentsia to make gains.

At the numerous rallies and protest strikes held by the UFWR in the Baltic republics and Moldavia, speaker after speaker railed against the cooperatives and likened the pro-market economist Deputy Prime Minister Leonid Abalkin to the “liberal” press, since “attacking everything is not democracy.”

Guardian correspondent Martin Walker wrote from Moscow, “The Soviet Jewish Cultural ‘Chronicle’ recently sent a reporter to infiltrate Pamyat in Leningrad, and he ominously recounts that the first qualification for new members is to supply the addresses of three Jewish families.”

Still other groups were formed this year to counter the non-Russian national resurgence. The Edinstvo (Unity) International Movement was born in reaction to the Moldavian Popular Front to defend the Russians’ privileged position economically and culturally. Edinstvo is presided by none other than Nina Andreyeva. It was created, says Andreyeva, “to counter the counter-revolution” in the non-Russian republics, according to the Spanish daily *El País* of Aug. 20. In an interview with the *Washington Post* this past August, Andreyeva, after bitterly lashing out at “Jewish” and “Zionist conspirators,” complained: “Four years of *perestroika* [has] undermined the trust of the working people. . . . In the past, a person going to bed at night knew that in the morning he’d go to work and have free medical care—not very skilled care, but free nonetheless. And now we don’t even have these guarantees.”

In early September, the UFWR members joined with Edinstvo, Interdvizheniye (“Inter-Movement”), and other Russian populist-fascist formations to participate in the inaugural congress of the “United Council of Russia.” Participants included all the old and newly established Russian nationalist organizations: Pamyat, the “military-patriotic” Otechestvo, the Brotherhood of Russian Artists, Union of “Afghantsi” (Russian Afghan war veterans), the All-Russian

Cultural Foundation, and others. The event was led by Russia’s top chauvinist writers and artists: Yuri Bondarev, Pyotr Proskutin, Ilya Glazunov, Apollon Kuzmin, Vadim Kozhinov, and Mikhail Antonov.

Speakers at the conference said the Russian working class should struggle against republics’ break-away attempts, and against “capitalist” elements being introduced into Soviet economy.

‘Rothschilds’ vs. ‘Russians’

Shortages in the shops worsen daily while goods in demand pile up in railway sidings and ports because of an inefficient distribution system and worker unrest; and hungry Russians are being told that “the Jews” are to blame. In this spirit, Pamyat has launched the campaign targeting private cooperatives as “Jewish.” The cooperatives as such, with their sky-high prices, have already become the internal “enemy image” that the “kulaks” were in the late 1920s, and are hated by most of Soviet citizens. The U.S.S.R. has over 150,000 cooperatives now, employing about 3 million people. As winter approaches and food and energy shortages worsen, Soviet Jews fear the worst, now that the adjective “Jewish” has been pegged to the hated word “cooperative.”

This Pamyat campaign was given nationwide publicity through an article in the latest issue of the mass circulation Russian chauvinist journal *Nash Sovremennik* (No. 11, 1989), which strongly denounced the “reformers’ ” cooperative movement and the rising “social inequality” in Soviet society—between the “Rothschilds” and the “Russians.” The author, Aleksandr Kazintsev, condemned “the huge patronage of Russian merchants” and “contemporary intelligentsia” for increasingly bowing to the “gold corpuscule of cosmopolitanism,” calling it “the 4% of the biologically active persons.” Similarly, Veniamin Yarin, the co-chairman of the United Front, spelled out his views in the trade union newspaper *Trud*, complaining that under Gorbachov’s economic reforms, workers were worse off, dividing society between the rich and the poor.

Early this summer, the first Jewish co-operative restaurant opened in Moscow. It was not long before a firebomb was thrown through its window. According to Jewish sources, it was the work of Russian anti-Semites.

British correspondent Martin Walker returned to Moscow after one year’s absence. In the Nov. 4 issue of the *Guardian*, here’s what he had to say: “Apart from the shortages in the shops, the most sobering change since I was last in Moscow is the increase in open anti-Semitism. You can get the flavor from letters sent to *Ogonyok* magazine this month. ‘You Jews started the damn Revolution and now your plot to ruin Mother Russia has succeeded, you are scuttling out again. . . . We must not let you slink out of the country so we have to come and hunt you down abroad, like we did to Trotsky. We’ll get you here, because this way it will be

Ukrainian nationalists reject anti-Semitism

In mid-April, the Ukrainian Helsinki Union reported that organs of the Soviet KGB and party functionaries in major cities began spreading provocative rumors that on April 20, Hitler's birthday, some "extreme nationalist" organizations were preparing Jewish pogroms, kidnappings of Jewish children, and so forth. This was even echoed in the official Soviet press.

The attempts by Pamyat and its KGB backers to extend the wave of anti-Semitism into non-Russian Slavic republics has failed so far, especially in the populous Ukraine, where about 15 million Russians reside. The failure has not been accidental. It is the fruit of a conscientious campaign by Ukrainian nationalists to defend Jewish rights and to expose anti-Semitism as a Moscow "divide and conquer" scheme.

A powerful resolution against anti-Semitism was unanimously passed and circulated throughout the republic at the September founding congress of the Ukrainian nationalist movement, Rukh. Key passages from this extraordinary document, titled "Against Anti-Semitism"

and never before published in the West, read:

"The Congress of Rukh is acting against any form of national discrimination, and is extending its brotherly hand to the Jewish people. . . . A people that for many years has lived in Ukrainian territories, a people which has excelled in its talent and hard work, still does not feel as an equal. . . . Years of Stalinism, as well as Brezhnevism, and fascist genocide during World War II has left them with many losses. . . .

"The people of Ukraine are not to blame for that. We reject any formulations and allegations that try to portray Ukrainians as anti-Semites. Anti-Semitism in Ukraine, and in other regions of the country [U.S.S.R.] exists not in the hearts of nationally conscious and civically active people, but in the denationalized masses who thrive on the lies of politicians who are acting on the old imperial principle of 'divide and conquer'—sowing enmity amongst nations. In fact, it's characteristic that today, in a time of great social and national revival in Ukraine, anti-Semitic meetings are not taking place.

"The Congress calls on all the conscious citizens of Ukraine and representatives of all nations and nationalities who are living in Ukraine to raise their voice against any form of anti-Semitism and to come to the defense of their own national integrity and the integrity of the Jewish people, their culture, education, religion, rights of representation in electoral organs, as well as their right to speak, develop, and teach their children Yiddish or Hebrew."

cheaper.' . . . The Soviet Jewish Cultural *Chronicle* [*Vestnik*] recently sent a reporter to infiltrate Pamyat in Leningrad, and he ominously recounts that the first qualification for new members is to supply the addresses of three Jewish families. According to the *Chronicle's* editor, Tankred Golenpolski, Jewish self-defense groups are being widely organized. . . . Three hundred members of the Writers' Union have sent an anguished telegram to Gorbachov complaining that there is a group of journals 'encouraging anti-Semitic pogroms.' Most Jews I know are worried sick."

Russia's 'fashiki'

In addition to these alarming developments, "fashiki" (fascist youths) and neo-Nazis who are known to enjoy support in higher places—the *nomenklatura* included—have been running around with Nazi regalia for the last several years committing criminal acts of vandalism, according to an article, "Fashiki," by Vitali Yeremin, in *Nedelya*, (No. 15, 1989). These acts have included beatings of Jews and other nationalities, murder, and rape. Borrowing their ideas from the works of Russian writer Fyodor Dostoevsky (such

as *Diary of a Writer*) and Nazi ideologists such as Hitler, Alfred Rosenberg, and Josef Goebbels, these Russian thugs call themselves the "Russian National-Socialist Workers' Party," the "National [Russian] Front," and the "Organization of National-Socialists." Established firmly in Leningrad and Moscow, these groups are found in almost every major city of the Soviet Union where Russians live: Murmansk, Sverdlovsk, Novosibirsk, Minsk, Alma-Ata, Riga, etc., says Valeri Konovalov, in *Report on the U.S.S.R.*, (June 16, 1989, p. 10). Recently, the journal *Semya* (*Family*), No. 31, 1989 published an article about how these "fashiki" were on the loose, terrorizing the entire city of Voronezh, going around and raping young girls on the open street.

On July 8, 1988, a documentary film "Tak i zhivem" (This Is How We Live) appeared on the popular Central Television program "Vzglyad," featuring two young Russian neo-Nazis from Leningrad who attacked non-Russians as "inferior races." "We will finish what the Führer began," one of them said. "He didn't bring in the right kind of Nazism in Germany. Only Russian soil is suitable for the real thing."