

## ABSTRACT

*Contemporary expressions of Judeophobia—in Germany, as elsewhere in Europe—contain a potentially explosive mix of traditional and newer forms of antisemitism. Since 9/11, and especially in the wake of the Iraq war, anti-Americanism has been a potent factor in envenoming hostile attitudes to Israel and the Jews—as alleged architects of the war, and “aggressors” in the Middle East. Conspiracy theories, with an antisemitic subtext, have flourished on the Left and in the mainstream media, as well as on the far Right. One-sided representations of the Middle East conflict, downplaying Palestinian terrorism, the threat posed by radical Islam and the genocidal antisemitism rampant in the Muslim and Arab media—while highlighting Israeli counter-violence as gratuitous sadism—have contributed to fostering anti-Jewish feelings. “Anti-Sharonism” has been widely used as a cover to present Israel as a “criminal” state in its essence.*

*Such commentaries reinforce long-standing and widespread anti-Jewish stereotypes, revealed by surveys of German public opinion over the years—especially those related to Jewish money, power, and exploitative “abuse” of the Holocaust. Much of contemporary German antisemitism can best be understood as a form of resentment against constant reminders of the Nazi past and the desire to reverse the roles, to turn Israelis/Jews into “perpetrators” and Germans into “victims.”*

The new Judeophobia in contemporary Germany is a mutation of earlier varieties of antisemitism. It is a politics of *ressentiment* whose most novel feature is the convergence between anti-Americanism and Jew-hatred, pacifism, right-wing radicalism, and militant Islam, along with a special focus on the evils of Zionist Israel. Among al-Qaida’s greatest admirers, for example, is the neo-Nazi ideologue, Horst Mahler. During the 1970s a leading member of the leftist anarcho-terrorist Baader-Meinhof gang in West Germany, he spent a number of years in prison. Mahler re-emerged as a true *völkisch* believer praying for the destruction of Israel and the United States. Looking back at the 1968 student protest movements in Germany, he reinterpreted their anti-capitalism as an embryonic form of National Socialism. Horst Mahler may be an extreme case but there are probably millions of Germans who would agree with a

more moderate version of his anti-American and anti-Jewish theses.<sup>1</sup>

Such ideas are linked to an apocalyptic German vision of America, regarding it as the decadent centre of a capitalist civilization characterized by blind arrogance and hubris. This attitude takes the political form of blaming Middle East violence, Arab terrorism, and the murderous assault of 9/11 on the failed global policies of the United States.<sup>2</sup> Much of this commentary suggests that the German role with regard to America must be (in the words of Andrei Markovits):

to forestall the vengeful Old Testament-inclined Americans from striking their retaliatory blow by using the kind of Christian neighborly love inherent to the Europeans and, naturally, the Germans—(*alt-testamentarisch* being a frequently-used adjective pejoratively describing America's putative reactions and very essence, a euphemistic term for Jewish and Judaized).<sup>3</sup>

In New Left and far Right circles the United States has long represented everything crassly “materialistic,” exploitative, crude, and bullying about global capitalism. For the “anti-Zionist” German Left, America embodies the willful, arrogant, and domineering humiliation of the Third World—especially of Muslims, Arabs, and Palestinians. It exemplifies an adventurist “warmongering” policy completely at odds with the kind of militant pacifism that has become a quasi-sacred cultural norm in postwar Germany.<sup>4</sup> In the struggling ex-communist Länder (states) of eastern Germany, a vulgar Stalinist variation on this anti-Americanism had been planted by decades of totalitarian Soviet-style propaganda. The continued strength of the PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism), heir of the Communist ruling party, in the eastern parts of Germany, is a testament to the impact of this legacy. On the other hand, in liberal-democratic West Germany anti-Americanism could draw on cultural stereotypes having many structural similarities with classical antisemitism.<sup>5</sup> In some ways postwar anti-Americanism became a more socially respectable and high-minded form of antisemitism—untainted by direct association with the Holocaust. By dipping heavily into the left-wing pacifist strand of such anti-American sentiment, Gerhard Schröder got himself re-elected as Social Democratic Chancellor of Germany on September 22, 2002.

There were prominent Germans who could barely disguise their *Schadenfreude* at the successful al-Qaida terrorist attack on New York in September 2001. It was seen by such people as a deserved “payback” for American war crimes going back to Dresden and Hiroshima in 1945. Popular sentiments also revealed a marked lack of sympathy for the idea that Americans or Israelis could ever be victims. Artists and intellectuals expressed even greater chilliness, finding no difference between the mentality of George W. Bush, Ariel Sharon, or Osama bin Laden.<sup>6</sup> Conspiracy theories, too, have achieved considerable resonance in German public opinion. Millions of Germans believe that the U.S. government may have ordered the attacks of September 11th. On the German Right and Left, there have also been voices insinuating that 9/11 was a cleverly staged “catastrophe” by the omnipotent Israeli Mossad to intensify American support for Israel. The intention was to enable Sharon to crush Palestinian aspirations to freedom. This fantasy recalled some German leftist attitudes during the first Gulf War (in 1991) when there were those who also held Jews responsible for the American invasion of Iraq. During the Second Gulf War, anti-Jewish *ressentiment* again flared up in the German peace movement. In the past year, wild allegations have circulated, suggesting that Israel and a “cabal” of neoconservatives propelled the United States into an imperialist war to seize Iraqi oil resources. President Bush has been portrayed as being either a gullible or willing tool in the grip of the “Zionist lobby” and powerful East Coast advisers—mainly Jewish “neo-cons” (Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, Douglas Feith, William Kristol, Elliott Abrams, etc.). This “neo-con” conspiracy theory also enjoys considerable resonance in America, Britain, France and other European countries—as well as in the Middle East. In Germany it found an echo at the highest political level. For example, Rudolf Scharping, a Social Democratic party leader and former defense minister in Schröder’s cabinet, told a meeting in Berlin on August 27, 2002 that the “overly powerful Jewish lobby” in America had encouraged George W. Bush to go to war.<sup>7</sup>

German street demonstrations against the American President (like those which took place in London, Paris, Madrid, Rome, Brussels, and different parts of Scandinavia) depicted him as a warmonger, “terrorist,” “assassin,” or born-again “Crusader.” The “reckless” Texas cowboy was for most Germans a much greater

threat to world peace than Saddam Hussein. His image, like that of Ariel Sharon, was thoroughly demonized through the use of a full array of Nazi-era references with swastikas to adorn his visage. The animosity exhibited towards Sharon—“a loathsome monster running amok” or the “personification of the ‘ugly Israeli’”—was even greater than towards Bush.<sup>8</sup> He was frozen by the European media into the role of the implacable bulldozer, “slaughterer” of Arabs, “pyromaniac” and unrepentant “war criminal”—apparently insatiable in his appetite for Palestinian blood. Caricaturists exaggerated of his outward characteristics—fat, ugly, pot-bellied, elephantine in bulk—as if they were determined to inspire the maximum physiological revulsion.<sup>9</sup>

Josef Joffe, the editor of the Hamburg daily, *Die Zeit*, has argued that the common hatred of America and Israel does not derive from their being “rogue states” but from envy and rage at “the two most successful states in their surroundings.” This success has provoked European as well as Arab resentment. At the same time, the application of Nazi imagery to both America and Israel in German peace demonstrations against the war in Iraq, has unmistakably exuded antisemitism. One German poster showed an obviously Jewish figure setting the world aflame. Another proclaimed: “USA-Third Reich, Both Alike.”<sup>10</sup> In the poisoned atmosphere in which the German media can gratuitously smear Jews as “Zionist pigs” and Americans as rapacious thugs,

it is [indeed] difficult to decide whether the Jews are hated because of their close alliance with the U.S., or whether the U.S. is hated because of its alliance with the Jews.<sup>11</sup>

Israel has mutated for many Germans into the ugly face of American “modernity” in the Middle East.<sup>12</sup> Both Americans and Israelis are reviled as worshippers of Mammon, corrupters of morality and proselytizers for idolatrous values promoted by an all-conquering, greedy, gun-toting capitalism. In the eyes of European sophisticates, they stand condemned for overrunning weaker neighbors, trampling on indigenous cultures, and ignoring international law.<sup>13</sup> The American and Israeli emphasis on technical superiority, their presumption to embody “democratic virtue” and to exemplify the restless pioneering energy of frontier societies is dismissed as a mere façade masking a predatory and ruthless will-to-power.

Such stereotypes have spread far beyond old/new leftists in the Green movement, pacifists, feminists, trade unionists, or the anti-American wing of the ruling SPD. They have also been voiced by prominent Conservative and Liberal politicians. Thus the (then) foreign policy spokesman of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group, Karl Lamers, insinuated in February 2002 that Israel was a “foreign body” in the Middle East region, an aggressive and “artificial” state whose policies serve to “discredit” the West.<sup>14</sup> Germany, he pontificated, must face its historic responsibility for Israel’s establishment which had resulted in millions of Palestinians living in refugee camps. This was something Germans could no longer be silent about. He deplored the fact that Israel (with its human rights violations) was neither a model nor a source of hope for its neighbors. On the contrary, its record reflected badly on Europe and the West. Two months later, Lamers was sanctimoniously calling for the consideration of sanctions *against* the Jewish State.<sup>15</sup>

Another leading CDU politician (and a former Minister of Labor) Norbert Blum was no less blunt, informing the German public that “he could not regard the actions of the Israeli military as self-defense against terrorism but only as destruction.”<sup>16</sup> The dispersed Jews, he believed, would never find their own “piece of land” or a peaceful haven under a man like Sharon. Blum seemed to indicate that Israel could have no secure place in the Middle East unless it bowed to Arafat’s demands. He did not pause to reflect whether there would still be an Israel if it chose the path of appeasement and reliance on Europe and the United Nations.

During “Operation Defensive Shield” the German media became especially vociferous in maintaining that Israel was violating international law, ethical norms, and human rights. “Coldblooded executions” were reported in Jenin as if they were actual facts, and the *Frankfurter Rundschau* hysterically pictured a Palestinian variant of “Ground Zero” provoked by Israeli hands.<sup>17</sup> The conservative *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (*FAZ*) was equally swift in reproving Israel’s policy as a form of “State terrorism.” It recalled that former Israeli Prime Ministers Begin and Shamir had been “terrorists”; and that in the Middle East (as elsewhere) negotiations with former terrorists were perfectly normal.<sup>18</sup> This exercise in the relativization of terror ignored great differences in the methods used and the political goals pursued. Worse still, it provided an implicit justification of Palestinian tactics, dismissing

the suffering of ordinary Israelis and showing a perverse disregard for the obligation of the Jewish State to defend its own citizens.<sup>19</sup> Typically, Sharon rather than Arafat was blamed by German television and the press for having sowed death and destruction. He was further accused of ignoring law and justice—especially in the practice of targeted killings. The Israeli Government was even charged by some commentators with seeking to wipe out the memory of the Palestinian people.<sup>20</sup>

On the other hand, the German public is rarely exposed to reporting about the widespread *Stürmer*-like caricatures of Jews in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, and the rest of the Arab world. It learns very little from the media about Muslim exploitation of the *Protocols*, medieval blood libels, or the racist vitriol so reminiscent of Nazi Germany and now being recycled in Muslim-Arab propaganda against Israel. Another remarkable blind spot is the absence of discussion of the openly antisemitic character of the Palestinian Hamas movement. Nor, with the exception of *Der Spiegel*, has there been any mention of the Judeophobic outlook of Mohammed Atta, the 33-year-old German-educated mastermind of the Manhattan massacre.<sup>21</sup> Such silence is all the more astonishing since Atta was a gifted architectural student in Hamburg, where 9/11 was planned and operational preparations were carried out. Several of the perpetrators came from the “Muslim diaspora” in Germany and their support network was obviously much larger. Yet the palpable Islamist danger was handled with kid gloves both by the German government and most of the media.<sup>22</sup>

Before 9/11 critical discussion of Islamic fundamentalism in Germany was virtually taboo—in the name of “tolerance” and democratic “political correctness.”<sup>23</sup> Radical Islam’s highly discriminatory treatment of women, its open contempt for liberal democracy and hostility to western culture, as well as its totalitarian ideology were strikingly downplayed—especially in the media and the universities. Nothing was done to counter the indoctrination of Islamism within the autonomous system of Muslim religious education. The prevailing pro-Third World ideology of the Left combined with misplaced liberal concepts of religious freedom, led to shocking complacency, confusion, and “politically correct” laxness. Matters were not helped by the conventional wisdom in Germany which consistently blamed the West for the rise of

fundamentalism.<sup>24</sup> If Islamic terrorism was “immoral,” then so, too, was the neo-liberal globalization which had induced it.<sup>25</sup> More surprisingly, in the wake of 9/11, earlier indifference to Islam in Germany gave way not to Islamophobia but to a bizarre and suspect form of Islamophilia. Bassam Tibi has tellingly called this liberal posture “a compulsive love of the alien,” which has masked the chronic inability to comprehend the true meaning of jihad as a “war of conquest to Islamicize the world.”<sup>26</sup>

Since Palestinians are a priori defined as being the “oppressed” party, there is little incentive for liberals to critically analyze their beliefs, ideology, and actions. Designated as *victims* of “apartheid” and occupation, they must therefore be presumed innocent<sup>27</sup>; their “homicidal” acts become legitimate “resistance” to Israeli settlement policy—which is deemed by prominent writers like Günter Grass to be unreservedly “criminal.”<sup>28</sup> This concept of “criminality,” personified for much of the German media by the figure of Ariel Sharon, makes it all the easier to blame the Israeli Prime Minister for the revival of antisemitism.<sup>29</sup> The generous offering of platforms to Israeli (and Jewish) leftists in the German media, in order to denounce Sharon’s “vengeful” power politics, reinforces this message and serves as a useful cover against charges of antisemitism.<sup>30</sup> Since Israelis like Diaspora Jews are Olympic Gold Medallists in masochistic self-criticism, there is never any shortage of volunteers.

Yet opinion surveys have shown that millions of Germans still think of Jews as “too powerful,” as “troublemakers” or as a major danger to world peace. After 9/11 this stereotypically antisemitic opinion appears to have been significantly strengthened. Some German commentators began to feverishly explain that legitimate Arab anger at America’s pro-Israel policy was the primary cause of terrorism.<sup>31</sup> An increasingly skewed picture of the Arab-Israeli conflict (rewritten as a saga of relentless aggression by Israel against its “peace-loving” neighbors) helped reinforce anti-Americanism and the antisemitic myth of bloodthirsty Jews threatening “conciliatory” Arabs.

*Der Spiegel*, the popular news magazine, added its own biblical twist to such fables by suggesting that Israel’s “religious fundamentalism” was the true source of Arab terror. Sharon’s policy of reprisals, it claimed, had caused the persistence of the conflict.<sup>32</sup> The magazine even asserted that Palestinian “suicide

bombers” were imitating the spirit of Massada which had animated Judea’s last stand against Rome two thousand years ago.<sup>33</sup> Palestinian murderers of innocent Israeli civilians were placed on the same moral plane as the Jews of Massada who had sacrificed only their own lives in order not to surrender to the Roman conquerors. No less astonishing was the attempt by *Der Spiegel* to link a Palestinian suicide bomber’s slaughter of Jews at the Passover Seder in Netanya with the Israelite exodus from Egypt—metamorphosed into “the first Passover massacre.”<sup>34</sup> Such perverse depictions of biblical Judaism as a religion of massacre, murder, and vengeance provided a one-dimensional, heavily anti-Israeli explanation of the present Middle Eastern conflict. In this deformed narrative, Jews were alleged to have carried out massacres, stolen land and committed “war crimes” against the “indigenous” people of Palestine for *religious* reasons. Not only that, but the Hebrew Bible becomes the sourcebook for all subsequent genocides. Moreover, in *Der Spiegel*’s revisionist version of history, every Muslim act of terrorism must be shown to have had a biblical source. Hence Samson’s tearing down of the Philistine temple (as recounted in the Old Testament book of Judges) is transformed into a macabre parallel which the magazine selected as being most appropriate for understanding the assault on the World Trade Center.<sup>35</sup>

The willingness by certain politicians and a section of the media to inject antisemitic rhetoric into public discourse, has been particularly unsettling for German Jews.<sup>36</sup> The head of the Frankfurt Jewish community, Salomon Korn, gave thoughtful expression in May 2002 to this new sense of isolation and insecurity among Germany’s Jews.<sup>37</sup> Korn maintained that Jews in postwar Germany had enjoyed a relative immunity as long as they were perceived as victims. Their presence had served as a reminder to Germans of everything that went terribly wrong in their past and needed to be corrected. The “Jew” symbolically represented “the darker sides of German history and of their own family history” as well as a warning for the future.<sup>38</sup> This admonitory function inevitably produced a tremendous burden of unwanted tension, guilt and anxiety from which the mass of Germans wished to escape. By aggressively criticizing the “Israelis,” many Germans—according to Korn—could finally offload their inability

to deal with the mountain of unresolved guilt preying on their minds.

The Israelis are ultimately transformed into “Nazis,” the Palestinians into persecuted and murdered “Jews.” In the repeatedly cited picture of the “beer-bellied Sharon” (was Helmut Kohl ever described in this way?), the stereotype of the ugly “Stürmer-Jew” finds its current Israeli-Jewish rebirth.<sup>39</sup>

Unbridled criticism of Israel’s military actions has enabled growing numbers of Germans to relieve themselves of “the unease toward Jews they continue to feel.” At the same time, German Jews found themselves being held to collective liability *as a community* for Israeli actions, enabling antisemitism “under the appearance of legitimacy [to] unburden itself, sometimes more subtly, at other times more openly....”<sup>40</sup> As a consequence, relations between Jews and non-Jews in Germany had become increasingly strained and distant; once more, as Korn explained to his German readers, the “old sword-of-Damocles question” had arisen: “Did the Jews make the right choice when they chose to remain in Germany?”

This question became more acute following the remarks by the prominent German writer, Martin Walser, on receiving a prestigious peace prize at the Frankfurt Book Fair on October 11, 1998.<sup>41</sup> In his speech, Walser had attacked the abuse of the Holocaust in German public discourse, calling it a “means of intimidation,” and deploring the “constant presentation of our disgrace” (Auschwitz) with its paralyzing effect on contemporary German culture.<sup>42</sup> This outburst, which was widely applauded by many Germans, led to Jewish leader Ignaz Bubis’s denunciation of Walser for indulging in “mental arson” (*geistige Brandstiftung*).<sup>43</sup>

Bubis was swiftly condemned by much of the German media for degrading the tone of a legitimate debate, losing his self-control, and encouraging unjustified suspicion of Walser’s motives.<sup>44</sup> The aggressive reactions to his warning heralded the emergence in 2002–2003 of ever harsher criticisms directed against the Central Council of Jews in Germany (*Zentralrat*) for allegedly trying to forbid discussion of controversial issues concerning the German nation.<sup>45</sup> German Jews, it was suggested by some commentators, were attempting to control public opinion and dictate the terms of debate about German nationalism, the

Holocaust, Israel, and the Palestinians. They were supposedly striving to impose censorship on the German media with regard to Jewish-related issues. Special indignation was aroused by the practice of dubbing critics of Israel as “antisemitic.” As a result, instead of dealing directly with the issue of prejudice, a secondary debate emerged around the need to repudiate charges of antisemitism (*Antisemitismusvorwurf*).<sup>46</sup> This state of affairs was one-sidedly blamed on prominent Jews like Bubis, Paul Spiegel, and Michel Friedman—all of them accused at different times of trying to “silence” the German media. This was a particularly strange reproach at a time when the German TV and press had never been more vocally anti-Israel or uninhibited in its criticism.

Walser’s nationalist rhetoric, which had helped to spark this debate, fell on fertile soil because he was able to identify the new German patriotic mood and the strong German desire to be accepted as a “normal people.” Obligations to Jews, Israel and the memory of the Holocaust have increasingly come to be seen by the broad public as a profound irritant.<sup>47</sup> The standing ovation which greeted Walser’s 1998 speech, was certainly an indication that he spoke for many Germans.<sup>48</sup> A 1998 survey showed that 63% of Germans wanted closure on the constant references to anti-Jewish persecution under the Nazis and 50% believed that Jews opportunistically used the Holocaust for their material advantage at German expense.<sup>49</sup> Walser made such deep resentments more respectable (*salonfähig*) by repeating the refrain that reminders of the past disturbed his “peace of mind” (*Seelenfrieden*).<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, he suggested that postwar Germans were the victims of a Jewish presence (and pressure) which provoked guilt feelings as well as paralyzing German creativity.

Walser’s recent novel, *Tod eines Kritikers* (Death of a critic) revived with renewed vigor the older concerns about his motives. This book is a metaphorical “assassination” of Germany’s leading literary critic, Marcel Reich-Ranicki, who happens to be of Polish-Jewish origin. It is a fictional portrait heavily laden with antisemitic clichés.<sup>51</sup> Many reviewers felt that the central Jewish protagonist in the novel was a monster of vulgarity, corruption, and lecherousness—“a pure figure of hate.”<sup>52</sup> This character is endowed with an insatiable lust for power, an obsession with sex, and the will to dominate German culture. Jews were implicitly seen in the novel as cultural parasites and “imitators” rather than

creators.<sup>53</sup> They were portrayed as persecutors rather than victims.<sup>54</sup> The writer Hans Lachs (Walser's *alter ego*) is however depicted as the positive antithesis of the sterile, omnipotent critic in the novel. He is a deep German thinker unjustly victimized by Jewish media power.

Walser's book was an instant bestseller. Not only that but the author was given a platform to read his novel (chapter by chapter) on State Television stations. It was the subject of constant talk show discussions. Moreover, there were those who defended Walser in the name of "freedom of art"; some even praised his breaking of "moralistic" taboos relating to Jews.<sup>55</sup> Others, like Günter Grass, fully backed Walser's denial of any antisemitic motivation.<sup>56</sup> There were also comments which trivialized the affair by calling it a "poor joke" or nothing more than an act of personal revenge.<sup>57</sup>

The Walser affair, replete with its coded language and the author's own self-serving rhetoric of victimization, exposed a nationalist mood among some German intellectuals which has become steadily more visible since unification in 1991. This trend found a more overtly political expression in the antisemitic utterances of the flamboyant, controversial and media-obsessed Deputy Chairman of the Free Democratic Party (FDP), Jürgen Möllemann. Until his mysterious suicide in June 2003, Möllemann had forced the pace in trying to smash any remaining German "taboos" concerning Israel and the Jews.<sup>58</sup> Möllemann was FDP chairman in North Rhine Westphalia and for 30 years stood at the head of the German-Arab society, which helped him develop very lucrative business ties with the Arab world. Not surprisingly, in view of these connections, he had also become a sharp critic of Israel. In the past three years, this critique escalated into a vehement personal campaign against what Möllemann called Israeli "state terror" and a public endorsement of Palestinian suicide bombers sent to murder civilians inside Israel. Möllemann declared that if Germany were "occupied," he, too, would fight violently and take the war of resistance to the enemy's territory.<sup>59</sup> Möllemann's vitriolic and intemperate remarks about Israel were immediately challenged by lawyer Michel Friedman—at the time vice-chairman of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, a CDU politician, and a provocative television talk show host whose abrasive style had made him numerous enemies. Möllemann

responded by conceding that antisemites did indeed exist in Germany but

hardly anyone makes them more popular than Mr. Sharon and, in Germany, Friedman, with his intolerant and malicious manner.<sup>60</sup>

The Liberal Party Deputy-Chairman was highly adept at blaming the Jews for antisemitism and then indignantly complaining that *he* was being victimized by those he attacked.<sup>61</sup> Möllemann even managed to unleash a new scandal by defending the Syrian-born Jamal Karsli (a former member of the Greens) whom he had encouraged to join the FDP despite his blatantly antisemitic remarks.<sup>62</sup> Karsli not only raged against the “Nazi tactics” of the Israeli army and the iniquities of the “Zionist lobby” (which allegedly controlled the media in Germany) but evidently believed in the “world Jewish conspiracy.”<sup>63</sup>

The FDP party chairman, Guido Westerwelle, did not initially protest at this turn of events. He supported both Möllemann and Karsli, protesting that it was wrong to brand Israel’s “critics” as antisemites.<sup>64</sup> Indeed, Westerwelle seemed to be enthusiastic about Möllemann’s demagogic tactics. He had no objection to the idea of transforming the FDP from a small if respectable Liberal party (which had been a regular coalition partner in most postwar German governments) into a third force, comparable to Jörg Haider’s populist Freedom Party in Austria. Möllemann’s hostile stance against Israel and his attempts to appeal to new Muslim voters through antisemitic allusions were part of what was called “Project 18”—the FDP effort to win at least 18% of the vote in the national elections of September 2002. For a while, it seemed possible that Möllemann’s anti-Israeli and anti-Jewish campaign might in fact be working. The FDP was expected at one point—in July 2002—to win about 13% of the German vote, a considerable improvement on their national average of 7–8% support.<sup>65</sup> Hence, the modest performance of the party in the national elections was a considerable disappointment to the leadership.

Möllemann’s failure to transform the Liberal Democrats from an elitist clique into a populist *Volkspartei* was due (at least in part) to a rallying of the German political establishment and media against his strident demagoguery. Chancellor Schröder spoke out against the FDP and expressed concern that the high profile debate on antisemitism might damage the image of Germany

abroad.<sup>66</sup> Inside the FDP, a few critical voices were also registered, though they became more vocal only after the electoral failure. Party Chairman Westerwelle, felt constrained by mounting public pressure to belatedly distance himself from Möllemann, who grudgingly apologized to German Jews for having “inadvertently” offended them. But Möllemann continued to lash out fiercely at Friedman, who some months later was obliged to abandon public life after involvement in a cocaine scandal. Karsli, for his part, resigned from the FDP before the national elections. His withdrawal was accompanied by a bitter open letter, denouncing German cowardice and the “crimes of Zionism.”

The elections demonstrated that Möllemann’s spectacular bid to make a “centrist” lower middle-class antisemitism politically *salonfähig* once more in Germany had for the time being backfired. However, far more Germans agreed with his views on the Jewish/Israeli question than were ready to vote for a party as opportunist, divided and confused as the FDP.<sup>67</sup> Möllemann’s mixture of nationalism, antisemitic *ressentiment* and anti-establishment populism had exploited a real German discontent whose full potential still remains untapped and should not be underestimated.

Möllemann’s harshly anti-Israel standpoint was one symptom of this malaise. It expressed a broad consensus in German society as well as reflecting powerful economic interests and national dependence on Arab oil. Möllemann’s extravagant demand that Israel compensate Germany for its destruction of Gaza airport (financed with German taxpayer money) was, however, a significant escalation of his earlier rhetoric. His remarks implied that the model of *Wiedergutmachung* payments to Jews could be made to serve the cause of Palestine. His German-Arab society liked to draw analogies between “the crimes of the [Israeli] occupation” and those of the Third Reich.<sup>68</sup> It frequently denounced Israel’s “state terrorism,” suggesting it was a major threat to world peace as well as to its neighbors.<sup>69</sup> Shortly before the national elections, Möllemann published a leaflet which was massively distributed in his constituency, singling out Sharon and Michel Friedman as the “enemies of peace.” The content of this propaganda did him no harm at all with his electors, though subsequent questions relating to the financing of the flyers, helped bring about his demise.<sup>70</sup>

Many Germans seem to have agreed with Müllemann's criticisms of Israel while ignoring their anti-Jewish dimension. Even parliamentarians like Dr. Norbert Lammert, speaker for the CDU/CSU group in the Bundestag, had no words of criticism for the FDP's manipulation of antisemitism. Instead he attacked those who had raised the issue—supposedly in order to avoid condemnation of Israel.<sup>71</sup> Protests against such presumed abuse of antisemitism as a “political” card were often far more indignant than the concrete criticisms of Müllemann.<sup>72</sup> Indeed, there was considerable reluctance across the political spectrum to examine in depth the motivations and meaning of the anti-Jewish discourse adopted by the FDP.<sup>73</sup> This reticence stands in sharp contrast to the unequivocal attitude adopted towards neo-Nazi and far-Right antisemitism. Part of the reason is that Müllemann's role as a pioneer in breaking the alleged “taboo” on German criticism of Israel gained him support on both the Right and Left. Among his defenders was former German Chancellor and SPD Chairman Helmut Schmidt.<sup>74</sup> Such striking indulgence meant that for many months German Jewish leaders were isolated in their protests against Müllemann. They won little assistance from other political parties, not to mention the trade unions, churches, or intellectuals. Furthermore, they had to withstand a series of malevolent personal attacks from the FDP leadership which accused the Zentralrat of being an obstacle to the formation of a healthy German identity.<sup>75</sup>

The favorite Jewish target of the FDP was undoubtedly Michel Friedman—not least because of his pugnacious opposition to racism and antisemitism. True, Friedman's personality was considered arrogant, brusque, and unsympathetic by many of his adversaries. The German media liked to characterize him as the “Great Inquisitor” (for his TV talk-show grilling of guests) or to deride him as a dubious “moral authority” whose indelible foreignness grated on viewers.<sup>76</sup> The widespread resentment towards Friedman as a cheeky, upstart Jew playing on German guilt, led to the closing of ranks against this threatening “other.”<sup>77</sup> Repeatedly, in articles, interviews and commentaries before his fall from grace, Friedman was portrayed as a rootless outsider, an aggressive manipulator and cynical exploiter of “antisemitism” for personal aggrandizement. His manner, tone and militancy were deemed inimical to German-Jewish rapprochement.<sup>78</sup> Some German critics even accused Friedman of harboring “hatred for

Germany,” in light of his constant reminders of the Nazi past and references to antisemitism in the present. Hence, Möllemann’s highly personalized assault on Friedman fell on fertile soil in broad strata of the German population, happy to see a successful though uncongenial parvenu Jew pulled down a peg.

The Möllemann Affair was a disturbing reminder to German Jews of the stubborn reality of antisemitism and the visible chill in public attitudes towards them. Perhaps the only prominent German politician to respond adequately to the challenge was Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer. This was the more noteworthy, since Fischer had contributed to the “relativization” of the Holocaust a decade earlier by utilizing it to justify German involvement in the Balkans conflict. Thirty years ago he had been a typical anti-Zionist of the New Left stripe. In the current controversy, however, he deplored the lack of a spontaneous national outcry against Möllemann’s defense of Palestinian terrorist attacks. Moreover, though Fischer affirmed the right of Germans to criticize Israel, he also insisted that it should be exercised “only on the firm basis of indelible solidarity.”<sup>79</sup> According to Fischer, attempts to deal with unresolved problems of German identity by projecting them against the Jewish State could “only end in the abyss of antisemitism.” Fischer’s reassuring message to German Jews was that they were not alone. Antisemitism was a threat not only to the Jewish community but to German democracy as a whole.<sup>80</sup> This was far from being a shared sentiment in German society, but it was symbolically important that such comments were made at the highest official level.

At a more mundane level, the German authorities have had to respond to a troubling rise in violent incidents of antisemitism in recent years.<sup>81</sup> According to the German Office for the Protection of the Constitution (the official monitoring body) there are about 2,800 neo-Nazis dispersed in different political groups across Germany—some of them militant, extremist, and willing to use violence. The German government takes this danger seriously and makes every effort to protect Jewish public figures, sites, and institutions from such threats. There are state as well as federal government initiatives to combat neo-Nazis and extremist groups; furthermore, many private groups engage in “anti-racist” educational projects and activities. Such combined efforts of

tighter policing, monitoring, and legislation have helped to contain the more extreme forms of neo-Nazism, right-wing antisemitism, and Holocaust denial.

Nevertheless, the authorities appear to be powerless in the face of the current social and economic dislocation in Germany. The results of the September 2004 state parliamentary elections in Saxony and Brandenburg indicated substantial gains for the far Right and the extreme Left at the expense of the two main parties. In Saxony, the radical right-wing National Democratic Party (NPD) won 9% of the vote and has 12 seats in the state parliament—just one seat less than the ruling Social Democrats. In Brandenburg, the extremist German People's Union (DVU) gained 6% of the vote and six parliamentary seats. This “neo-Nazi” protest vote would certainly have been even higher were not much of it siphoned off by the successors to the old East German Communist Party, the PDS, who won 28% of the vote in Brandenburg and 23% in Saxony. As Paul Spiegel (head of Germany's Central Council of Jews) warned: “Memories of the end of the Weimar Republic are awakened.” Clearly, German democracy is in trouble and the lessons of the past have been increasingly forgotten. For Jews, this confirms a number of warning signals from the recent past.

In particular, it is evident that in Germany a large majority strongly prefers to draw a line over the Nazi past. This was the reason for the extraordinary popularity in Germany of Norman Finkelstein's scandalous book, *Die Holocaust-Industrie*. Finkelstein's diatribe found little echo in the United States, but his thesis that American Jewish organizations had deliberately and “illegitimately” sought to enrich themselves at German expense, struck a powerful chord in Germany. His book went straight to the top of the bestseller list. Sixty-five per cent of Germans basically agreed with Finkelstein's accusations, and only 15% thought his thesis was false. Among the 20–29 year olds, no less than 80% were in favor and only 17% against Finkelstein's assertions.<sup>82</sup> There was very little difference between Germans in the West or East with regard to this particular debate.

Finkelstein not only lashed out against profiteering but also denounced the “moral blackmail” allegedly practiced by organized American Jewry in exploiting the Holocaust to deflect criticism of Israel and their own “morally indefensible policies.”<sup>83</sup> His savage

indictment called for closure on all reparation claims. This message was music to the ears of millions of ordinary Germans weary of hearing about Auschwitz. Only a maverick American Jew who was himself the son of Holocaust survivors could provide such a seemingly authoritative confirmation for what many in Germany had long believed—that Israel and organized Jewry deliberately exploit the Holocaust for their own financial benefit.<sup>84</sup> A newly-released study by the University of Bielefeld has confirmed that 70% of Germans hold this view and resent being reminded of Nazi crimes.<sup>85</sup> This resentment against the attribution of guilt and responsibility has permitted the revival of antisemitic stereotypes through the back door. It began with reparations and continued with the demonization of Ariel Sharon and the Israeli military—whose so-called “war of destruction” against the Palestinians has been the source of intense indignation.<sup>86</sup> The emotionally laden vocabulary seems designed to suggest that Israel consciously plans the “expulsion” of the Palestinians as an escalation of its barbaric, “criminal” policy in the territories.<sup>87</sup> The inflated use of such language explains how the German (and European) media could so easily credit mendacious Palestinian accounts of a “massacre” at Jenin. As in the British and French press, reports were accepted as fact before they were verified.<sup>88</sup> One journalist, Inge Günther, even compared the devastation of the Jenin refugee camp following the Israeli military operation to “Ground Zero” after the al-Qaida attack on the World Trade Center. Typically, there was not a word in her report about the reasons for “Operation Defensive Shield” or the role of Jenin as the major terrorist base in the West Bank.<sup>89</sup>

Israel’s military actions after the Jenin Affair were described in a similar vein by most of the German media—as a ruthless effort to destroy any chance for a Palestinian State. Very few Germans were prepared to see the agonizing nature of Israel’s predicament or to consider that its actions might be a perfectly rational response to a new form of terror. At the same time, any suggestion of “antisemitism” or prejudice in this reporting was vehemently repudiated.<sup>90</sup> Instead, it was emphasized that German responsibilities were not merely to defend Israel’s right to exist but above all to guarantee justice for the Palestinians. This special concern for the “victims of the victims” (*Opfer der Opfer*)—allegedly dictated by the German past—has emerged as something of a mantra in certain establishment circles, especially among politicians

and the liberal-Left media. For successive German governments the Palestinian cause serves as a higher “moral” justification for their expanding business contacts and political deals in the Arab world. It is also a way for some of suggesting that Jews no longer belong in the “victim” category. One SPD politician, Freimut Duve, even stated that the real historic tragedy was that Israel had become infected with the (Nazi) *völkisch* idea of the homogeneous ethnic state. The German “contribution to peace” must therefore lie in helping Israel overcome this *racist legacy* of the German past!<sup>91</sup>

Franziska Augstein (daughter of the former editor of *Der Spiegel*) is another who has linked Israel’s history and policies to Nazism (“der deutschen Hitlerei”) in a misleading manner. She argued that it was a kind of historic predestination (a “horrible example of philosophical dialectics”) that the Israeli nation (“legitimized as victims” by German crimes) *had to* carry out a policy of expelling Palestinians.<sup>92</sup> Israeli “criminality” in her scenario becomes a fatal prolongation of the Holocaust—one which she divorces from decades of Arab rejectionism, Islamist antisemitism, or Palestinian terror.<sup>93</sup> This circle is closed by the transfiguration of suicide bombers into “victims of the victims” (i.e., of the Jews). The bombers are naively presumed to be acting out of pure “desperation” rather than in accord with a jihadist ideology or any consistent strategy.<sup>94</sup> It has apparently become an axiom in Europe (and not only in Germany) that Palestinians bear no responsibility for their actions.

In these circumstances it is less surprising that the gulf between “latent” and “manifest” antisemitism in Germany has significantly narrowed.<sup>95</sup> Attitudes among mainstream media and politicians towards Israel are steadily creeping closer to those once voiced only on the political extremes. Thus the SPD deputy Chairperson and Minister for Development, Heidemarie Wieczovek-Zeul, told *Der Spiegel* in April 2002 that the Israeli army was committing a “terrible injustice” toward the Palestinians. She depicted Sharon’s rejection of European mediation as a deliberate “provocation.” In keeping with the trend, she also presented her (postwar) generation’s political engagement as a *moral* imperative deriving from the Holocaust—one that almost always means heavy pressure on Israel!<sup>96</sup> There was not one word of sympathy for the many Israeli victims of Palestinian terror.

An examination of radical Right and neo-Nazi comment in Germany reveals that today it does not differ much from such mainstream pro-Palestinian caricatures of the conflict. For example, the millionaire publisher of the *National Zeitung*, Dr. Gerhard Frey, frequently relies on American Jewish leftists (and vehemently anti-Zionists) like Norman Finkelstein and Noam Chomsky to support his own far Right views. Chomsky's thunderous denunciations of U.S. imperialism and Sharon's attempt to "enslave" the Palestinians (like his defense of suicide bombing as legitimate resistance to the "terrible injustice" of Israeli policy) is grist to Frey's mill.<sup>97</sup> Indeed, his ultra-nationalist newspaper relied on Chomsky to expose the "monstrosity" of the American wars against Iraq and Afghanistan. Neo-Nazis, no less than radical leftists, view "the war against terror" as a brazen conspiracy of U.S. imperialists and "Zionists" to secure Arab oil resources and ensure the crushing of the Palestinians.<sup>98</sup> The only difference is that the anti-Jewish origins of their "compassion" for the Palestinian people are generally more transparent.

For example, the NDP lawyer, Horst Mahler, in the wake of 9/11, welcomed the Islamist terror-strike as heralding a "war of liberation" which would mark the end of Mammonism and the "worldly Yahweh-cult."<sup>99</sup> Reinhold Oberlercher, another extreme Right ideologue, saw it as a sign of the "decline of the 'Judeo-American imperium.'" The neo-Nazi "Aktionsbüro Norddeutschland" praised the massacre as a blow against "international capital, multiculturalism and globalization." The organ of the National Socialists spoke of a successful attack on the "symbol of Jewish world power."<sup>100</sup> The racist "Aryan Action" called on the internet to its supporters: "Either you fight with the Jews against Al Qaida or with us and Al Qaida against the Jews."<sup>101</sup> For the far Right and the neo-Nazis it goes without saying that Israel, ever since its foundation has been a state based on terror and crimes against humanity.<sup>102</sup> Thus, Holocaust denier, Manfred Roeder, blasted America and Israel as "rogue states" who regularly practice terror and seek "world domination."<sup>103</sup> This is also the view of the leader of the Republikaner, Franz Schönhuber, a former Waffen-SS officer.<sup>104</sup> Neo-Nazi polemics are virtually identical on this point to those of the extreme Left. Today they are also echoed in German mainstream opinion. The *National Zeitung*, for example, regularly condemns Israel's policies against

Palestinians as “state terrorism.” It, too, insists on the “right to criticize” Israel and oppose “arrogant” Jews like talk-show moderator Michel Friedman, without being accused of antisemitism.<sup>105</sup> To demonstrate his “freedom from prejudice,” Gerhard Frey even interviews ultra-Orthodox Jews who are militantly anti-Zionist and “pro-German.” This tactic allows him to more credibly delegitimize Israel as the antithesis of Judaism.<sup>106</sup> At the same time, Frey and other right-wing radicals naturally supported Möllemann and Karsli as “victims” of the power of Israel and of the Central Council of Jews in Germany.<sup>107</sup> Equally they applauded Martin Walser’s “denial of antisemitism” and his “patriotic” reminder that the unjust Versailles Treaty (imposed by the Western Allies after WWI) were the main cause of Hitler’s popularity.<sup>108</sup> The “anti-Zionist” and anti-American standpoint of the *National Zeitung* might once have seemed far removed from the German consensus. Today this is no longer the case.

A good example of gradual convergence between the center and the extremists is the scandal that resulted from the remarks of Martin Hohmann, a 55-year-old opposition Christian Democrat and ex-Mayor of Neuhof. In a speech on October 3, 2003, he bluntly stated to party constituents that Germany had already atoned enough for the Holocaust. Hohmann had often spoken in a similar vein in radical Right gatherings in the past, also attacking the tolerance shown for homosexuals in Germany, and the “preference” given by the authorities to foreigners over native Germans. But his special wrath on this occasion was reserved for the notion that Germans were a “guilty people” (*Tätervolk*) because of the Holocaust. He insisted that the same accusation must be applied to Jews because of their nefarious role in Russia’s Bolshevik Revolution. According to his twisted logic, Jews were the source of global evil because individuals of Jewish origin like Leon Trotsky had been key figures in the early years of the Red Terror in the Soviet Union.<sup>109</sup> Since millions had been killed in this first phase of Communist Revolution, one had to ask about “the ‘guilt’ of the Jews.”<sup>110</sup> (Naturally, Hohmann did not blame the Georgian people for Stalin’s murder of an infinitely greater number of victims.) In a television interview, Hohmann extended his macabre exercise in moral equivalency by saying that “the Jewish people’s history also has dark stains.” In subsequent meetings with fellow conservative lawmakers in Berlin, he refused

to retract “the tenor and the spirit of his speech,” almost forcing Angela Merkel, the Christian Democratic leader, to ask for his expulsion from the parliamentary caucus.<sup>111</sup> After an initial week of hesitation, she called his remarks antisemitic in nature and “under no circumstances tolerable.” Nevertheless, despite the unequivocal reprimand of Hohmann by his own party leaders and a sharp condemnation by the SPD-led ruling coalition, German public opinion was by no means in line with the political establishment. Some more outspoken CDU critics of Hohmann received abusive and even threatening phone calls. Worse still, there was a flood of faxes and e-mails, protesting efforts to seek the deputy’s expulsion.<sup>112</sup>

The Hohmann affair was greatly aggravated by the glowing letter of praise he received from Brig. Gen. Reinhard Guenzel, commander of Germany’s elite special forces. In his letter Guenzel expressed admiration for “an excellent speech, of courage, truth and clarity, which one seldom hears or reads in our country.” He added that “you can be certain that you clearly speak for the majority of our people.”<sup>113</sup> Defense Minister Peter Struck swiftly dismissed Guenzel for his provocative remarks which were not only “unacceptable” but also damaging to Germany’s military reputation.<sup>114</sup> The rapidity of the official reaction did much to contain the damage surrounding what German Jewish leader Paul Spiegel called “the worst case of antisemitism that I have experienced in the last decade.”<sup>115</sup>

However, it is important to realize that Hohmann’s speech was no spontaneous aberration or momentary rhetorical exaggeration. It echoed the classic antisemitic world-view of the radical Right in its reliance on the myth of Judeo-Bolshevism.<sup>116</sup> One of Hohmann’s most important sources was the notorious American antisemite, Henry Ford, whose 1920s book, *The International Jew*, deeply influenced Adolf Hitler. Ford’s essential premise was that the Jews, bent on achieving world domination, formed a secret society of conspirators who stood behind world Communism and global revolution. The frequently quoted high level of participation of individual Jews in the Communist Revolutions of 1918–1920—in Bolshevik Russia, Germany, and Hungary—was of course grist to Hohmann’s mill. The Catholic conservative deputy provided lists of Russian Jews in the Bolshevik Politburo and Revolutionary Committees as well as evoking their “overrepresentation” in Soviet

secret police repression. He reminded his listeners that Jews had murdered the Russian Tsar, and that they accounted for 60 percent of the Marxist leadership in Austria as well as most of the top revolutionary cadre in the short-lived Soviet republic in Bavaria.<sup>117</sup> He further revealed that “Communist Jews” before 1924 had apparently eliminated 1.7 million innocent victims in the USSR—including 815,000 peasants and 355,000 intellectuals! Thus Hohmann not only accepted the crudely propagandist Nazi-style equation of “Jew” and “Bolshevik” but used it with the help of misleading statistics to establish a spurious equivalency between Jews and Nazis as *Täter* (perpetrators).<sup>118</sup>

Much of the “scientific” basis for Hohmann’s antisemitic assertions came from a semi-academic work by the German writer, Johannes Rogalla von Bieberstein, prefaced by the conservative right-wing “revisionist” philosopher of history, Ernst Nolte.<sup>119</sup> For Hohmann, as for Nolte, Communism was *the* religion of secular Jews. They were its most ardent apostles—the “believing soldiers of the world revolution”—as well as its leaders and the major practitioners of the Red Terror. Nazism was ultimately a necessary form of self-defense (*Notwehr*) against this terrible Bolshevik danger. But the left-wing mafia who controlled the German media had suppressed Jewish guilt for Communism. Instead, they imposed a highly partisan “moralistic” and “anti-fascist” historiography on Germany. The result was a perverse focus on the twelve-year tyranny of National Socialism. Germany had been branded as the “most guilty nation of all time,” its national pride humiliated and its armed forces slandered while the crimes of others were being ignored. While Germany had been turned by leftist anti-fascist propaganda into a “negative symbol” of the 20th century with paralyzing results for its youth, the media remained silent about the “dark side” of Jewish history. However, only at the end of Hohmann’s speech did it become clear that in his eyes neither Germans nor Jews were the true perpetrators of genocide. Rather it was the *Gottlosen* (godless atheists) with their endemic hubris, evil ideologies and sovereign disregard for the Biblical commandment “Thou shalt not kill,” who were ultimately responsible for mass murder. The “godless” Bolsheviks (Jews who had subverted biblical Judaism) and the atheist Nazis (Gentiles who had abandoned Christianity) were the supreme perpetrators of evil in the 20th century. Thus, Hohmann’s antisemitic appeal to

justice for Germany and the Germans was also a call for a return to the religious roots of German life. Only on such Christian foundations could a new Europe (with a nationally self-confident Germany at its heart) be rebuilt.

The Hohmann Affair, as well as the foiled neo-Nazi bomb plot to blow up the cornerstone-laying ceremony of a new synagogue in Munich, cast a shadow over the 65th anniversary of Kristallnacht on November 9, 2003. At the Munich ceremony, Bavarian Governor Edmund Stoiber, referring to the neo-Nazis, told his audience that the German authorities must vigorously combat “these crazy people who refuse to learn from history.” German President Johannes Rau, alluding to the Hohmann Affair, urged Germany to be vigilant not only against hate crimes but also against “relativizing [the Holocaust] and the falsification of history we have witnessed in recent days.”<sup>120</sup>

Since then, we have some spectacular gains by the German far Right in the September 2004 state elections in Saxony and Brandenburg. At one level, the election results were a way for voters to punish the two biggest mainstream parties, the ruling Social Democrats and the opposition conservative Christian Democrats, who lost heavily in both states. The major factor in the success of the neo-communist PDS (which won about a quarter of all votes) and the far Right parties, was the high unemployment rate in East Germany (running at 20%)—nearly twice the national average. The extremist parties gathered much of their support from the unemployed. In Saxony, the populist campaign of the NPD (a movement with a strong neo-Nazi, anti-immigrant, and antisemitic tradition) bore fruit through its broad attacks on Chancellor Schröder’s economic reforms. Holger Apfel, the NPD leader in Saxony, called his party’s performance “a huge victory for the German people.”<sup>121</sup>

While this euphoria is no doubt misplaced, its right-wing xenophobic campaign for giving job preferences to ethnic Germans, denouncing the presence of so many foreigners on German soil (9 million, according to some inflated estimates, including a large number of Turkish Muslims) and opposing subsidies encouraging Jewish immigration from the East—bore some fruit at the polls. Both the ex-Communists and the far Right have been able to play on the disillusionment with West German capitalism and parliamentary democracy in the eastern parts of

Germany; with the sentiment that the “Ossies” are second-class citizens, in a united Federal Republic; that the values of equality and social justice (to which lip service was at least paid by the former Communist regime) are without meaning in the new dispensation. In particular, the tradition of the Prussian *Obrigkeitsstaat* (authoritarian state) and its paternalist welfare system—maintained for forty years by the East German Communist regime—retains its appeal to those trapped in a jobless twilight zone between two social systems. The end of the *Subventionsstaat*—now being dismantled by Schröder’s Social Democrats—has been traumatic for the unemployed and those who had been protected and coddled for decades under East Germany’s *Realsozialismus* (“real existing socialism”). The population in East Germany had lived for sixty-five years from 1933 to 1989) under dictatorships with a strong “welfare” dimension—both Nazi and Communist—while individual freedom has been a fragile growth of the last fifteen years. The Communists have shrewdly played on resentments toward the Americans, West German capitalism, and above all, the rising joblessness in the East; the far Right has attacked German financial contributions to American imperialism (e.g., Afghanistan), the subsidies for *Ausländer*, ex-Soviet Jews and the excessive payments to Brussels. Like the far Left, it repudiates the United States as a pillar of the global capitalism which is allegedly destroying the industrial infrastructure in the East; unlike the Left, it also claims to defend the “Kleine Mann” against foreigners and Jews—of whom there are very few actually living in eastern Germany.<sup>122</sup>

At the same time in west Germany, there is growing resentment at the ingratitude of the “Ossies” after billions of euros have been invested in the east to renovate its cities and equalize conditions with those in the West. Bitterness has been increased by the realization that fifteen years after reunification, the gap between the two Germanies appears to be growing. According to a survey by the Forsa Institute in Germany (September 2004), nearly 20% of all Germans would like to see the Berlin Wall restored—or at least to reinstate the old separation. This sentiment is much stronger in the west—where they have to pick up the bill for underwriting reunification (\$70 million a year); according to the Forsa survey, more than a quarter of West Germans would like to

see the back of their compatriots in the east. Thus, there is little unity between “Wessies” and “Ossies” in the face of the challenges of globalization to the German economy and to its somewhat fragile national identity.

The cracks in the previously solid and stable German democracy are becoming apparent for all with eyes to see. As the respected *Süddeutsche Zeitung* recently observed: “When many people vote for right-wing extremists, a great many more for the nostalgia of the neo-communists, and yet more for nobody at all, then democracy is in a lamentable state.” These disturbing symptoms are, of course, part of a wider European trend. But the vocabulary and the existential reality of antisemitism and the “Jewish Question” retain a unique historical significance in Germany. Hence, the eagerness of so many Germans to “normalize” their status and to free themselves from past taboos has special implications for relations with Israel, Jews and other minorities. Most of the German political elite has tried to respond in a responsible manner to these challenges, mindful of its image in the civilized world.<sup>123</sup> However, their efforts have been undermined by the growing gap between the two Germanies, the mounting frustration at economic dislocation and the failure of political education against racism and xenophobia. This “democratic deficit” has a particular significance for Jews in Germany, the Diaspora, and Israel, who have an interest in the consolidation of a self-confident and secure German national identity, which is cleansed of the spectre of racist and antisemitic resentments. For the present, the Israeli and the Jewish “other” still remains *the* historic marker of difference in Germany, an ever tempting target for antisemitic projection and a constant reminder of the burdens associated with a past that refuses to go away.

#### NOTES

1. See Walter Laqueur, “1948–2003: Some Reflections,” *Partisan Review* (Boston) 2 (2003): 305–16. For Mahler’s views, see *NPD-Stellungnahme im Verbotsverfahren vor dem BVerfG vom 20. April 2001*. (The BVerfG is the Federal Constitutional Court.) More recent statements by Mahler on the American-Jewish-Israeli conspiracy to destroy Germany, can be found in the report for 2003 of the German monitoring organization for the Protection of the Constitution, entitled *Die Bedeutung des Antisemitismus in aktuellen deutschen Rechtsextremismus*.

2. Richard Herzinger, "Die Hure Babylon. Die apokalyptischen Motive eines Weltweit Grassierenden AntiAmerikanismus," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 24 Sept. 2001.
3. Andrei S. Markovits, "Terror and Clandestine Anti-Semitism: Thoughts on German and American Reactions to September 11, 2001," *Partisan Review* 1 (2002): 19–24.
4. See Wolfgang Schneider, "Lazarett Deutschland," *Konkret* 3/1991, for a withering critique of the anti-Americanism (and anti-Israelism) in the German peace movement during the first Gulf War (1991), which anticipated many relevant motifs in the current debate.
5. See Paul Hollander, *Anti-Americanism: Irrational and Rational* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1995); and most recently Dan Diner, *Feindbild Amerika: Über die Beständigkeit eines Ressentiments* (Munich: Propyläen Verlag, 2002). An earlier version of this book translated into English under the title *America in the Eyes of the Germans. An Essay on Anti-Americanism* (Princeton, N.J.: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1996), 81–103 contains an interesting chapter on Nazi views of America—"Uncle Sam is Uncle Shylock."
6. Among the more callous comments were those of German composer Karlheinz Stockhausen who described the bombing of the Twin Towers as the greatest piece of art that he had ever experienced. Quoted by Markovits, "Terror and Clandestine Anti-Semitism," 23.
7. William Safire, "The German Problem," *New York Times*, 19 Sept. 2002. The following day, the *New York Times* reported that Schröder's Minister of Justice, Herta Däubler-Gmelin, had compared Bush's tactics to Hitler—the war on Iraq was simply an attempt to divert attention from domestic problems. For this indiscretion, the Justice Minister was fired.
8. Alvin H. Rosenfeld, *Feeling Alone, Again. The Growing Unease among Germany's Jews* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 2002), 9.
9. Report by scholars at the Duisburg Institut für Sprach und Sozialforschung, commissioned by the American Jewish Committee, entitled "The Mideast Coverage of the Second Intifada in the German Print Media, with Particular Attention to the Image of Israel." My thanks to Ulrike Becker (Hamburg) for drawing my attention to some of the materials used in this section.
10. Josef Joffe, "The Demons of Europe," *Commentary* (Jan. 2004): 29–34. Joffe also quotes the German author and TV moderator, Franz Alt, calling Mr. Bush "the greatest enemy of mankind"—an echo of Nazi antisemitic propaganda in World War II.
11. See Alvin H. Rosenfeld, *Anti-Americanism and Anti-Semitism. A New Frontier of Bigotry* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 2003), 27; Paul Hollander, "Anti-Americanism: Murderous and Rhetorical," *Partisan Review* 1 (2002):

- 14–18. He quotes the leader of the Hungarian radical Right, Istvan Csurka, who applauded 9/11 as an anti-Jewish act of Third World justice: “The oppressed people of the world could not tolerate without a counter blow the humiliations, the exploitation and the purposeful genocide taking place in Palestine.” Csurka is a good example of the antisemitic syndrome driving anti-Americanism in East-Central Europe.
12. See David Brooks, “Among the Bourgeoisphobes. Why the Europeans and Arabs, Each in their Own Way, Hate America and Israel,” *Weekly Standard*, 15 Apr. 2002. The article appeared in German in *Die Zeit* 27/2002 under the title “Die bürgerliche Provokation.”
13. *Jerusalem Post*, 11 Feb. 2003, 5, reported that a poll by the Forsa Institute showed that 57 per cent of Germans thought the United States was a *nation of warmongers*, and only 6% thought they were interested in peace.
14. “Israel diskreditiert den Westen,” interview with Karl Lamers in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung Sonntagszeitung*, 3 Feb. 2002. The author thanks Ulrike Becker (Hamburg) and Alma Lessing (Jerusalem) for providing me with this and other valuable items from the German press.
15. *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 4 Apr. 2002, 5.
16. Interview in *Stern* magazine, No. 26, 20 June 2002.
17. See the report by Heiko Flottau, “Sperrgebiet,” *Süddeutsche Zeitung (SZ)*, 3 Apr. 2002; also Susanne Knaul, “Raketen treffen Flüchtlingslager,” *Die Tageszeitung (TAZ)*, 9 Apr. 2002; Inge Günther, “Leben mit und über Toten,” *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 18 Apr. 2002.
18. *FAZ*, 18 Apr. 2002; “Wo verhäuft die Grenze zum Terrorismus,” *FAZ*, 7 May 2002; Manfred Wüst, “Kann man mit Panzern den Terrorismus zerstören?” *SZ*, 18 Apr. 2002.
19. Thorsten Schmitz, “Der Mut der Ängstlichen,” *SZ*, 30 Aug. 2001.
20. Heiko Flottau, “Das Gedächtnis eines Volkes wird eliminiert,” *SZ*, 6 Apr. 2002.
21. Robert S. Wistrich, “The New Islamic Fascism,” *Partisan Review* 1 (2002): 32–34. Less than two months after 9/11, I wrote that for Mohammed Atta and his followers, “Jewish” New York was the symbolic heart of the world conspiracy that threatened Islam. There is little doubt in my mind that Atta’s ideology was an Islamicized version of Nazism. With a few rare exceptions, this fact has not stirred any interest in Germany, or elsewhere in Europe. See John Hooper, “The shy, caring, deadly fanatic,” *The Observer*, 23 Sept. 2001 for general biographical details. He, too, ignores the anti-Jewish aspect of Atta’s politics.
22. See Alice Schwarzer, ed., *Die Gotteskrieger und die falsche Toleranz* (Köln: Kiepenhauer and Witsch, 2002), 9–10 and 77–128. In her introduction, Alice

Schwarzer describes the “Islamic crusaders” as the “fascists of the 21st century.” For twenty-five years they were permitted to pursue their hate propaganda unhindered in Germany. She deplores the fact that German society is still afraid of openly criticizing Islamists; that the Islamologues in Germany are so spineless; and that fear of being branded as “racist” inhibits most Germans from honestly facing the totalitarian threat posed by radical Islam. This point is also made in an article in the respected Swiss newspaper *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 16 May 2003, in a piece entitled “Schleichende Auszehrung der Neugier. Deutsche Medien und der radikale Islamismus” (Creeping failure of curiosity. German media and radical Islamism).

23. Bassam Tibi, “Die deutsche verordnete Fremdenliebe,” in Schwartz, *Die Gotteskrieger*, 105–120.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 108–109.
25. *SZ*, 12 Nov. 2001.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 113. There are 3.2 million Muslims in Germany (more than 300,000 are estimated to be citizens), the largest group—about two million—being of Turkish origin. Most are neither jihadists nor anti-Jewish. Moreover, relations between Israel and Turkey are very good. But the most influential Muslim organization in Germany, *Milli Görüş*, is a Turkish fundamentalist group with more than 30,000 members. Its ideology is fundamentalist, anti-Western, anti-Israel, and antisemitic. It opposes the integration of Muslims in German society. It should be added that the German authorities did dissolve *Hizb-ut-Tabrir* (Liberation Party), another Muslim fundamentalist group which encouraged antisemitism at German universities; see *Jerusalem Post*, 16 Jan. 2003.
27. Günter Lerch, “Wer kann für Friedfertigkeit werben?” *FAZ*, 13 Apr. 2002.
28. Quoted in *Jungle World*, 16 Apr. 2002.
29. Herbert Prantl, “Und wieder sind die Juden Schuld,” *SZ*, 15 Apr. 2002. The article acknowledged the rise of antisemitic *ressentiment* in Germany but blamed it squarely on Sharon and Jewish behavior towards the Palestinians. This reflects the conventional wisdom.
30. See, for one among many examples, Moshe Zuckermann, “Logik der Gewaltpolitik,” *Die Tageszeitung*, 12 Apr. 2002.
31. Jochen Siemens, “Die Quellen des globalen Terrors,” *FR*, 20 Sept. 2001.
32. “Auge um Auge—der biblische Krieg,” *Der Spiegel*, 8 Apr. 2002.
33. “Gott hat es gewollt,” *Der Spiegel*, 8 April 2002, 140–48. “Heute sind es die Palästinenser, die ihre Kinder dem Geist von Massada opfern, damit sie als Selbstmordattentäter ins Paradies eingehen.”
34. *Ibid.* According to the magazine it was significant that a “massacre” of Egyptians was celebrated during the central festival of Judaism. This betrays

a total misunderstanding of the Passover festival and how Jews interpret the meaning of the Exodus story.

35. "Gott will es," *Der Spiegel*, 8 Oct. 2001.
36. See the AJC website <http://www.ajc.org/IntheMedia/Publications.asp?did-539> The research was originally commissioned by the Berlin office of the American Jewish Committee. It analyzed over 2,500 articles in Germany's leading newspapers. It concluded that the reporting "often tends to reproduce existing anti-Semitic and racist prejudices in German public discourses, or even to construct them anew."
37. Salomon Korn, "Ende der Schonzeit: Es gibt keinen neuen Antisemitismus—der vorhandene wird entlarvt." [End of the no-hunting season: There is no new antisemitism. The existing one is now exposed], *FAZ*, 6 May 2002.
38. Ibid. See also Richard Chaim Schneider, "Wieder einmal allein. Europas Juden und der Antisemitismus," *SZ*, 5 Apr. 2002.
39. Ibid. A fuller quotation and illuminating discussion is provided by Rosenfeld, "Feeling Alone, Again," 12–13.
40. Ibid.
41. On the first Walser affair and the debate with Ignaz Bubis in 1998, see Leon de Winter, "Schuld und Schande, Kein normales Volk," *Der Spiegel*, Dec. 1998, 300–302; Roger Cohen, "Germany Searches for Normality," *New York Times*, 29 Nov. 1998; Lea Rosh, "Walser ist ein Brandstifter," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 13 Dec. 1998; Sigfrid Löffler, "Im Schatten der Versöhnung," *Die Zeit*, 52, 16 Dec. 1998.
42. Bill Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past: United Germany and the Legacy of the Third Reich* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 175–93.
43. See "The Berlin Republic," *The Economist*, Feb. 6, 1999, 15–16. The British weekly observed that Walser evidently "spoke for vast numbers of his countrymen." Walser's call for a "normal" national identity was also very much in line with Chancellor Schröder's position. Bubis, on the other hand, was obviously alarmed by the "spreading intellectual nationalism" in Germany, to which Walser had given voice—a trend accompanied already in 1999, by anti-Jewish manifestations. See Ze'ev Wolff, "Antisemitism in Germany alive and kicking," *Searchlight* (Sept. 1999): 17; and Martin Becker, "Germany: Coming to terms with past and future," *Searchlight*, 20–21.
44. For Walser's reaction at the time, see Lars Rensmann and Hajo Funke, "Aus dem deutschen Seelenleben," *Jüdische Allgemeine Zeitung*, 24 Dec. 1998.
45. Thomas Steinfeld, "Hygiene," *SZ*, 8 May 2002.
46. Ibid.

47. See the remarks of the SPD General Secretary Franz Müntefering on Germany as “a normal European country,” *SZ*, 10 May 2002.
48. On the Walser speech, see Lars Rensmann’s article in *Umkämpftes Vergessen. Walser-Debatte, Holocaust-Mahnmal und neuere deutsche Geschichtspolitik*, edited by Micha Brumlik et al. (Berlin 2000), 28–126; Frank Schirrmacher, ed., *Die Walser-Bubis-Debatte. Eine Dokumentation* (Frankfurt am/M: Suhrkamp, 1999).
49. Forsa survey, *Die Woche*, 24 Dec. 1998. A more recent survey showed 70% of Germans resent Holocaust “guilt.” See *Ha’aretz*, 12 Dec. 2003.
50. Rensmann and Funke, “Aus dem deutschen Seelenleben.”
51. Franz Schirrmacher in an “Open Letter to Walser” published in the *FAZ*, 29 May 2002 called his novel “a document of hate,” intolerable for its toying with the fiction “of finishing off what the Nazis did not accomplish.” Reich-Ranicki put his own viewpoint in the *FAZ*, 6 June 2002, blasting the novel as a “really blatant antisemitic outburst.” Walser, for his part, accused Schirrmacher of being an “antisemite” for describing the novel as if it was antisemitic!
52. *FAZ*, 6 June 2002. See also Jan Philipp Reemtsa, “Ein antisemitischer Affektsturm,” *FAZ*, June 27, 2002 and Walser’s interview in *Der Spiegel*, 23/2002, 186–90. In the same issue, Schirrmacher again attacked Walser for playing with antisemitic clichés. See also Ruth Kluger’s letter to the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 27 June 2002.
53. Uwe Wittstock, *Die Welt*, 4 June 2002.
54. Elke Schmitter, “Skandale sind hilfreich,” *Der Spiegel*, no. 27/2002; and “Der verfolgte Verfolger,” *Der Spiegel*, no. 23/2002.
55. Thomas Steinfeld, “Die Rache ist mein, spricht der Autor,” *SZ*, 31 May 2002. Steinfeld rallied to Walser as a crusader against the “moral stupidity of political correctness.”
56. Talkshows, *Boulevard Bio*, 4 June 2002. My thanks to Ulrike Becker for this reference. According to Grass, in all of Walser’s prolific output, he had not found “a single line which had even a whiff of antisemitism.” Grass also claimed that his new novel did not contain “a single antisemitic line,” which suggests that he has not even the slightest understanding of the phenomenon.
57. See *Der Spiegel* 24/2002, 202 ff.; Jens Jessen, “Der Dichter und seine Bärenführer,” *Die Zeit*, 26 June 2002; and Ulrich Greiner, “Walser, der Spezialist des Undeutlichen,” *ibid.*
58. See “Das Spiel mit dem Feuer,” *Der Spiegel*, 23/2002, 22–38. For an overview of Möllemann’s career emphasizing his hubris, obsession with publicity, and high-flying ambitions, see Matthias Geis, “Eine Überdosis Politik: Der Fall Möllemann,” *Die Zeit* 25/2003, 12 June 2003.

59. See Josef Joffe, "FDP und ihr Verführer: Antisemitismus als Wahlköder? Möllemann darf nicht voran," *Die Zeit*, 23 May 2002. For the original statement, "Ich würde mich auch wehren," *Die Tageszeitung*, 4 Apr. 2002.
60. Quoted by Rosenfeld, "Feeling Alone, Again," 8. See also Henryk M. Broder, "Ein moderner Antisemit," *Der Spiegel*, 27 May 2002. Broder emphasized the trendy character of Möllemann's "cool, up-to-date" antisemitism.
61. See Christian Schlüter, "JWM geht. Der Antisemitismus bleibt," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 22 Oct. 2002. This article underlines Möllemann's skill at mobilizing antisemitic lower middle-class resentment while always proclaiming his "innocence" and concern for human rights. His main objective was to create a *tabula rasa* concerning German guilt and the Jews; he wanted to show that "die Juden sind selbst schuld an ihren Unglück. (The Jews are themselves responsible for their misfortune.)"
62. See "Der Krampf geht weiter," *Der Spiegel* 24/2002, 22–26. Some Turkish Muslims publicly distanced themselves from Karsli and Möllemann's antisemitic allusions. Also the report in the *FAZ*, 17 May 2002, *FAZ*, 23 May 2002; "Das Vertrauen ist wieder hergestellt," *FAZ*, 7 June 2002; and "Karsli geht. Westerwelle zufrieden," *ibid.*
63. *FAZ*, 17 May 2002, for extracts from Karsli's interview with the far Right weekly *Junge Freiheit*—in which he claimed that the Zionists controlled the "den grössten Teil der Medienmacht in der Welt." See Karsli's letter of resignation, addressed to Möllemann, *FAZ*, 23 May 2003 in which he presents himself as a victim of German taboos and "political correctness"; also Möllemann's reply, *ibid.*, defending Karsli, and suggesting that the political class in Germany was out of touch with popular sentiment.
64. "Terror-Äusserungen: Westerwelle nimmt Möllemann in Schutz," *Die Welt*, 6 Apr. 2002. During Westerwelle's visit to Israel, he declared himself impressed by Arafat. His Israeli hosts were highly critical of his "tolerance" of antisemitism in FDP ranks. See *FAZ*, 29 May 2002.
65. "Allensbach: FDP weiter im Hohenflug," *FAZ*, 3 July 2002. See also Rolf Jurmann, "Möllemann war's," *Jungle World*, no. 42, 9 Oct. 2002, who pointed out that the antisemitic campaign was quite successful in Möllemann's own constituency, where he distributed over a million leaflets presenting himself as a champion of free speech against "Jewish" pressures.
66. *FAZ*, 25 May 2002.
67. See *FAZ*, 23 May 2002. Möllemann claimed to have received 15,000 emails from Germans who supported his views. In his constituency of North-Rhine Westphalia he received a higher vote than the FDP's average result in the German national elections of September 2002. It should also be added that in April 2002, more Germans expressed sympathy for the Palestinians

- (26%) than for Israel (24%). See the Pew Foundation Survey Report, 20 Apr. 2002.
68. The home page of the German-Arab society is full of anti-Israel incitement, suggesting that Israeli policies are destroying any justification for its physical existence. *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 31 May 2002, 18.
69. Interview with *Tageszeitung*, 4 Apr. 2002. Recent surveys have shown that 65% of Germans share this view.
70. In North Rhine-Westphalia, Möllemann received 9.4% of the vote, two per cent more than the federal average of the FDP.
71. Protokollauszug des Deutschen Bundestages, 27 June 2002. This session was a response to the Möllemann debate.
72. Hans-Ulrich Jörges, "Was darf man in Deutschland sagen?" *Stern*, no. 24, 6 June 2000.
73. A good example of such evasiveness can be found in Wolfgang Benz's bizarre claim that no antisemitic *Denkstrukturen* could be found in Möllemann or Walser's speeches. "Antisemitismus ohne Antisemiten?" *Jüdische Allgemeine Wochenzeitung*, 4 July 2002. Since Benz heads the Berlin Centre for the Study of Antisemitism, such a conclusion seems especially surprising.
74. See *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 1 July 2002. Schmidt had been a severe critic of Israeli Prime Minister Menahem Begin in the early 1980s, when he was German Chancellor. Already then, he referred to Palestinians as "victims of the victims," anticipating one of the favorite German clichés of the present.
75. *Der Spiegel*, 27 May 2002. Party Chairman Westerwelle claimed to be liberating German youth from the oppressive weight of "memory," symbolized by National Socialism and the persecution of the Jews.
76. Thomas Tuma, "Der deutsche Michel," *Der Spiegel*, 6 May 2002. Tuma's portrait presented Friedman's interviews as sadistic "executions" of German politicians, made even more insipid by his dissection of the corpse.
77. Tilman Gerwien, "Warum zerstören Sie sich selbst," *Stern*, 15 June 2003. Friedman's "Jewishness" and the structure of German identity appear here as completely antithetical.
78. See Felix Schmidt's hostile interview with Friedman in the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 16 Feb. 2000.
79. Joschka Fischer's article "Deutschland, deine Juden" (Germany, these are your Jews) appeared in *FAZ*, 11 May 2002. See also his interview, "Israel darf keine Schwäche zeigen," in *Die Zeit*, 25 Apr. 2002 for a reasonably balanced view of Israel's predicament.
80. See Paul Berman, "The Passion of Joschka Fischer," *New Republic*, Aug. 27 and Sept. 3, 2001, 36–59 for a sense of how far Fischer had evolved since

his pro-Palestinian utopian radicalism of the late 1960s. After the Entebbe Affair, he became more sensitized to the anti-Jewish dimension in Palestinian terrorism and German New Left attitudes to Zionism.

81. See *Antisemitism Worldwide 2001/2* (Tel-Aviv University, 2003)  
[http://www.tau.ac.il/Anti-Semitism/asw\\_2001-2/germany.htm](http://www.tau.ac.il/Anti-Semitism/asw_2001-2/germany.htm)
82. “Erschreckende Umfrage-Ergebnisse zu Finkelsteins Thesen,” *Der Spiegel*, 10 February 2001.
83. Norman G. Finkelstein, *The Holocaust Industry. Reflections on the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering* (London and New York: Verso, 2000), 149–50.
84. See Rolf Surmann, ed., *Das Finkelstein Alibi. “Holocaust-Industrie” und Tätergesellschaft* (Köln: Papy Rossa Verlag, 2001), 126–53 for the article by Lars Rensmann.
85. According to the earlier survey by Infratest (commissioned by the American Jewish Committee) in November 2002, 52% of Germans thought that Jews “exploit the memory of the Holocaust for their own benefit.” The Bielefeld study was released in Berlin (11 Dec. 2003) just as the German Bundestag began a two-hour debate on antisemitism. Speaker Wolfgang Thierse called on Germans to remember the crimes of the past and defend democracy. *Jewish Chronicle*, 26 Dec. 2003. See also the results of a joint survey by Prof. Elmar Brühler (University of Leipzig) and Prof. Oskar Niedermayer (FU Berlin), *Rechtsextreme Einstellungen in Deutschland* (Sept. 2002) communicated at a press conference in Berlin. 28% of all Germans felt Jews had “too much influence” (far more West Germans believed this than those in East Germany!)—and only 40% disagreed. 23% of Germans (again significantly more in West Germany) regarded Jews as “tricky” with 47% rejecting this proposition; 20% of Germans thought Jews were too different and do not fit in with them. The survey clearly indicated a significant rise in antisemitism in the western part of Germany and a greater receptivity than before to ethnocentric far Right ideas.
86. See Ulla Berkewicz, “Als Ignatz Bubis starb,” *Die Zeit*, 26 Aug. 2002. Thorsten Schmitz, “Scharon kündigt ‘totalen Krieg’ gegen terror an,” *SZ*, 2 Apr. 2002; Michael Lüders, “Siedlung als Waffe,” *Frankfurter Rundschau*, no. 88, 16 Apr. 2002 which totally embraces the Palestinian narrative. Former Cabinet Minister Norbert Blum, in a letter on 2 Apr. 2002 to the Israeli ambassador in Berlin, Shimon Stein, wrote that “Israeli tanks are shooting at the Church of the Nativity and destroying the lives of peaceful human beings. This is an uninhibited war of destruction” (*Vernichtungskrieg*). The term recalls the orders given to the Wehrmacht by Hitler, regarding the conduct of war on the Eastern Front against a “subhuman” enemy.

87. Franziska Augstein, "Sharons 4000 Jahre. Israel ist wie Deutschland—und den USA zu kompliziert," *SZ*, 13 Apr. 2002. Interview with Klaus von Raussendorff, "Israel und die Palästinenser: Plant Sharon Vertreibung?," *Junge Welt*, 2 Oct. 2002. A day later the radical journal published an appeal by Israeli academics, warning that Sharon planned to expel the Palestinians. See also the interviews with various Israeli and Jewish leftists in October 2002. The Israeli historian Martin van Creveld, writing in the mainstream *Die Welt*, 2 Aug. 2002, 8, described Sharon's policy as hysterically "insane criminality." See also "Abschied vom Klischee?," *Der Spiegel's* opinion survey, 24/2002, 26–27. It showed that 25% of all Germans (35% in the 18–29 age-group) agreed that Israel's treatment of Palestinians was analogous to Nazi behavior to Jews; nearly 30% felt Jews were co-responsible for their own persecution; but 86% were ashamed of the Holocaust.
88. See Susanne Knaul, "Raketen Treffen Flüchtlingslager," *Die Tageszeitung*, 9 Apr. 2002; Inge Günther, "Nach dem Sturm," *Berliner Zeitung*, 18 Apr. 2002; Heiku Flottau, "Anklage aus Dschenin," *SZ*, 17 Apr. 2002; Rolf Paasch, "Widerstand als einzige chance," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 10 May 2002.
89. Inge Günther, "Leben mit und über Toten," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 18 Apr. 2002. The far Left was unequivocal in branding Israel's policy as "genocidal." See "Sharon's Projekt: Massaker und Vertreibung," *Sozialistische Zeitung*, 24 May 2001.
90. See Gabi Zimmer, Chairman of the PDS (ex-Communists), at press conference on 24 Apr. 2002. Like other German politicians, she stressed that it was not "antisemitism" to denounce Sharon's policy as brutal and oppressive. Her colleague in the German Parliament, Wolfgang Gehrcke, elaborated on April 13, 2002, that it was only those who did *not* want criticism of Israel, who were encouraging antisemitism! The right-wing CDU politician Norbert Blüm went even further in an interview with *Stern* magazine, no. 26, 20 June 2002, asserting: "The reproach of antisemitism is also used as a cudgel to silence any reference to the [Israeli] abuse of human rights." (Quoted in "Nahost erreicht die deutsche Politik," *Die Tageszeitung*, 4 Apr. 2002.)
91. Freimut Duve, "Die Saat der Gewalt: Israelis wie Palästinenser haben den gefährlichen Traum vom homogenen Staat nicht aufgegeben," *Die Zeit*, 7 Dec. 2000, no. 50/2000. Duve works as a German commissioner for media freedom at the OSCE in Vienna. See the reply by Dieter Wald, "Ohne Hitler kein Israel?" *Die Zeit*, 17 Jan. 2001.
92. Augstein, "Sharons 4000 Jahre." It is striking that in the same article the European Jews are presented as having no more right to the Promised Land than the Crusaders; Israel is compared to Weimar Germany as if there is the

imminent danger of a new “Nazism” springing from its internal politics: “criticism of Israel” is treated as if it is still “taboo” in Germany when the opposite has been true for many years; and Zionism is caricatured as the myth of a 4000-year-old Jewish presence in Palestine—which only exists in the mind of “war criminals” like Ariel Sharon—an absurd caricature.

93. See Wolf Biermann’s “Salzig, Salzig, Salzig” in *Der Spiegel* 24/2000, 170–78, which is often perceptive as well as bitterly sarcastic about the one-sidedness of the German proclivity to self-justification in linking Israel to the Holocaust.
94. See Christoph Reuter, “Sie morden aus Verzweiflung,” *Stern Magazine*, 3 July 2002, and Wolfgang Günter Lerch, “Umschlag der Stimmung,” *FAZ*, 16 Apr. 2002, 12, for whom the Palestinians are totally innocent victims deserving only compassion, help, and support. Israel had forfeited any sympathy because (like America) it relied on militarization and brute strength; it had betrayed its own moral standards and its reprisals were invariably excessive. Moreover, Israel itself practiced “terror” with far more sophisticated weapons, *ibid.*; “Wo verläuft die Grenze zum Terrorismus?” *FAZ*, 7 May 2002.
95. Salomon Korn, “Die Wut hinter der Maske,” *Die Zeit*, 7 Apr. 2002.
96. “Schreckliches Unrecht,” *Der Spiegel*, 8 Apr. 2002, 20.
97. Dr. Gerhard Frey, “Der Völkermord an den Palästinensern,” *National Zeitung (NZ)*, no. 16, 12 April 2002.
98. *Ibid.*, “Sterben für Bush,” *NZ*, no. 12, 15 Mar. 2002.
99. *Deutsche Stimme*, no. 9, September 2001. Special issue.
100. *NS-Kampfbrief*, no. 138 (Sept.–Dec. 2001).
101. Quoted in *Berliner Zeitung*, 29 Oct. 2001.
102. “Sharon—der neue Weltherrscher” Wer ist der wahre Terrorist?” *Nationalzeitung*, no. 18, 26 Apr. 2002.
103. Deutsche Bürgerinitiative, no. 8/2001.
104. *Nationalzeitung (NZ)*, no. 7, 8 February 2002.
105. “Friedman oder Möllemann—wer hat Recht?” *NZ*, no. 24, 7 June 2002.
106. “Der andere Friedman,” interview with the Chief Rabbi of the ultra-Orthodox Jewish community in Vienna, Moishe Arye Friedman, *NZ*, no. 24, 7 June 2002 and 12 July 2002. Rabbi Friedman claimed that Zionists have a vested interest to stoke up antisemitism all over the world, especially in Germany—a classic antisemitic myth.
107. “Möllemann im Visier Israels,” *NZ*, no. 22, 24 May 2002; “Darf sich Friedman alles erlauben? Wie er die FDP in die Knie Zwingen will,” *NZ*, no. 26, 21 June 2002.

108. “‘Hitler—in Versailles geboren.’ Zur Wahrheit, die Walser auszusprechen wagte,” *NZ*, no. 21, 17 May 2002.
109. Josef Joffe, “Trotzki und Tätervolk,” *Die Zeit*, 13 Nov. 2003.
110. Ansprache von MdB Martin Hohmann zum Nationalfeiertag, 3 Oct. 2003.
111. See *Jerusalem Post*, 13 Nov. 2003. Hohmann did initially yield to pressure and express regret “if I have hurt anyone’s feelings.” Subsequently, in his defense before the CDU caucus, the Catholic deputy even invoked the Pope’s apology to the Jews in 2000 and lamely maintained that his remarks had been misrepresented. See *Der Spiegel* Online, 13 Nov. 2003.
112. “CDU vor Hohmann-Abstimmung, Proteste, Austritte und Gewaltandrohung,” *Der Spiegel* (online), 13 Nov. 2003. 90% of the communications to CDU Central Office were against expulsion.
113. “Germany sacks general in anti-Semitism incident,” *Jerusalem Post*, 5 Nov. 2003; and 9 Nov. 2003 for Guenzel’s denial that he was antisemitic. Struck evidently wished to get rid of Guenzel anyway, though that does not detract from the decisiveness with which he acted.
114. *Ibid.* There have been numerous antisemitic incidents at lower levels in the Bundeswehr in recent years.
115. *Jerusalem Post*, 5 Nov. 2003, 6.
116. See Wolfgang Benz, “Lupenreines Exempel. Hohmanns judenfeindlicher Diskurs,” *SZ*, 11 Nov. 2003. Benz points to the similarity between Ford’s view of Jewry and that of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*—both of which echo through Hohmann’s speech.
117. Martin Hohmann zum Nationalfeiertag.
118. See Richard Herzinger, “Lehrstück Hohmann. Der Antisemitismus frisst sich in die politische Mitte,” *Die Zeit*, 46/2003, 12 Nov. 2003.
119. Johannes Rogalla von Bieberstein, “Jüdischer Bolschewismus.” *Mythos und Realität* (Dresden: Edition Antaios, 2002). The introduction by Nolte argues that Jewish messianism lay at the heart of Socialism and Communism.
120. “New synagogue marks Kristallnacht,” *Jerusalem Post*, 10 Nov. 2003; *Ha’aretz*, 9 Nov. 2003. Sixteen suspects of a far Right terrorist organization were to be charged by the German authorities with acquiring weapons and explosives for the attack.
121. “German Far Right Gains Strength,” *Jerusalem Post*, 21 Sept. 2004. In 2003, Germany’s highest court had rejected government attempts to ban the party, some of whose skinhead supporters were responsible for inspiring hate crimes.
122. “Trubsaal in der Zwischenwelt,” *Der Spiegel*, no. 39, 20 Sept. 2004, 44–60.
123. See “German lawmakers condemn prejudice,” *Jerusalem Post*, 12 Dec. 2003. Germany’s parliament debated antisemitism for two hours, expressing

concern that anti-Jewish sentiments were seeping into society's mainstream. Volker Beck, of the Green Party, noted that many Germans had no idea that the majority of those benefiting from the German fund for compensation of slave labour were not Jewish. They simply assumed that this was another case of Jews exploiting the Holocaust for their own benefit. Gert Weisskirchen of the ruling Social Democrats said that "misuse of criticism (e.g., comparing Israel to the Nazis) had reawakened the "nightmare of antisemitism." *Jewish Chronicle*, 12 Dec. 2003.