Gregg Hunt

While speaking of propaganda methodology at the Nuremberg Trials in 1946, Hermann Goering, the senior Nazi commander, declared, "Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of their leaders. All you have to do is tell them that they are in danger of being attacked and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger."[1] Specifically, Goering was referring to the way in which the Nazis manufactured public consent for war against Germany's enemies, including Jews, during WWII.

In understanding how the conditions became ripe for the systematic state-sponsored killing of millions of Jews during WWII, it is essential to examine the tools that helped shape the German public mind towards an anti-Semitic consensus. The use of Nazi propaganda and its social impact emerges as central to the discussion. Once the Nazis seized power in 1933, they quickly established the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, which promptly presented Germans with an imaginary Jewish enemy. Effectively, the German state declared war on its Jewish population through a highly systematized anti-Semitic propaganda program. The Ministry saw that this message was communicated through a variety of print media outlets, such as newspapers, books, and educational materials. However, it also widely distributed anti-Semitism through a variety of visual channels, such as film, art, and urban posters. An exploration of these Nazi-sponsored mediums demonstrates a manipulation of visual imagery that aimed to shape an anti-Semitic public opinion against the Jews.

Propaganda did not always have such a negative meaning.[2] In the early twentieth century institutions and governments used it openly to manage the flow of information in order to encourage or shape a desired public response. As Jacques Ellul, one of the leading theorists of propaganda and communication has stated, "mass media provides the essential link between the individual and the demands of the technological society."[3] To this end, the aim of state-sponsored propaganda was generally important to nationalism and emerged synonymous with society's established objectives as a whole. Providing more than just information, propaganda often responded to the society's fundamental needs by offering the public guidance and even entertainment.[4]

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[1] G.M. Gilbert, *Nuremburg Diary* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 1995), 279.

[2] Aristotle A. Kallis, *Nazi Propaganda and the Second World War* (Basingstoke, U.K: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 1.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., 2.

In essence, propaganda seeks to shape ideological thought – to control what people believe.[5] But importantly, it conceals this function or often disguises it by representing itself as an innate truth, assuming that people will perceive it at face value and forgo any follow-up analyses of its premises or assumptions. It is in this context that propaganda presents assumptions about its object as the norm and condemns any contradictory schools of thought, declaring them as incorrect, harmful, or evil. Thus, state-sponsored propaganda aims, covertly, to persuade its population, or a group of its population, to subscribe to a desired ideology. Since propaganda usually targets large numbers of individuals, controlling and manipulating mass media outlets is paramount and the most efficient way to reach and affect the highest number of people in the shortest period of time. While print and radio media carried Nazi messages to the masses, images did what words could not by providing visualization. Transmitting large amounts of data, and often multiple ideas, propaganda images had the capability to sum up the Nazi message in a compact urban poster or in the pages of a children's book.

However, Nazi propaganda did not find success in a vacuum. The effectiveness of a German mass anti-Semitic propaganda program depended on long-established and ubiquitous cultural attitudes. The systematized Nazi program to shape the German consciousness towards an anti-Semitic consensus would not have been nearly as effective if deep-rooted anti-Semitic stereotypes and Jewish hatred had not permeated German society long before the Nazis rose to power. The historical roots of European anti-Semitism, widespread and ingrained in the German mind by the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, significantly accounts for the success of Nazi anti-Semitic programs in the twentieth century. However, it is important to point out that anti-Semitism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries differed greatly from Nazi doctrine. Nevertheless, without the long history of widespread anti-Jewish ideology the Nazis would have found shaping an anti-Semitic consensus, and thus a space for wholesale genocide, more difficult.

This paper examines the Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda process and strategy in one of the primary channels of disseminated information forms, print imagery. It primarily analyzes caricatures in *Der Stürmer*, the Nazi's platform for anti-Semitism, a children's book, *Trust No Fox on His Green Heath and No Jew on His Oath*, wall posters that occupied the urban landscape, and a key pamphlet, *The War Goal of World Plutocracy*, that surfaced during WWII. Although Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda circulated prior to 1933, this paper focuses on anti-Semitic imagery beginning with the Nazi ascension to power until their collapse in 1945 in order to underscore a dramatic shift that took place in their portrayal of Jews. Further, it addresses the psychological conditions that prompted this radical shift at the outbreak of WWII. This abrupt course change in Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda firmly materialized when, on January 30, 1939, Adolf Hitler announced that his preparation for war was a response to a long series of aggressive acts by

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[5] Garth Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1986), 271.

"international Jewry against Germany."[6] According to Hitler, the Jews had formulated and implemented an international conspiracy that brought on the war and lured Germany into conflict. This shift from "Jews as an element incompatible with the German nation and a cause for Germany's post-WWI problems" to Jews as "war wagers" and, thus, "an eminent socio-political threat" underscored the new Nazi propaganda agenda. Speaking directly about this Jewish socio-political threat, Hitler, for the first time in public, called for the extermination of European Jews in his infamous Prophecy Speech:

> Today I will once more be a prophet: If the international Jewish financiers in and outside Europe should succeed in plunging the nations once more into a world war, then the result will not be the Bolshevization of the earth, and thus the victory of Jewry, but the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe![7]

It is worth noting that, in 1933, prior to their mass exodus out of Germany, this eminent Jewish threat consisted of approximately 505,000 individuals living in German territories – including the Saar region, which totaled little less than three-quarters of one-percent of the total population.[8]

Through the distribution of anti-Semitic visual materials, the Nazis aimed to dehumanize the Jews in order to frame an anti-Jewish public consensus and to insist on the need for action taken against the "Jewish problem." Consequently, as Germany entered into WWII, a modified Nazi propaganda strategy emerged, which sought to represent Jews as an urgent and dangerous threat to German national security. In fact, during this time, the Nazi's war against the Jews became synonymous with their understanding of WWII itself, a shift that provided the impetus for a new landscape to form. It allowed not only for a mass anti-Semitic consensus to build, but also rallied the public to support a solution.[9] By merging deep-rooted cultural stereotypes with a Jewish socio-political threat, Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda imagery underwent a radicalization that, by WWII, produced mass paranoia and a reactionary climate that helped to facilitate the next phase in the Nazi's treatment of the Jews.

Historians of the Holocaust have produced a large body of research examining the origins of anti-Semitism in Europe and its roots in Germany during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[10] The scholarship has gone far

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[6] Adolf Hitler, *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler*, ed. Norman Hepburn Baynes (London: Oxford University Press, 1942), 737-41.

[7] Ibid., 737-41.

[8] "Germany: Jewish Population in 1933" United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005276 (accessed November 5, 2010).

[9] The idea that the Nazi's war against the Jews emerged synonymous with their understanding of WWII itself is an important aspect of Jeffrey Herf's thesis, which I will be reinforcing. In addition, Herf emphasizes that the radicalization of Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda during WWII was integral to Nazi motivation and to the launching of the war and perpetration of the Final Solution. See: Herf, Jeffrey, *The Jewish Enemy, Nazi Propaganda during World War II and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 8-9, 264-265.

[10] John Weiss, *Ideology of Death: Why the Holocaust Happened in Germany* (Chicago: I.R. Dee. 1996); Robert Gellately, *Backing Hitler, Consent & Coercion in Nazi Germany* (Oxford:

to explain Jewish persecution and the impetus for a potent anti-Semitic environment during the German interwar period. While scholarship in this area has revealed much about the historical roots of anti-Semitism and the conditions that made Germany ripe for an anti-Semitic consensus during the twentieth century, it does not adequately account for the drastic change in German policy, which brought about the systematic state-sponsored murder of Jews during WWII. The question therefore continues to loom why, in 1941, for the first time in Europe's long history of Jewish hatred and persecution, did anti-Semitism adopt an unheard of radicalism that aimed for the continent-wide mass murder of millions?[11] Many historians have attempted to address this question by utilizing social and cultural approaches that focus on propaganda, thereby shedding new light onto an important dimension of the Holocaust.

By constructing community histories of specific German towns, social historians have revealed how the residents of those towns facilitated Nazi aims. For example, in William Sheridan Allen's work, the town of Northeim, a civilized small city during the Weimar Republic, plunged into a nihilistic dictatorship after the Nazis took over in 1933.[12] Allen argues that without the enthusiastic efforts on the part of German party members to facilitate Nazi aims, such as organized assaults against the working class, the Nazi takeover there would not have been possible. Propaganda, particularly from the press, facilitated the Nazi seizure of power in Northeim, emerging as an important structural component that sustained Nazi enthusiasm and provided people with justification for the revolution.[13]

Similarly, Robert Gellately demonstrates that, far from a Gestapo officer patrolling every street corner, a panoptic society emerged based on a type of citizen self-policing.[14] Using Gestapo case files that center around the town of Würzburg, Gellately shows that the Gestapo, limited in personnel in that region, relied heavily upon denunciations by the German public, most from the lower socio-economic classes.[15] Consequently, ordinary Germans emerged not merely as complacent bystanders, but active participants in Nazi policy by extending the reach of fascist surveillance throughout the German social fabric. Here, "whisper propaganda" took form.[16] Originating with the Gestapo, whisper propaganda sought to spread unsettling rumors to

Oxford University Press, 2001); George Mosse, *Towards the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985); Jeffrey Herf, *The Jewish Enemy, Nazi Propaganda during World War II and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

[11] Jeffrey Herf poses this question in his 2006 work on Nazi propaganda during the Holocaust. See: Jeffrey Herf, *The Jewish Enemy, Nazi Propaganda during World War II and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

[12] William S. Allen, *The Nazi Seizure of Power, The Experience of a Single German Town 1922-1945* (New York: Franklin Watts Publishing, 1984).

[13] Ibid., 202-203.

[14] Robert Gellately, *The Gestapo and German Society, Enforcing Racial Policy 1933-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish, The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

[15] Gellately, *The Gestapo and German Society,* 158.

[16] Robert Gellately, *Backing Hitler, Consent & Coercion in Nazi Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 205.

individuals whose friends and relatives had been taken to concentration camps. The technique sought to suppress behavior and allow the Nazis to maintain control over the community.[17]

Cultural historians have taken up Nazi propaganda as a way to understand its deeper meaning. In shifting the focus from local community history narratives to the Nazi dictatorship itself, these historians have debated the impact anti-Semitic imagery had on German society, and to what extent posters, media publications, and cinematic film shaped German public opinion against the Jews. While some historians have argued that Nazi anti-Semitic images primarily influenced those who already believed in the Nazi principles of racial purity, others have asserted that racial imagery promoted a general indifference to Jewish suffering, thus prompting ordinary Germans to tolerate mass violence. Aristotle A. Kallis asks did Nazi wartime propaganda effectively control the perceptions of ordinary Germans?[18] Reassessing conventional Nazi propaganda assumptions, Kallis argues that its "totalitarian assault" on modern society has become exaggerated.[19] Consequently, the press, radio, and film propaganda achieved integration of a national community against its enemies, but failed in becoming a "totalitarian mechanism of information and perception-shaping."[20] In similar fashion, David Welch challenges the belief that Nazi propaganda found a high rate of success molding its subjects towards an anti-Semitic frame of mind.[21] Although Welch credits the role of Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda as an important function in sustaining the Third Reich, he contends that its success rested on those that already harbored anti-Semitic attitudes. Furthermore, Nazi propaganda became so intrinsically linked to military victories that, during the war's final years, it proved less effective as it failed to compensate for the deteriorating military conditions.[22]

Still others hold that Nazi propaganda underwent a sweeping transformation, presenting Jews as a political threat and therefore effectively rallied the public around an anti-Semitic consensus. Jeffrey Herf argues that Joseph Goebbels and Hitler's war against the Jews emerged synonymous with their understanding of WWII itself.[23] Moreover, Nazi leaders believed that they had unraveled one of the epochal riddles of modern history, which provided answers to questions such as why Britain decided to fight on during the summer and fall of 1940 rather than negotiate, and why Franklin Roosevelt opposed Hitler.[24] Daringly, Herf interprets the wholesale murder of Jews during WWII as a "paranoid political, rather than biological, conviction and narrative."[25] Although this downplays race as a primary factor that brought about the Holocaust, it boldly draws attention to the role Nazi

[17] Ibid.
[18] Kallis.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid., 12.
[21] David Welch, *The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda* (London: Routledge, 1995).
[22] Ibid., 125.
[23] Herf.
[24] Ibid., 8.
[25] Ibid., 151.

psychology played in fabricating a Jewish political threat. Although a paranoid fantasy, constructing a "Jewish enemy" allowed Hitler, Goebbels, and other propagandists to validate their decision to annihilate millions of European Jews and justify it as "an ordinary consequence of the logic of war."[26]

By reinforcing these aspects of Herf's thesis, this paper further demonstrates how obsession and psychological projection consumed the Nazi mindset. In Nazi anti-Semitic imagery, a powerful weapon against the Jews materialized. But importantly, a pattern reveals a sweeping transformation that took place in Nazi-sponsored propaganda imagery, which sought to publicly realign Jews as an eminent social and political threat to Germany. Although German history reveals long-held anti-Semitic attitudes, a social environment permitting wholesale genocide only emerged within the milieu of WWII, once the Nazis successfully established Jews as a dangerous threat to the German public.

When the Nazis took power on January 30, 1933, they already had established themselves as experienced anti-Semitic propagandists. The Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, headed by Joseph Goebbels, aimed to control information within every major media outlet in order to feed the German public with a Nazi-approved narrative. The Nazi-approved message of anti-Semitism was the central message and one that had earned the party votes in the 1932 election. Once the Nazis seized power, they defined official state policy. The Ministry sought to spread the anti-Semitic narrative as far as possible and, along the way, eliminate any media it deemed a threat to the Nazi power structure.

Der Stürmer – "The Stormer" or "The Attacker" – the Nazi's official anti-Semitic newspaper, had been around since 1923. During the Third Reich, its editor, Julius Streicher, vowed to continue attacking Jews on the basis of their physical appearance, perceived hyper-sexuality, and conspiratorial scheming. Hitler believed that the publication played a significant role in shaping the German perception of Jews and as a result, the publication's circulation grew from 47,000 in 1933 to 473,000 by 1938, an increase of over nine-hundred-percent in just five years.[27] At the bottom page of each issue, in large bold print, the paper carried the phrase, "Die Juden sind unser Unglück!" or "The Jews are our misfortune!" In addition to text-based anti-Semitic propaganda, the paper printed anti-Jewish imagery – mostly caricatures – that revolved around a variety of anti-Semitic themes. One symbol that Streicher enjoyed publishing was the Jewish blood libel, which, although it had roots in Europe prior to the Middle Ages, the Nazis used in the twentieth century to dehumanize Jews. Nothing more than an unfounded myth, the blood libel depicted a Jewish ceremonial murder, usually of a Christian child, in order to obtain blood for various medicinal purposes, the preparation of Passover, or just plain revenge. A May 1934 issue ran such an image on its front cover, declaring, in bold red ink, "Jewish

[26] Ibid., 267.

[27] "Der Stürmer: A Fierce and Filthy Rag," Calvin College,
    http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/faculty/streich3.htm (accessed November 19, 2010).

Murder Plan Against Gentile Humanity Revealed."[28] The image represents two Jews, with exaggerated racial features, i.e. sunken faces and large noses, sinking a knife into eight young Aryan women and catching their blood with a long, shallow Kiddush bowl. Images like this, designed specifically to inflame racial and religious stereotypes, have been around for centuries and aimed to represent Jews as monstrous creatures, devoid of morals. Ironically, the Nazis banned the issue not for its blatant anti-Semitism, but because it misrepresented the Holy Christian Communion, comparing it to the Jewish ritual murder.

Another common anti-Semitic theme in *Der Stürmer* revolved around a nineteenth century motif where Jews emerged represented as serpent or toad-like creatures, consuming the world. A June 1933 issue featured such a cartoon entitled "Pan-Jewry," implying that an alarming global Jewish epidemic existed.[29] The Jew, seen as an enormous stubble-faced frog, opens its mouth to literally swallow humanity. Consequently, its amphibian hands securely clutch a bag of gold, seducing Communists, businessmen, Aryan women, religious and world leaders into its giant mouth-abyss. Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda totalized its subjects. In this case, Communists and other Leftists were presented as synonymous with Jews, a claim that Nazi propagandists increasingly emphasized as WWII approached. By equating Jews with Communists, the Nazis could form a political case against Jews and present to the German public the danger of world Jewry. In fact, in 1939, Streicher wrote a column in his paper that proclaimed an end to Jewry would eradicate Communism itself. "There must be a punitive expedition against the Jews in Russia," he stated, "a punitive expedition which will expect: death sentence and execution. Then the world will see the end of the Jews is also the end of Bolshevism."[30]

Der Stürmer often asserted that Jews only had their own interests at heart – that, although they claimed American, British, German, or French citizenship, they ultimately indentified with their Jewish roots instead of with their national heritage. The July 1934 issue ran a cartoon entitled "The Jewish Congress," which shows a Jew speaking, presumably to the League of Nations, a group the image implies is a body of "Jewish member states."[31] With a large Star of David over the speaker's platform, the image suggests that Jews run the world's nations, insisting on a Jewish global conspiracy. However, the caption also conveys more than Jewish dominance, which translates, "Let the Goyim believe that we can be Americans, Englishmen, Germans, or French. When our interests are at stake, we are always Jews, and nothing but."[32] Here, Streicher cites the Jewish faith as an organization of self-interest, incompatible with the goals or good of modern society. If Jews considered their religion, and consequently each other, above all else, then how could the Jewish individual, devotedly in solidarity with other Jews,

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[28] Julius Streicher, "Jewish Murder Plan Against Gentile Humanity Revealed," *Der Stürmer*, May 1934.

[29] Julius Streicher, "Pan-Jewry," *Der Stürmer*, June 1933.

[30] Julius Streicher, *Der Stürmer*, May 1939.

[31] Julius Streicher, "The Jewish Congress," *Der Stürmer*, July 1934.

[32] Ibid. The term "Goyim" is an offensive word for non-Jews.

be good for Germany? By questioning Jewish patriotism and dedication to German society, the Nazis aimed to reinforce the idea of the Jewish "racial other" in order to further isolate them from mainstream Germany.

In an effort to indoctrinate the young and maintain control over the teaching materials in German schools, Streicher and the Nazis published books for young children, of which *Trust No Fox on His Green Heath and No Jew on His Oath* has emerged the most infamous.[33] Written and illustrated by an eighteen-year-old named Elvira Bauer in 1936, the title of the book comes from a phrase by Martin Luther, whose anti-Semitic remarks the Nazis were happy to use.[34] Judging by the language, artwork, and layout, the book targets an age range between five and six years old and features images that represent Jews as shadowy, hyper-sexualized creatures who prey upon the weaknesses of others. In Fig. 1, an awkward, well-dressed Jew stalks a young, innocent-looking German village girl, attempting to seduce her with his jewels, demonstrating Jewish men as not only shady characters, but also as people that use their financial power to rapaciously shadow Aryan women.

Figure 1

The image of the Jew as hyper-sexualized emerged as a common theme in Nazi propaganda and attempted to communicate to the Aryan
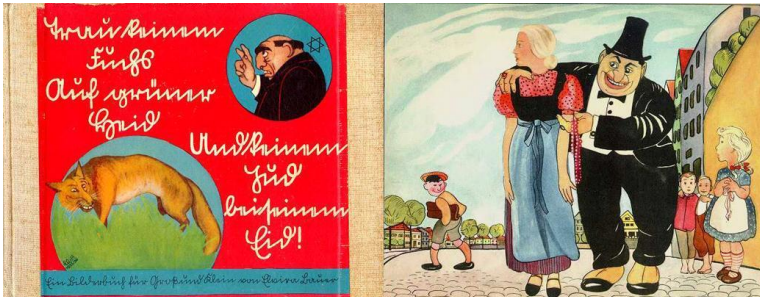
population of Germany that Jews, sexually treacherous, must not be trusted. In fact, portraying Jews as lewd, sexual predators aimed to reinforce stereotypes shared by the adult population as well as form the minds of young German school children. Conceivably, men would have especially found the image threatening because it involved the "pure" German woman, a crucial component to the German male's social and familial framework. The image intended to rouse fear, which the Nazis hoped would express itself as hate. Streicher and the Ministry of Propaganda and Enlightenment desired such a response in order to indoctrinate the Aryan population into the Nazi anti-Semitic vision. Images such as those found in *Trust No Fox* demonstrate a precursor to the widespread paranoia found in Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda during WWII. Representing Jews as lewd predators and lustful of Aryan women signaled a Jewish threat to the German public. How

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[33] Elvira Bauer, *Trau Keinem Fuchs auf Grüner Heid und Keinem Jud auf Seinem Eid* (Nuremberg: Stürmer Publishing House, 1936).

[34] "Trust No Fox..." Calvin College, http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/fuchs.htm (accessed November 08, 2010).

could Germany tolerate people that threatened the wholesome German family and the purity of the German people? Shaping public consensus against a common Jewish foe took a multitude of approaches. Once the German populace accepted the Jews as a social and political threat, the Nazis had an easier time creating the conditions that permitted a radical solution.

Figure 2   Figure 3

Der Stürmer also presented hyper-sexualized images of the Jewish male in its own pages, increasing in obscenity over time. In Fig. 2 (left), a 1935 caricature, the Jewish gentleman does not look particularly menacing; if anything, he seems awkward and presumptuous; perhaps obnoxious to the Aryan woman, for his body leans slightly forward into her.[35] The caricature intends to represent Jews as obsessed with and thus a nuisance to Aryan women, however nowhere does the image imply an immediate or dangerous social or political threat. Juxtaposing that image with Fig. 3 (right), a *Der Stürmer* caricature from 1939, one notices a redefinition of Jewish sexual
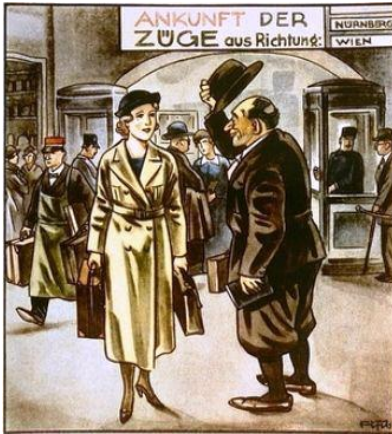
representation, which emerges increasingly blatant. The Jew here has transformed into a "race defiler," one who is about to secretly have his way with an intoxicated Aryan woman.[36] In four years, the *Der Stürmer* Jew went from public nuisance to interracial rapist, shifting the meaning of male Jewry in which the Nazis presented to the German populace. Importantly, by sexualizing the Jewish male, the Nazis corporealized them. This process, in the Nazi sense, intended to first establish Jews as an awkward, yet sexualized, irritant; later, a rapist and social threat to the German perception of racial purity. Both images project fear and distrust, but the notion of Jews as race defilers above all attempts to politicize a Jewish social threat. If Jews behaved regularly in this fashion, then how could they be trusted to live among German men and women?

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[35] Julius Streicher, "Jew Approaching an Aryan Woman," *Der Stürmer*, June 1935.
[36] Julius Streicher, "Jew as a Race Defiler," *Der Stürmer*, May 1939.

Another *Der Stürmer* image, which ran the caption, "Business is Business," intends to connect the idea of a global Jewish conspiracy to Germany's war with Britain.[37] The caricature appeared in the November 1939 issue, just after the Nazi's invasion of Poland and Britain's declaration of war on Germany. The image suggests that Jews are the impetus behind international political decisions and, through their scheming and capital influence, have pushed the British into war against Germany. To the Nazi paranoid mind, this cartoon attempts to provide the German population with an answer to why Britain decided to declare war on Germany in 1939. It establishes "international Jewry" as Germany's primary wartime enemy and Jews as an urgent political threat responsible for inciting the war. Emerging as a state-deemed socio-political threat, Jews would find themselves victims to the Nazi propaganda machine, which would facilitate a radical solution under the cover of war.

As Nazi propagandists connected the idea of an international Jewish conspiracy with the outbreak of war and presented it to the German public, Goebbels and Otto Dietrich, the Reich Press Chief, distributed a new line of visual attack in the form of full-color images on the urban scene. The anti-Semitic wall poster thus found a wider audience for its message during the war years in urban spaces. Public buildings, transportation centers, party offices, and other areas of general urban activity became spaces that hosted new anti-Semitic assaults. The roughly 4.5 x 3 feet wall posters were disseminated by an extensive Nazi network of personnel and contacts that placed the most artful editions in glass cabinets mounted to walls in the busiest traffic areas. Prior to the Nazi seizure of power, cost-effective text-based posters remained dominant, while posters in the later Nazi years tended to be mostly full-color and image-based. The large, full-color images had advantages from a propagandist's standpoint, as the Nazis could project their message more directly and more powerfully through visualization. By 1941, these urban posters communicated the clear message that Jews held responsibility for the war. As a result, the image of the blood libel, the serial rapist, and the toad-like creature began to fade for more relevant symbols, such as the Jewish-Bolshevik alliance and the aims of a world Jewish plutocracy.

As the Nazis invaded Russia in 1941, new visual messages in German urban posters and wallpapers reflected a mix of anti-Semitism and anti-Bolshevism, which attempted to establish Jews as a wartime socio-political threat, thus providing a public justification for mass murder.[38] Winston Churchill, once a stark opponent of Bolshevism, offered an alliance with the Soviet Union during Operation Barbarossa, which the German propagandists, not surprisingly, interpreted as a global Jewish conspiracy. To Goebbels and other Nazi propagandists, the Moscow-London conspiracy against Germany confirmed long-held attitudes about "Jewish Bolshevism."[39] In order to address the conspiracy publicly, and inform the German

[37] Julius Streicher, "Business is Business!" *Der Stürmer*, November 1939.
[38] Herf, 92.
[39] Ibid., 95.

population of the Jewish backstabbing that had taken place, the Ministry distributed colorful prints of the Jewish-Bolshevik message to busy urban areas. These wallpapers, smaller in size to the urban poster, emerged as an effective full-color device that sought direct communication with the German public – not with images, but strictly with words. Also placed in heavy traffic areas, the wallpaper carried weekly messages and bold quotes that the Ministry wished its German audience to reflect upon. One wallpaper from 1941, signed by the Führer himself, proclaimed in bold red print, "In Bolshevism, we see Jewry's attempt in the twentieth century to gain world domination."[40] Although the Ministry's weekly wallpapers did not rely on striking caricatures or photographs, they always featured large, colorful text that supported Nazi ideological themes. Hence, by utilizing both wallpapers and posters, the Nazis, by 1941, had spun the recent events in Moscow and London to coincide with their model of a Jewish-led conspiracy.

While the Ministry wished to more fully acclimate the German public to the idea of a conspiratorial Jewish-Bolshevik alliance, it also aimed to establish Jews as agents conducting a war of proxy against Germany in other areas around the world.[41] Consequently, Nazi propaganda directly attacked the United States, declaring that its connection to the European war validated Nazi rhetoric of a global Jewish conspiracy. Hence, the Nazis saw Jews as financially equipped to control entire nations, able to maneuver the puppet strings of the world stage. Just as President Roosevelt froze German assets in the United States, Germans discovered a new weekly wallpaper that proposed a straightforward solution to the Jewish issue:

> In order to subject the world to domination by Jewish money and blood, Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin, as instruments of world Jewry, have opted for war. They have received war in return! The German army has already delivered decisive blows against its enemies and will not rest until it has achieved final victory and the Jew has been exterminated.[42]

The wallpaper, posted in the summer of 1941, closely resembles Hitler's January 30, 1939 Prophecy Speech, which also called for the extermination of Jews.[43] However, this was the first time that Nazi propagandists issued a print declaration of this kind in an urban space.[44]

Theodore Nathan Kaufman, a Jew living in New York City during the war, provides a uniquely fascinating case of opportunism and exploitation in Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda. In 1941 Kaufman self-published a book entitled *Germany Must Perish*, which called for the sterilization of German citizens and a reorganization of Europe that divided Germany among its neighboring countries. Although the one hundred page, limited press run unsurprisingly escaped notice in the US, Nazi officials procured a copy and

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[40] Adolf Hitler, "In Bolshevism," *Reichspropagandaleitung*, July 26, 1941.
[41] Herf, 110.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Adolf Hitler, *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler,* ed. Norman Hepburn Baynes (London: Oxford University Press, 1942), 737-41.
[44] Herf, 110.

exploited it in Germany, proclaiming the book as the smoking gun of a global Jewish plot. In fact, the Nazis said Kaufman was a personal friend of President Roosevelt, working high up in the administration, despite his modest career as a theatrical ticket agency employee.[45] Interestingly, no American publisher would publish the book, which brought Kaufman to the decision to publish it himself.[46] Kaufman's insignificance as a political figure, and his lack of connection to the Roosevelt Administration, did not, however, detract him from venting his anger at the Nazis for their mistreatment of Jews. Nonetheless, Goebbels saw an opportunity to inform the German public about the Jewish plan. In Kaufman, the Nazis found tangible evidence that they could present to the German public. By manipulating the story to fit with well-established anti-Semitic stereotypes, Goebbels argued his case against world Jewry and the danger it posed to ordinary Germans. Moreover, Nazi response to the perceived Jewish threat, despite its radicalism and paranoia, would represent itself as a normal outcome of war.

In September 1941, the Ministry authorized Wolfgang Diewerge to publish a four-page pamphlet entitled *The War Goal of World Plutocracy*, which detailed Kaufman's alleged conspiracy.[47] The front cover, Fig. 4, is a brilliant piece of propaganda that features Theodore Kaufman working at his typewriter with his typed letter superimposed next to him. In addition, key

figures of the US and British government – Roosevelt, Churchill, and a handful of military generals – sit at the bottom of the page, implying that the typed letter has been sent to them. Legible on the pamphlet's cover, the sheet reads, "Thus we find that there is no middle course...There is, in fine, no other solution except one: that Germany must perish forever from this earth! And, fortunately, as we shall come to see, that is no longer [an] impossible accomplishment."[48] Inside the pamphlet, Diewerge claims that world Jewry shared Kaufman's opinion. Importantly, he emphasizes the union of "world Jewry in New York, Moscow, and London," which "agrees on the

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[45] Wolfgang Diewerge, *The War Goals of World Plutocracy*, September 1941.
[46] Herf, 111.
[47] Diewerge.
[48] Ibid.

complete destruction of the German people" and affirms "murder as a political tool."[49] World plutocracy, as the Nazis understood it, sought to dominate the world through their influence on governments in Washington, London, and Moscow. According to this paranoid Nazi reasoning, the Jews, wealthy, influential, and entrenched in government, desired not only to control unfolding political events, but to also carry out the eradication of the German people. An exceptional case of projection, fanatic Nazi anti-Semitic wartime propaganda provides us with unsettling, yet remarkable, details about the Nazi mind.

Propaganda is a tool that aims to manipulate the masses. As the Nazis demonstrated in their visual materials, it can undermine human rationality to the extent that morality becomes secondary. For the Nazis, anti-Semitic imagery materialized as a formidable device when it merged with deep-seated cultural stereotypes and attitudes, thereby creating a volatile amalgam that facilitated a mass consensus around a fabricated Jewish problem. Through it all, Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda aimed to dehumanize Jews. However, as WWII took shape, a shift in Nazi propaganda strategy framed Jews as a dangerous socio-political threat to Germany, providing the impetus for a social and political climate conducive for a radicalized solution to the perceived Jewish problem.

Germany officially moved from a Jewish policy of isolation and expulsion to one of racial violence and wholesale extermination. Nazi wartime propaganda reflected this profound shift in German policy towards the Jews. Like other areas of Nazi anti-Semitic wartime propaganda, the afterword of *The War Goal of World Plutocracy*, written by Goebbels, suggests a formal shift that had taken place in the way the Nazis presented Jews to their German audience. Goebbels wrote, "German people! Now you know what your eternal enemy and foe plan for you. There is only one defense against their [the Jews] plan for destruction: Victory!" By establishing an "eternal enemy" that threatened national security, Goebbels effectively realigned anti-Semitic propaganda to fit with wartime aims. Hence, by identifying German war enemies with "world Jewry," the Nazis officially elevated the Jewish threat level within Germany and redefined the national wartime narrative to one founded on an urgent Jewish threat. In Kaufman's anti-German book and Goebbels and Diewerge's pamphlet, the Nazis found new ways to exploit the political climate that facilitated the establishment of a Jewish socio-political danger indistinguishable from Germany's external enemies. The Nazis hoped for a favorable climate – or at least social indifference – to form around their plans for mass murder and a genocidal policy that they could execute covertly behind the veil of WWII. Concocting a story that world Jewry intended to destroy Germany provided the Nazis with a defensive strategy against their Jewish enemy and, consequently, facilitated motion toward a radical solution. Despite the paranoid fantasies the Nazis projected, anti-Semitic propaganda and imagery during the war era allowed the Third Reich to emerge one step closer to the Final Solution.

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[49] Ibid.

By 1941 Joseph Goebbels and other Nazi elites escalated their anti-Semitic propaganda efforts to coincide with their understanding of the war itself. According to the Nazis, not only were Jews responsible for inciting the war, but, by means of a global Jewish conspiracy, they also sought to "eradicate Germany from the earth."[50] Hitler launched this line of reasoning during his prophecy speech to the Reichstag on January 30, 1939, in which he made clear Germany's understanding of a Jewish plot to thrust the world into war. By claiming that the result of the Jewish-incited war "would not be the Bolshevization of the earth...but the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe!" Hitler advanced Nazi wartime paranoia to new radical levels and delivered a harbinger to the Holocaust.[51] Ultimately WWII provided the Nazis with the type of conditions necessary to allow such an unimaginable event like the Holocaust to take place. The rapid and chaotic events of WWII, combined with authoritarian state secrecy, effectively concealed the mass killing of Jews behind a wartime cover. Even if the movement and ultimate disappearance of Jews raised questions within some Germans, many simply felt indifferent toward the Jewish "racial other," and, as a state-deemed security threat, likely saw their disappearance as a normal wartime business.

      Hitler's 1939 prophecy speech was a self-fulfilling one. By taking aspects of their internal world – their hopes, desires, and fears – and projecting them onto their Jewish external subjects, the Nazis became a manifestation of their own accusations. It wasn't that the Jews conspired to dominate the world and bring an end to the German people. On the contrary, the Nazis, through their conquests in Europe and radicalized anti-Semitic policies, desired not only global hegemony, but also the total eradication of the world's Jewish population. Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda helped to facilitate this aim by framing a radical anti-Semitic consensus that allowed intolerance to build against a state-deemed wartime threat.

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[50] Joseph Goebbels, "Germany Must Die!" Reich Ministry for Propaganda and Public Enlightenment, 1941.

[51] Hitler, *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler,* 737-41.