



THE SLAUGHTER  
OF THE JEWS IN THE  
UKRAINE IN 1919

ELIAS HEIFETZ

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## **PREFACE**

The basis of this book is material gathered by delegates of the All-Ukrainian Relief Committee for the Victims of Pogroms, under the auspices of the Red Cross, of which committee I was the chairman.

Our aim was not only to supply money, food and clothing to the victims, render medical aid to the wounded and mutilated, and take care of the orphaned children; it was also to investigate to determine the true character of the events and ascertain the circumstances in which they occurred. Besides administering relief, our representatives, in accordance with a plan worked out by the Central Information Department of the committee, made careful investigations, questioning witnesses of all descriptions, the sufferers themselves, onlookers, and men in official or public positions. In large centres like Kiev and Yekaterinoslav, to which refugees from numerous pogrom-stricken localities streamed, special bureaus were established for the purpose of taking down the testimony of the refugees. Sometimes, when the pogrom was large and complicated in its character, our committee delegates called conferences of all public and party organizations of the place, in order to determine the social and political causes of the pogrom and the motives animating the participants, as well as to gather all possible details. The conferees were able, through personal observation and material at their disposal, to clear up obscurities, throw light on all aspects of the situation, and make corrections and addenda to reports presented at the meetings. Examples of documents resulting from such conferences are the protocols with their appendices given in the

Appendix to this book on the pogroms in Uman (pp. 316-336) and Dubovo (pp. 341-347). The material gathered at each place testimony of witnesses, documents, photographs was sent to the Central Information Department in Kiev, where it was classified and sifted by experts. What seemed of dubious veracity or did not coincide with other evidence was rejected. Nothing but verified matter was included in our summary.

In some cases of pogroms on a large scale special investigators, persons with a thorough legal training, were sent to the scene of the events, who supplemented evidence already to hand by securing documents and examining new witnesses. Material thus gathered was embodied in volumes sometimes numbering several hundred pages, to which the investigator later, in his summarized report, would refer, citing the page and number of the volume in the case, as, for instance, the reports of the well-known lawyer, Mr. A. I. Hillerson, on the pogroms in Ovruch (see Appendix, pp. 185 ff.) and in Proskurov (see Appendix, pp. 202 ff.), who substantiated his statements by exact references (as on pp. 208, 209, 210 and elsewhere).

Owing to the various war fronts in the Ukraine and the internal state of civil war, we were prevented from gathering material for all the pogroms. Nevertheless, the facts brought to light through the self-sacrificing efforts of our representatives are quite sufficient for a thoroughly grounded analysis, social and political, of the Jewish tragedy in the Ukraine in 1919. And as our committee was a Red Cross organization with non-political aims, the work of investigation was carried on in an utterly impartial spirit.

Most of the material at my disposal appears in the Appendix, some of it in the text. The book represents my personal conclusions drawn from the material and from my observations of the stormy events in the Ukraine.

It is more than a year now since the ghastly events described in this book took place. But the year 1919 did not see the end of them. The bloody tide overflowed the boundaries of the Ukraine, and horrors were enacted elsewhere that not only equaled but even surpassed the Ukrainian atrocities. And in the Ukraine itself reaction kept up its gory carnival. The events of 1920 only corroborate the findings in the present book, namely, that reaction uses the massacre of the Jews as a method for political warfare.

In conclusion I wish to express my gratitude to all my fellow-workers on the Relief Committee. My indebtedness to them is twofold for the moral satisfaction of work done together in aid of the wretched victims of the pogroms and for the stupendous, tireless work of gathering the evidence that has made possible the writing of this summary. I must make special mention of those who stood closest to me in the work: Dr. P. I. Rosenthal (Anman), Dr. F. E. Lander, Mr. L. V. Fraenkel, Mr. S. Y. Heifetz, Dr. L. N. Heller, Mr. A. I. Hillerson, and Mr. Isaac Gutermann.

ELIAS HEIFETZ.

NEW YORK, December 20, 1920.

## **CHAPTER I SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CAUSES**

THE terrible Jewish massacres in the Ukraine in the year 1919, which set the whole land aflame, cannot be compared with the pogroms in the eighties and during the first decade of our century. The latter form, in essence and scope, a chapter in themselves. The tsarist regime endeavored to divert the attention of the socially and politically discontented masses in another direction, the direction of least resistance. This they did by inciting the ignorant and intimidated lower classes against the defenseless Jews, who, they alleged, were responsible for the misery of the people. The Jews were represented as the exploiters of the people, as leeches, who sucked the blood of the peasant and robbed him of the fruits of his economic activity. Later, when the elemental forces of the revolution burst forth and whipped the waves of passion into high fury, the Jews were depicted by the agents of tsarism before the lowest classes of the people as the "leaders of unrest and rebellion, who were rising against the Fatherland and the 'Little Father\* (the tsar)." The Jewish pogroms coincide with the critical moments of the then regime and follow in scope and intensity a course parallel to that of the revolution.

The pogroms of the eighties correspond to the revolutionary movement of the intelligentsia organized as "Narodniki" ("Zemlya i Volya," "Narodnaya Volya"). Those in the beginning of our century, to the time of the first revolution ( 1903-1905 ) correspond to the great revolutionary strikes in the south of Russia. Finally, the



third pogrom wave, which came right after the revolution (end of 1905 and 1906), corresponds to the outbreak of the first revolution itself. The aim of the pogroms in the eighties was mainly the destruction of Jewish possessions. There was robbery and plunder, down and feathers were scattered to the wind, furniture was broken to pieces, valuables and money were taken away. In many cases women were violated, men beaten, but "with moderation," not to death. The pogroms, however, in Kishinev (1903), Gomel (1903) and Zhitomir (April, 1905), already began to assume a bloody course. Jews were murdered, the victims numbered many dozens. After the revolution (1905 and 1906) the pogroms expanded both in space and in time, with about a thousand victims. The organizing activity of the lower and middle administrative officers was clearly visible, as was shown in the judicial investigations. The parliamentary commission of the first imperial Duma, the revelations of the former active minister of internal affairs, Prince Urussov, and of the former director of the police department, Lopuchin, confirmed what was generally known, that the threads of the entire pogrom propaganda were held together in the hands of the highest representatives of the state force, the all-powerful minister of internal affairs and the director of the police. They determined the places where pogrom dramas were to be enacted, and gave proper instructions to the local authorities.

The pogroms of the tsarist period took place almost exclusively in the south, in the Ukraine, and particularly in the Ukrainian cities. The large Ukrainian cities like Kiev, Odessa, and Yekaterinoslav formed favorable grounds for anti-Jewish agitation by reason of the great wealth and economic activity, the accentuated class differences and the numerous tramp class existing in those places. The officials and the professional classes (teachers, clergy, partly also the professors) in the southern cities were almost

exclusively on the side of the Black Hundred. The central government took great care to see that all those who were in their service were thoroughly "reliable," i.e., that they were in complete accord with the reactionary politics of the central government and carried out their orders in their several localities.

The pogroms of the tsarist period were almost exclusively confined to the cities. There were none in the Ukrainian villages. Insurrection, robbery and violence were done by the city hoodlums in the larger centers. Not so the massacres in the year 1919. Here the Ukrainian village played the main role, the Ukrainian peasants, the bands of military insurgents as well as the more or less organized bands of insurrectionists. The wave rolled from the village to the city and in concentric circles embraced the whole land. But the village occupied the center. The impulse and the radii proceeded from the village. The urban crowd played a subordinate role, and merely participated, actively to be sure, in the events. Large cities like Odessa and Kiev (before the invasion of Denikin) were overwhelmed by this wave, which spread over about 700 localities and almost annihilated the entire Jewish population in the Ukrainian villages and districts.

This is not the first time in the history of the Ukrainian Jews that they had to suffer from persecution. Twice before have they been the object of horrible attacks and cruel murder, in the times of the Ukrainian period of storm and stress when the peasants rose against their Polish oppressors.

The Jews settled in Ukraine at the end of the sixteenth century. The emigrants from Lithuania and Poland found here uncultivated land and sparsely populated villages. Gradually there grew up cities, castles and settlements. The Polish nobility attracted as colonists the petty nobility, the serfs and also the Jews as a class engaged in commerce and industry. Thanks to the Jewish spirit of enterprise there

soon developed an extremely energetic commercial activity. The greatest variety of industries, the production of nitric acid and potash, fishing and hunting as well as the liquor business were in the hands of the Jews. Only a very small part of the Jews were rich. According to the investigations of Berschadski (*Die litauschen Juden*), the commercial and credit operations of the great majority of the Jews must be measured in dozens of rubles, and consisted merely in the granting of small loans to the peasants, the poorer middle class and the Tartars. But this is not all. The operations were carried on with the moneys which they themselves borrowed from the Christian clergy, nobility and poorer middle class. Often they borrowed this capital by pledging household articles, even body linen.

Is it true that the Jewish masses were guilty of abusing the Christian population? The Ukrainian historian Ivan Franko, points out that the sources of the Khmelnitzky period say nothing about the accusations that were later brought against the Jews, such as putting mortgages on the churches. "The unfair practices of the Jews, so far as there were such," says Franko, "are insignificant as compared with the abuses committed by the Polish government and the Polish military." To be sure, the Cossack population did not investigate with any degree of care as to who was really responsible for their enslavement. When the Ukrainian population rose in rebellion, with Khmelnitzky at their head, and freed themselves from the chains of political and economic enslavement, they swept away not only the lords, but also their agents, the Jews, who were their leaseholders and tenant farmers. The events of the years 1648-1658 with their heroes, Krivonos, Ganai, Morosenko, Timofei (son of Bogdan Khmelnitzky) , Koloda and others, cost the Ukrainian Jews, according to the careful computations of Sabbatai Cohen, about 100,000 lives (the "Chronicler" speaks of a half million.) Several hundred Jewish settlements were completely destroyed.

One hundred years later, the Ukraine was again the scene of insurrections. The Gaidamaks (this was the name of the insurrectionary Cossack bands in the 18th century) were no whit inferior in savage cruelty to the Cossack rebels under Bogdan Khmelnitzky. All the hatred that had accumulated up to that time on account of the political and economic enslavement of the people (introduction of serfdom, persecution of their faith, cruel practices of the administration, by state authorities as well as landed proprietors) was let loose in this moment. As formerly under Khmelnitzky, so a hundred years later, when the Jewish tenant farmer, the "inevitable attendant of the Polish lord" and the executor of his will in relation to the village, had again settled down, the fury of the peasants once more was directed against him. The rebellion of 1734 under the leadership of Griva adopted the following motto, "It is permitted to plunder the Jews and kill the Polaks."

In the forties of the eighteenth century, the "leader and great Hetman of the Gaidamak troops", Wasski Washchilo, shows clearly in his proclamation that the purpose of the rebellion was to destroy the Jewish people for the protection of Christianity. "Guided by zeal for the holy Christian religion, and anxious that the anger of the Lord for all these crimes may not fall upon innocent persons, I have decided, so far as it lies in my power, together with other good people who love Christianity, to exterminate the accursed Jewish people. I have already with God's help killed the Jews in the communities of Krichev and Propoisk, and although the Jews succeeded in having government troops sent against me, the just God gave me his protection in all cases. Trusting in the grace of God, I shall bring to end this holy war against the traitors." The year 1767 in which the insurrection under Zhelezniak and Gonta took place was pregnant with fate for the Jews. A terrible massacre of the Jews took place at Uman. There were also

excesses against the Jews in Fastov, Granov, Zhivotov, Tulchin and Dashev.

According to the reports of eye witnesses, 50,000 to 60,000 Jews lost their lives at the time of the Gaidamaks.

A hundred and fifty years had passed since then.

The Ukrainian village became quiet again and found its equilibrium. It cost the Jews in Ukraine much toil and labor to re-establish their economic existence. Now as before the village population dealt principally with the Jewish merchant and middleman, coming very rarely in contact with the poor Jewish population, the manual laborers. In the mind of the village people the Jew still occupied an intermediate place, "between the working people on the one hand and the landlords and rich cities on the other," being essentially nearer to the latter than to the former. The historical antipathy to the Jew remained, but there was no hatred. The Jew was merely distrusted as a stranger and the Ukrainian villagers, blessed with the craftiness of the peasant, showed contempt for the Jewish middleman and inhabitant of the city. Nevertheless peaceful and neighborly relations developed between the Jew and the Ukrainian peasants, which suffered no change during the last four decades of Russian rule. Jews who lost their entire possessions and most of their relatives in the fearful storms of 1919, testify unanimously that in a great number of cities and districts, peaceful and neighborly relations had existed between the Ukrainian peasants and the Jews, and in some cases they were very friendly to one another.

These neighborly relations were somewhat disturbed during the German occupation. The well-being of the population both Christian and Jewish had increased considerably. It was the time of unlimited speculation in goods and money, of smuggling in and out of Soviet Russia and the neutral zone. The peasants, however, could not increase their earnings in the same measure as the others. The products of the land were taken from them by force, at

low prices, and carried to Germany. On the basis of exaggerated reports of "the wealth of the Jews," there developed among the peasants a feeling of envy and a desire for city products (manufactured goods, shoes), of which there was nothing in the Ukrainian village, rumor having it that the Jews in the larger centers enjoyed a superfluity of such things.

The anti-Jewish sentiment came to the fore in the Ukrainian village at the time when the Soviet government took the helm. This government is in the eyes of the peasants a foreign importation from Moscow. The well-to-do peasant of the Ukrainian village is opposed to communistic tendencies. Besides, being a landlord in possession of the soil which he regards as his consecrated and inviolable property, he sees in the Soviet government principally a fiscal power, which requisitions his grain and other agricultural products at maximum prices, paying for them in worthless little papers. A tenacious and obstinate fight arose between the Ukrainian village and the Soviet government. The Soviet government brought for the first time into the village the Jewish official, as a representative of the state power. Under the tsar the law did not allow the Jews to hold any state or public office. At the time of the Provisional Government the whole power was actually in the hands of the central Rada, under which all local posts were held by Ukrainians, usually representatives of the local population. Under the Soviet regime, on the other hand, Jews also were government representatives, holding central as well as local offices. In districts where the Jews formed the majority of the population, a large number of Jews belonged to the executive committee. The mere fact that besides the Jewish middleman there was also a Jewish representative of the state force called forth a feeling of hostility on the part of the Ukrainian peasant. The Jew whom he was accustomed to look down upon and to treat with contempt, suddenly stood before him as the possessor

of power, demanding respect. In addition, this same Jew appeared as the representative of a government foreign to the village and the object of its hatred. As a result the peasant became suspicious of the entire Jewish population, regarding all the Jews without exception as members of the Soviet regime, which enabled them to exercise power against the Christian population. The idea took firm root in his mind that the Jewish nation was endeavoring to dominate over the Christian peasant. In the later pogroms this attitude found expression in the words, "What! You want to rule over us?" The Ukrainian peasant had a tendency to impute to the Jewish commissars and generally to the whole Jewish population in the neighboring towns and districts all the sins committed against him by the new regime (requisitioning, mobilization, barrage troops, executions by order of the extraordinary commissions).

The traditional feeling of distrust and suspicion of the Jew was excited and fostered by the above mentioned social and political factors.

There is still, however, a great gulf between the vague feelings of envy, contempt, even hatred, and those cruel acts perpetrated upon the Jews in the Ukrainian massacres. To bridge it an external force was necessary, which compelled the peaceful peasants to overcome their moral and other inhibitions, aroused the slumbering instincts of destruction and hate, gave to the whole complex of vague feelings and sentiments a political form and instilled it into the minds of the peasants by anti-Jewish agitation. For this purpose it was necessary to accuse the Jews as such of exploitation of labor and speculation, to represent them as "bourgeois" and at the same time to brand them as advocates of the Soviet power and of communism, so as to organize the peasants and push them in a definite direction. Under the influence of this force came the peasant avalanche, continually increasing in scope, moving

faster and faster and burying under it tens of thousands of Ukrainian Jews.

This force which played so momentous a role in the history of Ukrainian Jewry, a force which for the first time in our revolutionary epoch made use of Jewish massacres as a political weapon, against the Soviet enemy, is represented by the later leaders and political heads of the Ukrainian People's Republic. They took the same bloody course that was followed later by the Russian reaction of the Denikin regime and the volunteer army. Not all at once but gradually, step by step and at critical moments, did they begin to take up the method of pogroms. First they addressed threats to the Jewish leaders, warning them of the people's wrath in case they did not exert the proper influence on the Jewish masses. Then followed the actual application of the method in question, first in the form of organized excesses and demonstrations, and then at the most critical moment in the form of a systematic and uninterrupted series of organized blood baths and horrible devastations. Forced back by the Soviet government to the frontier of the Ukraine, the leaders of the Ukrainian Republic, as represented by the Directory and its responsible agents, never again let go of this bloody weapon by which they expected to secure victory.

The history of the Jewish pogroms in the Ukraine is closely connected with the political history of the country, and cannot be separated from it. It seems necessary, therefore, to keep in mind the main factors of the revolutionary movement in the Ukraine, and to determine the dividing line between the popular movement of the Ukrainians and the Jewish socialistic parties. This division, accompanied by military defeats, already carried in itself the germ of the approaching massacres.

The March revolution exposed in sharp outline all the problems of Russian life, including the problem of nationality. The autocratic tsar held all the nationalities



inhabiting the several parts of the empire in slavery. Their endeavors to develop their national culture were exposed to persecution. Every attempt to attain even the most modest share of autonomy was regarded as a revolt against the highest authority and was rigorously suppressed.

With the outbreak of the revolution strong nationalistic movements began in certain parts of the former empire. The opposing forces made themselves felt. The nationalistic element came to the fore everywhere, especially in the large border states, Finland and the Ukraine. The Provisional Government tried to evade the problem as well as it could. In its dependence upon the Russian bourgeoisie, especially upon the party of the Constitutional Democrats (Cadets) which represented them in their efforts to create a "united, strong and great Russia," it saw in the nationalistic movement the danger of secession of the border states. The Provisional Government was resolved not to weaken the economic power of the great Russian bourgeoisie by showing a pliable temper, nor to weaken Russia while the imperialistic world war was raging. It, therefore, postponed the solution of the problem "until the calling of the Constitutional Assembly," which was again and again postponed to a later date. The nationalistic movement burst forth with the fury of a storm. Its waves rose higher and higher. The Provisional Government was compelled to recognize it and meet it step by step. In the Ukraine a representative body was formed, the Central Rada composed of all socialist parties, which controlled the political life of the country and created out of itself the national secretariat as an executive organ.

To bring about peaceful relations between the Provisional Government and the Central Rada, the two ministers Zeretelli and Tereschenko came from Petrograd to Kiev, and actually succeeded for a time in reconciling the nationalistic aspirations of the Ukraine with the wavering and restraining tendencies of the Provisional Government.

They recognized the right of the Ukraine to a considerable degree of autonomy. But they would not accept a federative structure of the Russian State.

The Central Rada based its hopes and claims upon the enormous majority of the Ukrainian village, upon the nationalistically minded intelligentsia of the cities as well as upon parts of the urban lower middle class. The Rada became, therefore, an important political power, maintaining its independence of the Russian Provisional Government, which had not the slightest influence in the Ukraine.

The Ukrainian great-bourgeoisie is composed of representatives of foreign nationalities (Russians, Jews, Poles). They were opposed to the Central Rada because they saw in it a power destructive to the integrity of the "Russian Empire." Without attacking them seriously in the sphere of social politics, the Central Rada paid very little attention to the great-bourgeoisie, and on the other hand showed itself more definite and determined than the Russian Provisional Government in respect to such cardinal questions of the Revolution as the question of the land and the termination of the war.

The Central Rada did not take its support from the working population of the cities. The urban workmen did not entirely trust the Central Rada because they saw in it mainly representatives of the interests of the middle peasants of the Ukrainian village. Nationally, too, the working classes were not at one with the Rada, consisting as they did for the most part of Russians, Poles and Jews. The Ukrainian Soviet delegates were in their general standpoint nearer to the Russian Central Committee of the Soviet labor delegates than to the Central Rada. Nevertheless the workmen as a class and the Jewish workmen in particular supported the Central Rada in their endeavors after national autonomy, which would make possible an unrestricted cultural and social development of

the Ukrainian forces, without, however, breaking with the All-Russian revolution.

The Jewish Labor Bund often played the role of mediator between the Ukrainian national movement and the Russian revolutionary democracy. The Jewish workmen and laborers, the support of the Jewish socialistic parties, were afraid of the extravagances of the Bolshevistic rule and saw in the Central Rada a power greater than the Provisional Government. Besides the Central Rada was in its political structure a democratic force, which at the same time guaranteed the cultural needs of the national minorities by the law of autonomy in the sphere of national culture. Representatives of the Jewish socialistic party belonged to the Secretariat (Council of Ministers) of the Central Rada.

The tendency of the Central Rada to favor separation from Russia forced the Jewish parties into opposition. The Jewish Labor Bund abstained from voting on the third manifesto ("Universal"), which opened wide the doors to the separatist tendencies of the Ukrainian movement. This resulted in the recall of the socialistic representatives in the Secretariat. A critical moment in the relations between the Jewish socialistic parties and the Central Rada was on the occasion of carrying out the fourth manifesto, which proclaimed the "independence" of the Ukraine, denoting a complete break with Soviet Russia.

The fourth manifesto was really called forth by the pressure of German imperialism upon Soviet Russia. It meant for the Ukraine a separate peace with Germany at the expense of Russia, and a protection against the danger of the Soviet. The manifesto was regarded with disfavor by the Ukrainian proletariat, because they could not reconcile themselves to an economic, political and moral separation from Russia. Moreover the proletariat sensed in the fourth manifesto a tendency to reaction externally (union with Germany) as well as internally. The lower middle class circles in the cities were opposed to the manifesto for

similar reasons. Fear of Bolshevism lamed their activity. Nevertheless their attitude to the new ways upon which the national movement had entered was negative. The fourth manifesto repelled the socialistic parties of the Ukrainian cities from the Central Rada. The latter continued to find support in the broad stratum of the great and middle peasants, who were only loosely connected with the Russian revolution and for the time being had no serious economic interests in the war-exhausted cities in general or in the Russian Soviet cities in particular.

In the debate on the fourth manifesto in the Central Rada, the Jewish labor parties spoke against it. The mere appearance on the platform of the well-known leader of the Bund, Liber, who was to speak in the name of the Jewish Labor Bund, called forth a storm of indignation. He was regarded as an advocate of centralization and an opponent of the Ukrainian national movement. The Jewish Labor Bund voted against the manifesto. The united Jewish socialistic party and the labor party of the Poale Zion abstained from voting, but expressed themselves in strong criticism of the manifesto.

After the proclamation of the fourth manifesto by the Central Rada, the question of political strikes was raised in the council of labor delegates. In spite of their negative attitude toward the fourth manifesto, the Jewish socialistic parties stood foursquare on the basis of the independence of the Ukraine, guided by the desire to remain in decided though not revolutionary opposition. On the question of strikes great differences and friction developed among them. A considerable part were against the strike. The left wing was not definitely opposed to it but recommended strikes with a definite time limit.

At this time began the first threats of the Ukrainians against the Jews. The purpose of these threats was to frighten the wavering elements among the Jews by calling attention to the coming retribution from the indignant

masses, who felt that their most sacred national feeling had been outraged.

Martos (later the president of the council of ministers), a representative, belonging to the left wing of the Ukrainian national movement, addressed the Jewish deputies from the platform to the following effect: "Yesterday one of your men in the council of labor delegates advocated the general strike. Do not play a double game. Say openly what you want. Restrain your people from such steps. We feel that we shall soon be unable to curb the anger and the hate of our people." The nationalistic agitation also was utilized to hold the troops in the Ukraine together by the anti-Jewish feeling which was common to them all.

The general strike began. Small armed bands of workmen opposed the Central Rada, but were not supported by the great masses. The strike failed. In the meantime Kiev was attacked by the troops of the Bolshevist Red Guard, who succeeded in getting possession of the city. The Central Rada removed their sessions from Kiev to Zhitomir. The Jewish deputies remained in Kiev. The Jewish socialistic parties and their representatives opposed the Bolsheviki most bitterly. In the fight of the Jewish socialistic parties against the Bolsheviki, the tendency of the Jewish labor masses finds its expression. They emphasize not only their negative attitude toward the October revolution, but the socialistic parties advocate also the independence of the Ukraine, and declare that the Soviet government cannot be regarded as the representative of the attitude of the Ukrainian masses, being on the contrary a foreign power which came from the outside to conquer the Ukraine.

The Central Rada in Zhitomir followed a nationalistic and reactionary course. A new law was made depriving members of foreign elements, Russians and Jews, of the rights of Ukrainian citizenship. At the same time the legend was circulated in Zhitomir that Jews in Kiev had shot the retiring Ukrainian troops in the back. The withdrawal of

the Ukrainian troops took place in the greatest haste. One military defeat followed upon another. The armies began to crumble away. To keep them together they made use of agitation against the Moscovites and especially against the Jews. And it was for this purpose that agents of the Rada spread the legend.

The anti-Semitic agitation increased after the Ukraine was reconquered by the Central Rada with the help of German bayonets. It was necessary to find a scapegoat to bear the national disgrace and carry away on his back the anger and hate of the army and the peasants. The Jews were made the scapegoat, on the ground that they had caused the occupation of the Ukraine by German troops and were in the service of the Bolshevist government. And when Petlura on a white horse entered Kiev at the head of a small band of Gaidamaks, followed on foot by well-armed and well-disciplined German troops, the hate and desire for revenge of the Ukrainian soldier against the Jew flared up in a hot flame. The Ukrainian bands were met by a delegation of members of the Central Rada, which contained also representatives of the Ukrainian social democracy. The military authorities declared to them calmly and definitely, "Tell the Jews that we will get even with them." And to Rafes, a member of the Central Rada, they said, "We know your speeches, we will dispose of you and your associates." Now the excesses began against the Jews, the first result of which was the death of a few persons, mainly Jewish workmen.

When the Central Rada returned from Zhitomir, the Jewish representatives resumed their activity in the Rada. They were received with hate, animosity and threats and were accused of Bolshevism without any reason. The only Ukrainian representatives who defended them were those who remained in Kiev during the Bolshevist rule.

The excesses against the Jews continued a long time. Professor Grushevski, the president of the Central Rada,

took pains to suppress the attacks. For this purpose he addressed himself again and again to the military and some of their leaders. Repeatedly he invited the Rada to work in common, as he pointed to the difficulty of the situation. Under the pressure of the Central Rada and the whole political situation (presence of German military, who had already spoken of order) there were no mass pogroms. Here we see the most characteristic feature of the Jewish pogroms the moment the instigators cease to find them useful for their purpose, they suddenly come to a standstill. At the time in question a strong anti-Semitic propaganda was developed. The sentiment in favor of pogroms among the Ukrainian troops was genuine and strong. They were firmly convinced that the Jews were responsible for Bolshevism as well as for the disgrace of their country. Nevertheless the number of victims was very small. The military leaders who excited and fanned these sentiments stood under the influence of the causes above mentioned. They prevented an open pogrom and, what is the main thing, they gave no orders for a pogrom.

The German military occupation made itself felt. They tried to utilize the "bread peace" to the fullest extent in their own interest. The Ukraine with its bread and its agricultural products must make it possible for Germany to continue the war in the west. The whole grain was often carried off from the villages by armed force. The villages soon realized the real meaning of the Force of Occupation. The Central Rada saw its political mistake. The representatives of the Ukrainian parties listened willingly to the speeches of the Jewish opposition against the Force of Occupation. The desire to liberate themselves from the Germans reconciled the Rada to the Jewish opposition. But the Central Rada had played its role, it was scattered by German bayonets.

The Occupation covered its domination over the Ukraine with the mantle of Hetman rule. The German military party

introduced a congress of representatives of the peasant land proprietors, the "Corn Peasants." These proclaimed as head of the Ukrainian State, Paul Skoropadsky, a descendant of an old Hetman family, a hitherto little known captain of the tsarist regime, who had later gone over to the service of the Ukrainian government. The Hetman was an obedient figurehead in the hands of the Force of Occupation. He was a devoted executor of their will and their efforts. The white terror prevailed in the cities and even more on the plains of the country. There was a continuous descent of punitive expeditions, requisitions, money penalties. The hate against the Force of Occupation and the external expression of the German rule grew from day to day, and not in the village only but also in the city. At the same time the great defeats of the Germans on the west front and the growing opposition among the German soldiers weakened the power of the Force of Occupation and announced its approaching end. The disturbances in the Ukrainian villages, which were kept down with the help of the Hetman's government troops and the German punitive expeditions, continued. In the cities secret meetings were held between the representatives of the Ukrainian parties of the Left and the Jewish socialistic parties. A complete rapprochement was not arrived at. The differences between them were of a radical nature. Mistrust was very great. The common enemy, however, brought about an understanding and the conviction of the necessity of making common cause against him. The understanding, however, was not of long duration. The enemy was soon overcome. The political parties of the Ukraine who had created a new national government, the Directory, experienced a violent clash with the Soviet government. In this embittered fight they carried to its full development the old weapon of poison, anti-Semitic agitation and the support of the organized Jewish pogroms.



## CHAPTER II THE DIRECTORY

ON the ninth of November, 1918, the revolution broke out in Germany. The consequence was a political crisis in German-occupied Ukraine and a revolt against German domination.

On the thirteenth of November a political general strike was determined upon at a general meeting of the Central Bureau of the Ukrainian Labor Union. Everywhere in the basin of the Donets where the Austrian troops retired there was a revolt. On the fifteenth of November the movement began in the Government of Kiev, district of Tarascha. Everywhere insurgent bands were formed under the leadership of Makhno, Grigoriev and others. At the head of the movement was a Directory and later Petlura. Yekaterinoslav, Kharkov and Odessa went over to the Directory. On the eleventh of December Kiev was occupied.

The rebellion of Petlura was not so much under the banner of nationalism as under that of Socialism and partly also of Bolshevism. The radical watchwords of the city gave expression to the general sentiment, particularly the desire of the villagers to obtain complete rights of disposition of the soil. This demand had the support not only of the rich peasants under the leadership of the "independent" socialists, but also of the middle peasants under the leadership of the socialist parties of the left. The city proletariat inclined to the Bolsheviki. Petlura entered Kiev as a national hero, but he was followed by his shadow, the Bolshevist Soviet power. As early as the middle of November there was formed in Kursk the Ukrainian Soviet

Government, which began a campaign against the Directory. Advancing from north to south, the Bolsheviki occupied Gomel, Glukhov, Sumy, Kharkov, Yekaterinoslav, and finally on the second of February, Kiev; Kharkov having been occupied by the Red Army even before Petlura's entrance into Kiev.

The international position of the Directory was also altogether difficult. Their negotiations with the Entente and Rumania through General Grekov in Odessa led to no result. The Entente held fast to the principle of a "united and undivided Russia" and supported Denikin.

Fermentation began among the troops of the Directory. These may be divided into two groups, insurrectionist and regular troops. When Petlura entered Kiev in December, 1918, at the head of the Directory, the peasant rebels formed the majority of his military force. Radically disposed as a result of the long guerilla warfare against the rule of the Germans and the Hetman, they formed at that time a disciplined mass, who had been for a great part through the school of the imperialistic war. In general, however, this mass was politically unstable and always divided, protecting the Ukrainian Republic whenever there was danger on the right, and becoming disloyal when there was a rebellion on the left. The regular troops were mainly enrolled in Odessa through the so-called military Rada, which stood under the military and political leadership of the most reactionary elements in the Ukrainian national movement (the independents, Ataman-Verbitski and Doctor Luzenko), from the circles of the wealthiest peasants as well as the nationalistically minded mobs of Ukraine. These formed the bands of Gaidamaks. They were joined by the Galician sharpshooters who had been war prisoners in Germany and had received there a particular Ukrainian nationalistic training. At the head of the army was a group of reactionaries. The political leadership was in the hands of the "independent\*" Doctor Luzenko, the military

leadership was in the hands of Konovaletz. Kavenko was emissary.

The leaders were confronted by an enormously difficult problem, that of welding into a unit a mass of troops in which the majority were radical while the minority were in favor of a national military dictatorship. Such a fusion of the army was an absolute necessity. The anti-Semitic agitation began. The bands of Gaidamaks had long been hostile to the Jews. At a time when the relations were still friendly, a number of Jews were attacked by them with the cry, "Cut down the Jews!" Konovaletz, the military leader of the troops of the Directory, selected for this special purpose from the Gaidamaks two Ukrainian Cossacks and certain well-disciplined bands, held together by their common hatred of the Bolsheviki and the Jews. These were the so-called "Kureni Smerti" (Clans of Death). Here also belonged special bands under the leadership of various "Batki." These bands were united by love of fighting in common, by reverence for and obedience to the Batko and by various peculiar privileges which they enjoyed. "They fight well, therefore they are permitted to plunder." This was the judgment of the military chiefs.

The conduct of these troops in quiet and, if I may say so, pogromless times, and the attitude toward them of the military authorities, are exhibited in a glaring light in a sketch of a memorial prepared by Abrius, the head of the police of Zhitomir, and handed to the Directory in the name of the administration of the city of Zhitomir. In this cautiously written memorial the authors request the Directory to remove from the city the troops which were quartered there during the first pogrom (the sketch in question was composed in the time between the first and the second pogroms). The soldiers are "very much demoralized, have absolutely no occupation and in connection with the mob strike fear and terror into every inhabitant. . . . This refers especially to the 'Sotnias' of the

commandants. The city administration and the, investigating commission had full opportunity to convince themselves that persons in military cloaks caught with stolen goods were in the service of the Sotnias of the commandants. When they were arrested and brought before the commandant, he at once set them free, whereupon they had the impudence to visit the administration and the investigating commission again and again and demand the return of the stolen property. This demand the investigating commission sometimes granted in view of the defiant attitude of the offenders and the circumstance that they had been let go without any punishment. Later these same persons, armed, drove in droshkas through the city, where they no doubt kept up their nefarious doings."

After the first pogrom the city administration organized night patrols of the inhabitants to prevent robbery (a kind of self-defense). The commandant gave his consent to the organization. "Immediately thereafter the city administration in the first night of the patrol's duty found themselves face to face with serious misunderstandings. In the first place, the commandant had given an order that no Cossack was to be arrested, and there were no exceptions to this rule. By this order all possibility was removed of doing anything to stop the excesses committed by the persons in gray cloaks. On the other hand, despite the requests of the administration, the commandant gave a special order in which he explained to the soldiers the purpose and the task of the night patrols. The night patrols were attacked by persons in soldiers' uniform and by Cossack officers. They began to disarm the city patrols, first in single cases, then more and more frequently, and finally the disarmament assumed a systematic and general character. Besides, the persons in military cloaks evidently were supported by the law, which prohibited any action against them, and became more defiant and shameless

every day. A band of eight persons passed through the main streets at one o'clock in the afternoon and robbed the passersby of their purses and valuables under the pretext of looking for arms. Despite the complaints of the administration the excesses remained unpunished. Attacks on dwellings became more and more frequent, while at the same time the city patrols were disarmed and robbed. The bandits took away their caps, watches, shoes, abused and insulted them at every step and indulged in anti-Semitic incitations. "Later the city administration which had reported the matter to the commandant and commander of the corps was astounded to read in the papers an order by which it was made a duty of the military patrols to shoot down not only the plunderers but also those whom the patrols regarded as enemies of the Republic and propagandists of Bolshevism. In this way the peaceful population was handed over to the arbitrary and unlimited whims of a degenerate and unruly mob in gray coats, and the city administration was deprived by this order of every possibility of organizing any resistance against the robbers and authors of violence."

In this way the soldier bands were systematically trained for the pogroms. They were demoralized, the life, honor and property of the peaceful population were given over to them and they disposed of life and death.

They carried out the order of their chiefs, because the orders were for and not against them. They still maintained discipline. Later, in consequence of impunity, they lost all discipline and degenerated simply into robber bands.

As long as discipline still prevailed among them, the pogroms instituted by them clearly bore the character of the execution of a military command. The Jewish persecutions began and ended at a signal, mostly open, sometimes secret.

All the pogroms carried out by the regular troops of the Directory followed a certain common general plan. They

were intensified in number and in degree of cruelty in times when the Directory felt itself especially threatened by the Bolsheviki, they were reduced in intensity when the Bolsheviki were driven out of the Ukraine by the troops of Denikin. The resolution of the council of ministers of the Petlura Government to take radical measures against the pogroms dates from the eighteenth of August, the proclamation of Petlura to the army on the same subject dates from the twenty-sixth of August, i.e., from the day when the Soviet power had already been driven out of the Ukraine by Denikin and the days of their stay in Kiev were numbered. The pogroms organized by the Directory assumed in the year 1919 a definite form.

### *THE JANUARY POGROMS*

These were confined principally to the eastern part of the government of Volhynia, because the troops of Petlura were obliged at that time, under the pressure of the Bolsheviki who were advancing toward Kiev from the north and northwest, to retire while fighting. Here belong the pogroms in Ovruch (December 31 to January 16), as well as in the villages of Potapovichi and Geshovo (December 31). As these pogroms are very significant, I shall take them up in more detail.

Ovruch is a capital city in the government of Volhynia with a population of about 10,000. More than two-thirds of the inhabitants are Jews. The mass of the Jewish population are not interested in politics and have not produced any well-known revolutionists. During the Jewish persecutions under the tsar, Ovruch was spared.

It was not until December, 1917, at the time of the Rada and under the influence of the agitation of the Polish landed proprietors and the old tsarist officials, that the peasants of the surrounding villages began the destruction of Jewish shops. Dwellings were untouched. Under the