Eighteenth-Century Europe: Liberalism and Its Critics

Edited by Jan Goldstein and John W. Boyer
shall give this all my attention and care. I declare myself in favor of the principle. I shall accept any solution likely to produce the quickest and most lasting results.

III. REFORM OF TAXATION TO PROMOTE DEMOCRATIC JUSTICE aiming at lowering taxes on consumer goods and charges which hit the small growers. The land tax is charged on an estimated income which often does not exist, on the basis of assessments which no longer correspond to reality. The tax on consumer goods is infinitely heavier on the poor than on the rich.

IV. ORGANIZATION OF AGRICULTURAL CREDIT, WHICH COULD INCLUDE THE FUNDS OF THE SAVING BANKS, today drained away from the whole province in order to be centralized and riskily used for the purchase of stocks.

V. FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION. THIS MEANS EXTENSION OF THE CIVIL PERSONALITY OF THE TRADE UNIONS IN SUCH A WAY THAT WHETHER AGRICULTURAL OR INDUSTRIAL UNIONS, THEY CAN USE THE POWER OF CREDIT, BECOME ASSOCIATIONS OF PRODUCERS and own the premises and working tools needed in industrial, commercial, or agricultural production.

VI. EXTENSION OF THE INDEPENDENT FREEDOMS AND THE CIVIL PERSONALITY OF THE COMMUNES, so as to permit them to achieve in part certain kinds of social progress—always provided they do not infringe the rights of the State.

VII. DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE DIRECTION OF OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING in order to allow all national aptitudes, all forms of intelligence to be developed.

VIII. REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION with the aim of giving universal suffrage its full and complete sovereignty, particularly by means of the municipal referendum.

ELECTORS.
It is useful that, in this region of Lorraine, where day by day they become more numerous, the workers in factories and in the fields should be able to express their wishes; it would be dangerous to suppress them into silence, as the old opportunists wished to do.

This program of the "National Socialist Republican Committee"—what generous and just mind would wish to misunderstand it?—corresponds to the needs of our population; it is in tune with the special spirit of our Lorraine and of our frontier.

Articles IV, V, VI, VIII, which concern decentralization, strongly indicate the direction of our demands in our region, where the "School of Nancy" matches public feeling.

In all our Articles, as anyone can see who examines them in the light of our preliminary arguments, the path of the future is prepared, and at the same time immediate interests are guaranteed. I undertake to defend them with every means at my disposal, at the same time as I place myself completely at the service of the special interests of my companions.

45. Theodor Herzl, The Jewish State

Theodor Herzl (1860–1904) was born in Budapest of a well-to-do German-Jewish family. Like his father, he believed in the promise of emancipation: in modern, liberal states, where religion was a private matter, Jews who adapted to the culture around them would become fully integrated members of society without converting to Christianity. During Herzl's childhood Jews achieved legal equality in Germany and Austria-Hungary, as they had earlier in western Europe. But at this time there emerged throughout Europe a modern anti-Semitism that argued that Jews were a foreign element whom neither cultural assimilation nor even religious conversion could change in essence, and that the essence of Judaism was disruptive and demoralizing to the national existence of the peoples among whom the Jews lived.

Although Herzl came into contact with the new anti-Semitism as a law student in Vienna, he did not abandon his liberal and assimilated views until the 1890s. After taking a law degree he devoted himself to a literary career in Vienna, becoming a modestly successful short-story writer, essayist, and playwright. In 1891 he went to Paris as the correspondent of Austria's most important newspaper, the Neue Freie Presse. In Paris Herzl witnessed the growth of an anti-Semitism that seemed even more virulent than that of Vienna. One decisive turning point in his life came with the trial for espionage of a Jewish army officer, Capt. Alfred Dreyfus, and the anti-Jewish mob scenes that Dreyfus's conviction and subsequent degradation unleashed in Paris in the winter of 1894–95. A second personal crisis came with the success of a group of political anti-Semites, led by Karl Lueger, in winning control of the municipal council of Vienna in late May 1895. Herzl began The Jewish State in June 1895. The book was published in 1896.

Since he felt that the problems facing the Jews in Europe were ultimately national in nature, Herzl focused attention on a political solution in the form of a Jewish state. His position at this time was more "territor-
rationalist" than rigidly Zionist: he called for a Jewish state in either Palestine or Argentina. Although he was not the first modern Zionist, his advocacy of a Jewish state, and his later popularity among the Jewish masses in eastern Europe, contributed to his reputation as the father of political Zionism.

II.—The Jewish Question

No one can deny the gravity of the situation of the Jews. Wherever they live in perceptible numbers, they are more or less persecuted. Their equality before the law, granted by statute, has become practically a dead letter. They are debarred from filling even moderately high positions, either in the army, or in any public or private capacity. And attempts are made to thrust them out of business also: "Don't buy from Jews!"

Attacks in Parliaments, in assemblies, in the press, in the pulpit, in the street, on journeys—for example, their exclusion from certain hotels—even in places of recreation, become daily more numerous. The forms of persecutions vary according to the countries and social circles in which they occur. In Russia, imposts are levied on Jewish villages; in Romania, a few persons are put to death; in Germany, they get a good beating occasionally; in Austria, Anti-Semitism exercise terrorism over all public life; in Algeria, there are travelling aggressors; in Paris, the Jews are shut out of the so-called best social circles and excluded from clubs. Shades of anti-Jewish feeling are innumerable. But this is not to be an attempt to make out a devilish category of Jewish hardships.

I do not intend to arouse sympathetic emotions on our behalf. That would be a foolish, futile, and undignified proceeding. I shall content myself with putting the following questions to the Jews: Is it not true that, in countries where we live in perceptible numbers, the position of Jewish lawyers, doctors, technicians, teachers, and employees of all descriptions becomes daily more intolerable? Is it not true, that the Jewish middle classes are seriously threatened? Is it not true, that the passions of the mob are incited against our wealthy people? Is it not true, that our poor endure greater sufferings than any other proletariat? I think that this external pressure makes itself felt everywhere. In our economically upper classes it causes discomfort, in our middle classes continual and grave anxieties, in our lower classes absolute despair.

Everything tends, in fact, to one and the same conclusion, which is clearly enunciated in that classic Berlin phrase: "Juden Raus!" (Out with the Jews!)

I shall now put the Question in the briefest possible form: Are we to "get out" now and where to?
is only a question of machinery. America must conquer Europe, in the same way as large landed possessions absorb small ones. The peasant is consequently a type which is in course of extinction. Whenever he is artificially preserved, it is done on account of the political interests which he is intended to serve. It is absurd, and indeed impossible, to make modern peasants on the old pattern. No one is wealthy or powerful enough to make civilization take a single retrograde step. The mere preservation of obsolete institutions is a task severe enough to require the enforcement of all the despotic measures of an autocratically governed State.

Are we, therefore, to credit Jews who are intelligent with a desire to become peasants of the old type? One might just as well say to them: "Here is a cross-bow; go now to war!" What? With a cross-bow, while the others have rifles and long range guns? Under these circumstances the Jews are perfectly justified in refusing to stir when people try to make peasants of them. A cross-bow is a beautiful weapon, which inspires me with mournful feelings when I have time to devote to them. But it belongs by rights to a museum.

Now, there certainly are districts to which desperate Jews go out, or at any rate, are willing to go out and till the soil. And a little observation shows that these districts—such as the enclaves of Hesse in Germany, and some provinces in Russia—these very districts are the principal seats of Anti-Semitism.

For the world's reformers, who send the Jews to the plough, forget a very important person, who has a great deal to say on the matter. This person is the agriculturist, and the agriculturist is also perfectly justified. For the tax on land, the risks attached to crops, the pressure of large proprietors who cheapen labor, and American competition in particular, combine to make his life hard enough. Besides, the duties on corn cannot go on increasing indefinitely. Nor can the manufacturer be allowed to starve; his political influence is, in fact, in the ascendant, and he must therefore be treated with additional consideration.

All these difficulties are well known, therefore I refer to them only cursorily. I merely wanted to indicate clearly how futile had been past attempts—most of them well intentioned—to solve the Jewish Question. Neither a diversion of the stream, nor an artificial depression of the intellectual level of our proletariat, will overcome the difficulty. The supposed infallible expedient of assimilation has already been dealt with.

We cannot get the better of Anti-Semitism by any of these methods. It cannot die out so long as its causes are not removed. Are they removable?

Causes of Anti-Semitism

We shall not again touch on those causes which are a result of temperament, prejudice and narrow views, but shall here restrict ourselves to political and economical causes alone. Modern Anti-Semitism is not to be confounded with the religious persecution of the Jews of former times. It does occasionally take a religious bias in some countries, but the main current of the aggressive movement has now changed. In the principal countries where Anti-Semitism prevails, it does so as a result of the emancipation of the Jews. When civilized nations awoke to the inhumanity of discriminatory legislation and enfranchised us, our enfranchisement came too late. It was no longer possible to remove our disabilities in our old homes. For we had, curiously enough, developed while in the Ghetto into a bourgeois people, and we stepped out of it only to enter into fierce competition with the middle classes. Hence, our emancipation set us suddenly within this middle-class circle, where we have a double pressure to sustain, from within and from without. The Christian bourgeoisie would not be unwilling to cast us as a sacrifice to Socialism, though that would not greatly improve matters.

At the same time, the equal rights of Jews before the law cannot be withdrawn where they have once been conceded. Not only because their withdrawal would be opposed to the spirit of our age, but also because it would immediately drive all Jews, rich and poor alike, into the ranks of subversive parties. Nothing effectual can really be done to our injury. In olden days our jewels were seized. How is our movable property to be got hold of now? It consists of printed papers which are locked up somewhere or other in the world, perhaps in the coffers of Christians. It is, of course, possible to get at shares and debentures in railways, banks and industrial undertakings of all descriptions by taxation, and where the progressive income-tax is in force all our movable property can eventually be laid hold of. But all these efforts cannot be directed against Jews alone, and wherever they might nevertheless be made, severe economic crises would be their immediate consequences, which would be by no means confined to the Jews who would be the first affected. The very impossibility of getting at the Jews nourishes and embitters hatred of them. Anti-Semitism increases daily by day and hour by hour among the nations; indeed, it is bound to increase, because the causes of its growth continue to exist and cannot be removed. Its remote cause is our loss of the power of assimilation during the Middle Ages; its immediate cause is our excessive production of mediocre intellects, who cannot find an outlet downwards or upwards—that is to say, no wholesome outlet in either direction. When we sink, we become a revolutionary proletariat, the subordinate officers of all revolutionary parties; and at the same time, when we rise, there rises also our terrible power of the purse.
Effects of Anti-Semitism

The oppression we endure does not improve us, for we are not a whit better than ordinary people. It is true that we do not love our enemies; but he alone who can conquer himself dare reproach us with that fault. Oppression naturally creates hostility against oppressors, and our hostility aggraviates the pressure. It is impossible to escape from this eternal circle.

"No!" Some soft-hearted visionaries will say. "No, it is possible! Possible by means of the ultimate perfection of humanity.

Is it necessary to point to the sentimental folly of this view? He who would find his hope for improved conditions on the ultimate perfection of humanity would indeed be relying upon a Utopia!

I referred previously to our "assimilation." I do not for a moment wish to imply that I desire such an end. Our national character is too historically famous, and, in spite of every degradation, too fine to make its amalga- mation desirable. We might perhaps be able to merge ourselves entirely into surrounding races, if these were to leave us in peace for a period of two generations. But they will not leave us in peace. For a little period they manage to tolerate us, and then their hostility breaks out again and again.

The world is provoked somehow by our prosperity, because it has for many centuries been accustomed to consider us as the most contemptible among the poverty-stricken. In its ignorance and narrowness of heart, it fails to observe that prosperity weakens our Judaism and extinguishes our peculiarities. It is only pressure that forces us back to the parent stem; it is only hatred encompassing us that makes us strangers once more.

Thus, whether we like it or not, we are now and shall henceforth remain, a historic group with unmistakable characteristics common to us all.

We are one people—our enemies have made us one without our consent, as repeatedly happens in history. Distress binds us together, and, thus united, we suddenly discover our strength. Yes, we are strong enough to form a State, and, indeed, a model State. We possess all human and material resources necessary for the purpose.

This is therefore the appropriate place to give an account of what has been somewhat roughly termed our "human material." But it would not be appreciated till the broad lines of the plan, on which everything depends, has first been marked out.

The Plan

The whole plan is in its essence perfectly simple, as it must necessarily be if it is to come within the comprehension of all.

Let the sovereignty be granted us over a portion of the globe large enough to satisfy the rightful requirements of a nation; the rest we shall manage for ourselves.

The creation of a new State is neither ridiculous nor impossible. We have in our day witnessed the process in connection with nations which were not largely members of the middle class, but poorer, less educated, and consequently weaker than ourselves. The Governments of all countries scourged by Anti-Semitism will be keenly interested in assisting us to obtain the sovereignty we want.

The plan, simple in design, but complicated in execution, will be carried out by two agencies: The Society of Jews and the Jewish Company.

The Society of Jews will do the preparatory work in the domains of science and politics, which the Jewish Company will afterwards apply practically.

The Jewish Company will be the liquidating agent of the business interests of departing Jews, and will organize commerce and trade in the new country.

We must not imagine the departure of the Jews to be a sudden one. It will be gradual, continuous, and will cover many decades. The poorest will go first to cultivate the soil. In accordance with a preconceived plan, they will construct roads, bridges, railways and telegraph installations; regulate rivers; and build their own dwellings; their labor will create trade, trade will create markets and markets will attract new settlers, for every man will go voluntarily, at his own expense and his own risk. The labor expended on the land will enhance its value, and the Jews will soon perceive that a new and permanent sphere of operation is opening here for that spirit of enterprise which has hitherto met only with hatred and obloquy.

If we wish to found a State today, we shall not do it in the way which would have been the only possible one a thousand years ago. It is foolish to revert to old stages of civilization, as many Zionists would like to do. Supposing, for example, we were obliged to clear a country of wild beasts, we should not set about the task in the fashion of Europeans of the fifth century. We should not take spear and lance and go out singly in pursuit of bears; we would organize a large and active hunting party, drive the animals together, and throw a melinite bomb into their midst.

If we wish to conduct building operations, we shall not plant a mass of stakes and piles on the shore of a lake, but we shall build as men build now. Indeed, we shall build in a bolder and more sturdy style than was ever adopted before, for we now possess means which men never yet possessed.

The emigrants standing lowest in the economic scale will be slowly followed by those of a higher grade. Those who at this moment are living in despair will go first. They will be led by the mediocre intellects which we produce so superabundantly and which are persecuted everywhere.
This pamphlet will open a general discussion on the Jewish Question, but that does not mean that there will be any voting on it. Such a result would ruin the cause from the outset, and dissidents must remember that allegiance or opposition is entirely voluntary. He who will not come with us should remain behind.

Let all who are willing to join us, fall in behind our banner and fight for our cause with voice and pen and deed.

Those Jews who agree with our idea of a State will attach themselves to the Society, which will thereby be authorized to confer and treat with Governments in the name of our people. The Society will thus be acknowledged in its relations with Governments as a State-creating power. This acknowledgment will practically create the State.

Should the Powers declare themselves willing to admit our sovereignty over a neutral piece of land, then the Society will enter into negotiations for the possession of this land. Here two territories come under consideration, Palestine and Argentina. In both countries important experiments in colonization have been made, though on the mistaken principle of a gradual infiltration of Jews. An infiltration is bound to end badly. It continues till the inevitable moment when the native population feels itself threatened, and forces the Government to stop a further influx of Jews. Immigration is consequently futile unless we have the sovereign right to continue such immigration.

The Society of Jews will treat with the present masters of the land, putting itself under the protection of the European Powers, if they prove friendly to the plan. We could offer the present possessors of the land enormous advantages, assume part of the public debt, build new roads for traffic, which our presence in the country would render necessary, and do many other things. The creation of our State would be beneficial to adjacent countries, because the cultivation of a strip of land increases the value of its surrounding districts in innumerable ways.

Palestine or Argentine?

Shall we choose Palestine or Argentina? We shall take what is given us, and what is selected by Jewish public opinion. The Society will determine both these points.

Argentina is one of the most fertile countries in the world, extends over a vast area, has a sparse population and a mild climate. The Argentine Republic would derive considerable profit from the cession of a portion of its territory to us. The present infiltration of Jews has certainly produced some discontent, and it would be necessary to enlighten the Republic on the intrinsic difference of our new movement.

Palestine is our ever-memorable historic home. The very name of Pal-
estine would attract our people with a force of marvellous potency. If His Majesty the Sultan were to give us Palestine, we could in return undertake to regulate the whole finances of Turkey. We should then form a portion of a rampart of Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilization as opposed to barbarism. We should as a neutral State remain in contact with all Europe, which would have to guarantee our existence. The sanctuaries of Christendom would be safeguarded by assigning to them an extra-territorial status such as is well-known to the law of nations. We should form a guard of honor about these sanctuaries, answering for the fulfilment of this duty with our existence. This guard of honor would be the great symbol of the solution of the Jewish Question after eighteen centuries of Jewish suffering.

Demand, Medium, Trade

I said in the last chapter, "The Jewish Company will organize trade and commerce in the new country." I shall here insert a few remarks on that point.

A scheme such as mine is gravely imperilled if it is opposed by "practical" people. Now "practical" people are as a rule nothing more than nonsensics who sink into the groove of daily routine, unable to emerge from a narrow circle of antiquated ideas. At the same time, their adverse opinion carries great weight, and can do considerable harm to a new project, at any rate until this new thing is sufficiently strong to throw the "practical" people and their mouldy notions to the winds.

In the earliest period of European railway construction some "practical" people were of the opinion that it was foolish to build certain lines "because there were not even sufficient passengers to fill the mail-coaches." They did not realize the truth—which now seems obvious to us—that travellers do not produce railways, but, conversely, railways produce travellers, the latest demand, of course, is taken for granted.

The impossibility of comprehending how trade and commerce are to be created in a new country which has yet to be acquired and cultivated, may be classed with those doubts of "practical" persons concerning the need of railways. A "practical" person would express himself somewhat in this fashion:

Granted that the present situation of the Jews is in many places untenable, and aggravated day by day; granted that there exists a desire to emigrate; granted even that the Jews do emigrate to the new country; how will they earn their living there, and what will they earn? What are they to live on when there? The business of many people cannot be artificially organized in a day.

To this I should reply: We have not the slightest intention of organizing trade artificially, and we should certainly not attempt to do it in a day. But,
though the organization of it may be impossible, the promotion of it is not. And how is commerce to be encouraged? Through the medium of a demand. The demand recognized, the medium created, it will establish itself.

If there is a real earnest demand among Jews for an improvement of their status; if the medium to be created—the Jewish Company—is sufficiently powerful, then commerce will extend itself freely in the new country.

46. Jean Jaurès, Idealism in History

Jean Jaurès (1859–1914) was the embodiment of French socialism before the Great War. Born in Castres in the south of France, he was by social background something between a bourgeois and a man of the people: his father, a failed businessman, had ended up as a small peasant proprietor. Jaurès was also very much a beneficiary of the meritocratic aspects of the French educational system. Once his intellectual gifts had been noticed by a local schoolmaster, he was sent on scholarship to a Paris lycée and then passed the entrance examination for the prestigious École Normale Supérieure. In effect, ENS trained France's intellectual elite, and Jaurès's classmates included Émile Durkheim (who became the founder of sociology in France) and Henri Bergson (who became the influential anti-rationalist philosopher). As was required of normaliens, Jaurès taught in a lycée—his subject was philosophy—upon graduation. Later in life, he liked to refer to himself as a "cultured peasant."

Jaurès entered politics in 1885, when at the age of twenty-six he was elected deputy for his native department of the Tarn. He had run on an independent, moderate republican ticket. The 1892 strike by the glass-workers of Carmaux, a town in the Tarn, gave him his first direct experience of the relations between labor and management and is generally credited with the decisive leftward turn in his thought and politics. Having failed in his bid for reelection in 1889, he ran again, successfully, in 1893, now as a socialist.

Although Jaurès was henceforth to regard himself as a Marxist, he never felt entirely comfortable with the "orthodox" Marxism espoused in France by the Parti ouvrier français (POF) of Jules Guesde. Much like the German revisionist Eduard Bernstein (see document 47), he preferred to conceptualize socialism as the logical outgrowth and extension of the Jacobin democratic tradition. But he was also convinced that the cause of socialism in France could only be damaged by doctrinal squabbles among its adherents, and it is a tribute to his great political skill that he was able to unify all French socialists into a single party, the SFIO (French Section of the Workers' International), in 1905. Membership in the SFIO doubled between the party's founding and 1914.

Jaurès was an impassioned and compelling orator. Landing his speeches with poetic imagery and literary allusions and able to tap the most generous sentiments of his audience, he was allowed to go on for two or three hours, on occasion for days, in the Chamber of Deputies. On the evening of 31 July 1914, shortly after he had returned from a meeting of the Second International in Brussels, Jaurès was assassinated by a crazed nationalist fanatic as he sat in a Paris café with some fellow socialists discussing how the apparently imminent war might be averted. His tragic death proved an apt augury of the immediate future of Europe. This selection is an early articulation of Jaurès's conception of socialism. It is Jaurès's side of a formal debate with the Guisnord Paul Lafargue (Karl Marx's son-in-law) on 12 January 1894. The debate, on "Idealism and Materialism in the Conception of History," took place in the Latin Quarter before an overflow crowd of socialist students.

First I want to caution you against an error that might arise from the fact that the subject I shall deal with here before you is one on which I spoke a few months ago. At that time I expounded the thesis of economic materialism, the interpretation and movement of history that was set forth by Marx; and I made an effort to justify Marx's doctrine, in such a way that it might have appeared that I accepted it without any qualification whatsoever.

This time, on the other hand, I want to demonstrate that the materialist conception of history does not preclude an idealist interpretation of it. And since one might, in this second part of my demonstration, lose sight of the arguments in all their force that I gave in favor of Marx's thesis, I ask you, so that there be no mistake about the whole of my thought on the subject, to correct and complete each part of this exposition, that we have been obliged to split in two, by the other.

I demonstrated, last time, that one could interpret all the phenomena of history from the viewpoint of economic materialism, which, as I said then, is definitely not physiological materialism. Marx was as far as any-one could be from saying that all phenomena of consciousness or of thought can be explained by simple groupings of molecular matter. This, in fact, is a hypothesis that Marx and, more recently Engels, regarded as metaphysical, and that has been repudiated as thoroughly by the scientific school as by the spiritualist one.

Nor is it what is sometimes called "moral materialism," which is the