

## Government, Jews, peasants, and land in post-emancipation Russia

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## Résumé

Hans Rogger, Le Gouvernement, les Juifs, les paysans et la terre dans la Russie d'après l'émancipation.

Dans le vaste ensemble de la législation qui fixait la manière d'agir de la Russie tsariste envers la population juive, rien n'était observé avec plus d'opiniâtreté ni de rigueur que les lois, règlements et ordonnances apportant des restrictions aux droits des Juifs de résider, de posséder ou d'affermier la terre dans les districts ruraux du pays. Même lorsque les bouleversements de la guerre contraignirent à abandonner la « zone d'établissement », cause première et symbole du statut inférieur des Juifs, la campagne resta fermée à ces derniers. Une politique discriminatoire qui était mise au point si nettement et conservée si longtemps devait être enracinée dans quelque chose de plus que des préjugés traditionnels, d'autant qu'elle entraînait à l'occasion en conflit avec les intérêts fiscaux de l'État et encore plus souvent avec ceux de la noblesse terrienne. Nos recherches ont abouti à la conclusion que c'est dans la relation entre les Juifs et les questions agraires, c'est-à-dire dans la façon dont ces questions étaient perçues (et traitées) par les autorités russes, qu'il faut chercher pourquoi ces dernières s'obstinaient à refuser d'étendre les droits des Juifs à la campagne. Le parti pris antisémite s'alliait à une attitude craintive et paternaliste envers la paysannerie pour fixer des limites strictes à l'émancipation des Juifs et pour justifier le maintien de la discrimination légale.

## Abstract

Hans Rogger, Government, Jews, peasants, and land in post-emancipation Russia.

In the vast body of legislation that governed Imperial Russia's treatment of its Jewish population, nothing was adhered to with more persistence or stringency than the laws, rules and regulations restricting the rights of Jews to live, as well as to own or lease land, in the rural districts of the country. Even when the upheaval of war made necessary the abandonment of the Pale of Settlement — that prime source and symbol of the inferior status of the Jews — the countryside remained closed to them. A discriminatory policy which was so sharply focused and so long maintained had to be rooted in more than traditional prejudices, the more so since it conflicted on occasion with the fiscal interests of the State and more often with those of the landed gentry. Our investigation concludes that it is in the nexus between the Jewish and the agrarian problems — that is, in the way in which these problems were perceived (and related) by Russian officials — that the explanation for their tenacious resistance to expanding Jewish rights in the countryside must be sought. Anti-Jewish bias joined with a paternalistic and fearful attitude toward the peasantry to place severe limits on Jewish emancipation and to rationalize the maintenance of legal discrimination.

H A N S R O G G E R

## GOVERNMENT, JEWS, PEASANTS, AND LAND IN POST-EMANCIPATION RUSSIA\*

Two specters: Peasant violence and Jewish exploitation

### III

If St. Petersburg was at first disposed to see in the excesses of the South Russian mobs the sinister hand of revolution, that view soon gave way to one that was more familiar and comforting and which became more readily acceptable as the conspiracy which had killed Alexander II was revealed to be not nearly as far-flung and well-organized as had been feared. True, some of the reports coming in from the affected localities spoke of the distress and confusion that news of the assassination had sowed in the public mind, how that mood had been utilized by revolutionary agitators and had contributed to the outbreak and spread of pogroms. But their fundamental cause, the government was told by its representatives in the provinces, was what would soon be called the "abnormal" economic relationships between Jews and the lower classes of the Christian population, especially the peasants. As Major-General P. I. Kutaisov, special emissary for the investigation of the disorders, concluded: not the religious question, not hostility for the followers of the law of Moses, but the heavy weight of their pitiless economic oppression, felt chiefly by the rural classes, had provoked the popular movement against the Jews.<sup>1</sup> After a century of complaints against the village Jews and a century of efforts to neutralize or remove them, such an explanation found a ready hearing, the more so since it was echoed by other trusted and highly placed functionaries.

Prince D. I. Sviatopolk-Mirskii, a hero of the Russo-Turkish War and Governor-General of Khar'kov at the time of the pogroms, not only ascribed the outburst of mass violence to the feeling of ignorant men that they were helpless in the face of Jewish exploitation and that the government had abandoned them; he also gave voice to the belief, which had been gaining ground among critics of the Great Reforms, that the end of serfdom, the removal of the landlords' patriarchal authority and protection, had left the peasants all the more vulnerable to Jewish machi-

\* La première partie de cette étude a paru dans les *CMRS*, XVII (1), 1976, pp. 5-25.

nations. And when they turned to the courts to extricate themselves from the dishonest deals in which the Jews had ensnared them, simple folk who had no understanding of legal intricacies and little appreciation of the binding force of contracts they considered unfair, were bound to be further disappointed, to feel that there was no relying on the law or its agents. Nor were the *meshchane*, living in or near the semi-rural townlets, *mestechki*, better off. They too had suffered since emancipation, losing rural customers and employment, hard-pressed at every step by Jewish competitors in their role as small producers, traders, or shopkeepers, and in their farming (for most of them a subsidiary or even main activity) even worse off than the peasants who were at least assured of a plot of land. "In a word, in all spheres of public life, the Jews are a sinister force directed against the Russian people and the existing order of things, a force against which, in the eyes of the people, neither individual citizens nor the state can prevail. This may be the root of the conviction which has taken hold in the public mind, that the authorities, unable to deal with them in other ways, have permitted the despoiling of the Jews."<sup>2</sup>

From Odessa, where he was now civil and military governor, Prince Dondukov-Korsakov wrote much the same thing, feeling no doubt that his predictions had come true. The exploitation, by Jews who had grasped all branches of commerce in town and country, of the local people, their inability to use or counter the predatory methods of the Jews, explained the constant and extreme antagonism of the rural and lower classes. It was this deepseated antipathy, heightened by the Jews' latest economic triumphs and intensified by a crisis in business and agriculture, that the tragedy of March 1 had caused to explode in a burst of violence which, in its later phases, revolutionary agitation had helped to spread. A. R. Drenteln, the Governor-General of Kiev, dismissed as unfounded the rumor that radical propagandists had had a hand in preparing the pogroms or guiding their course. Religious enmity might have played a part, but the underlying cause, he agreed with his colleagues, was the "deep hatred of the *narod*, Great Russian and even more Little Russian, for the ruthless and deceptive business practices of the Jews who victimize a trusting people, seek easy gain, and evade their taxes and public duties. . ."<sup>3</sup> In Kiev, as in Chernigov and Bessarabia, Kutaisov noted, it was particularly the villagers who were ill-used by Jewish moneylenders and tavern-keepers, a point also made by several *zemstvo* assemblies.<sup>4</sup> His assessment of the disturbances diverged from that made by other officials only in one respect; he criticized the lack of decisiveness and determination the police and army had shown in a number of instances.

That important fact was largely ignored in the reactions of the highest organs of the central administration to the communications they received. Secret instructions issued to district police officers to protect simple-minded peasants from wily Jews<sup>5</sup> indicate that St. Petersburg was losing sight of other factors that had been mentioned as playing at least a subsidiary role. When the Minister of Interior, Count N. P. Ignat'ev, gave Alexander III his views on the origin of the riots (21 August 1881), one issue had come to dominate all others.

“Having recognized how harmful to the Christian population of the country is the economic activity of the Jews, their tribal seclusion and religious fanaticism, the government for the past twenty years strove by a whole series of measures to promote their assimilation and almost equalized their rights with those of the native inhabitants. In the meantime, the anti-Jewish movement which began this year in the South [. . .] has proved irrefutably that in spite of all the government’s efforts, the abnormal relations between the Jews and the indigenous inhabitants continue as before [. . .] The main reason for behavior so uncharacteristic of Russians lies in circumstances of an exclusively economic kind. In the last twenty years the Jews, little by little, have taken over not only trade and production but through rent or purchase significant amounts of landed property. Because of their clannishness and solidarity, all but a few of them have bent every effort not to increase the productive forces of the country but to exploit the native inhabitants, and primarily the poorer classes. This provoked the protest of the latter, finding such deplorable expression in acts of violence. [. . .] Having energetically put down the disorders and stopped the people from taking the law into their own hands in order to safeguard the Jews from violence, an even-handed government must immediately take no less energetic steps to remove the abnormal conditions which now exist between Jews and natives and protect the latter from that pernicious activity which, according to the local authorities, was responsible for the disturbances.”<sup>6</sup>

How that was to be done, Ignat’ev proposed to leave to the commissions composed of representatives of the nobility, peasantry, local governments, and Jews which would meet in the 15 provinces of the Pale and Khar’kov to discuss the questions put to them by the minister: what aspect of the Jewish role in the economy was particularly harmful; what practical obstacles were there to the enforcement of the laws on leasing and buying land, on lending money and selling spirits; what legislative and administrative remedies were required to end Jewish evasion of the laws and to neutralize Jewish influence over those branches of the economy which the commissions should find to be threatened?

Ignat’ev’s report, proposal, and questions were approved by the Emperor in short order (22 August), communicated to the governors (whose biases must have been reinforced by the echo they found in the capital) and through them to the commissions which they convened and chaired. If the purpose of Ignat’ev’s enterprise was more than window-dressing in order to calm critics at home and abroad by an ostensible consultation of informed members of the public—a method he followed in other questions—; if he intended to do more than impress his master by a show of action and initiative; if, in short, the commissions were truly to assist him by supplying reliable information and wise counsel, Ignat’ev made this difficult, if not impossible, by the way in which he formulated his questions. They turned the commissions’ deliberations

to the discovery of the most effective means for curing the Jewish affliction without asking how real or how grave it was.

That Ignat'ev was impatient to do something drastic and dramatic about the Jewish problem and that he was indifferent to the opinion of those who knew it at first hand, became obvious when on 19 October he set up another Committee on the Jews, the existing one having been allowed to expire. The new body, chaired by his deputy D. V. Gotovtsev<sup>7</sup>, was presented at its very first meeting with a comprehensive scheme for the "discussion of the Jewish question in its totality" long before it could have received any but the most sketchy materials or recommendations from the provincial commissions. The 14 points of the Ignat'ev-Gotovtsev project aimed at a radical reversal of the policy initiated in the previous reign. They would have ended the opportunities a few categories of Jews had been given for the improvement of their civil and economic status, with the most painful effects for the large number whose livelihood was in some way derived from the rural areas of the Pale and their inhabitants. There were at the time about 550,000<sup>8</sup> Jews in the villages, but the number of those, whether they lived in towns or townlets, whose work or business lay wholly or in part outside their boundaries was vastly larger.

The ultimate direction in which Gotovtsev and his chief wished to move was indicated by their recommendations to suspend further admissions to the interior, "until the definitive solution of the Jewish question," to return to the Pale artisans who did not follow their trades, to introduce a *numerus clausus* in education as well as in town and county councils and assemblies. Most of their points had more immediate goals. They called for the removal of Jews from villages at the request of the commune (by simple majority in case of moneylenders); forbade Jews to engage in the liquor trade in the countryside, while restricting it in the towns, and to conduct business on Sundays and Christian holy days. Jews would no longer be allowed to sell in villages goods they had not made themselves; their buying and selling of foodstuffs was to be closely supervised; suits brought by Jews against peasants for nonpayment of debt could be stopped on a number of grounds if contested by defendants; no Jews, with the exception of licensed advocates, were to represent anyone but themselves before Justices of the Peace or peasant courts and, finally, Jews were no longer to lease or buy land.

What contemporaries called the "muzhikophilism" of Ignat'ev's administration became still more pronounced in the deliberations of the Gotovtsev Committee. They produced in February 1882 a set of four emergency measures whose immediate adoption was urged in order to forestall the renewal of mob violence in the coming Spring. Although the excesses of the mob had originated in the towns, the peasants had so much become the focus of the Committee's attention that it was felt necessary, as one member said, to "give them a visible demonstration of the government's concern for their protection from Jewish exploitation." Fundamental legislative remedies could be devised at a later date; temporary preventive steps for the villages should be taken without delay. Outside of towns and townlets Jews should be forbidden to live; to build, buy, or rent houses; to own, lease, use, or manage land; or to sell

liquor. The removal of Jews from their midst, and the right to petition for their exclusion from landlords' estates, the Committee proposed to entrust to the peasants themselves by simple majority of the village meeting, as opposed to the two-thirds vote required normally.

Ignat'ev, not surprisingly, embraced the project which so closely reflected his own thinking and inspiration, merely adding two refinements. Those Jewish mechanics and artisans who had the right of universal residence were to be admitted only to the towns of the interior, and out of respect for the religious feelings of Russians, Jews should be enjoined from doing business on Sundays and feast days. Anticipating difficulties in the Council of State, whose senior members were apt to make haste slowly or even to display a measure of independence when they were asked to abrogate or circumvent existing laws, Ignat'ev presented the joint product of his own and the Gotovtsev Committee's labors to the Committee of Ministers on 4 March 1882, hoping that it would there be promulgated quickly as a ministerial order and then be approved by the Emperor.<sup>9</sup>

Ignat'ev was only partially successful with his colleagues. That he did not fail entirely was due almost exclusively to the pro-peasant bias of his project and to the insistence of the Jewish Committee that action was demanded in the interests not only of the peasants but of the Jews themselves whom the government was in no position to defend from attack in each of the hundreds of villages in which they lived. It was a plea which some of the ministers, in view of its source, met with scepticism but none would risk not doing at least something that might conceivably be of use in maintaining law and order. Nor could the ministers be at all certain that what they had been told about the pogroms was either deliberately or unconsciously distorted or based on inadequate and incorrect information supplied by local authorities who wished to show that they were blameless or helpless. They had made no independent inquiries, had no reliable data on the disturbances themselves, on the degree of peasant participation or, indeed, on the character or consequences of Jewish economic activity in the affected towns and villages. It was not in the latter, official and non-official studies subsequently pointed out, that the violence had originated, yet neither the countryside nor its inhabitants had remained immune.

Besides, it was impossible to make rigorous administrative or social distinctions between town and country. In the larger cities, where urban laborers, many of them recent arrivals from Great Russian *gubernii*, made up the rampaging mobs<sup>10</sup>, one might perhaps dismiss peasant distress or anger as a direct cause of pogroms. But even there, and much more so in the smaller country towns, many city dwellers retained economic, personal, and legal links with the surrounding countryside. This was even more true in the townlets, the *mestechki*, which had in 1875 been given self-governing institutions much like those of the towns, but which were frequently as small as villages and populated by large numbers of peasants. The census of 1897 showed that at that late date fully half of the 14,3 million non-Jews living in Russia's cities belonged to the peasant estate,<sup>11</sup> and a Jewish author writing in 1877, noted that in several provinces of the Pale—including Kiev, Volynia, and Podolia—the

greater part of the Christian townsmen was no different from the country people and engaged mainly in agricultural occupations. In Ukrainian towns, he added, Jewish keepers of taverns and shops were all involved in the grain trade with peasants, although well-to-do peasants were the main purchasers.<sup>12</sup> If the most sober and reliable student of the reign of Alexander III could write as recently as 1964 that the pogroms had as their special target the small and middle Jewish rural bourgeoisie,<sup>13</sup> it should cause little surprise that even those of Ignat'ev's colleagues who wished to do so were in a poor position to challenge his version of events which they wanted at all costs to keep from happening again.<sup>14</sup>

Ignat'ev, moreover, could cite the findings of the provincial commissions that had become available by the early part of the year in support of his program. The record of their discussions and resolutions shows that although the minister had tried to predetermine the conclusions, which were predominantly hostile to the Jews, they were far from endorsing his long-range plans or even giving unqualified or unanimous approval to his temporary measures. The commissions did, however, address at length the problem-complex Jews-peasants-land and enough of them favored the course set in the capital, either in whole or in part, to allow Ignat'ev to claim that it was demanded or endorsed by public opinion. It was in two areas in particular that the commissions echoed the initiative of the Ministry of Interior—the sale of liquor to peasants (which twelve of their number wished to see stopped and the rest rigorously controlled) and land acquisition.<sup>15</sup>

As its motive for wanting to restrict the latter, the Gotovtsev Committee had given the Jews' distaste for agriculture, the poor showing they had made in the colonies, the rights they would acquire as land-owners, and the land hunger of the peasantry. One might question Jewish incapacity or dislike for tilling the soil; wonder just what special rights their ownership of land would have conferred; and speculate that emotion as much as pragmatic reasons, unconscious as much as conscious factors, determined the wish to keep Jews off the soil and out of the agrarian estate in order to deny them the values and dignity associated with owning and working the land. But one could not ignore the growing land shortage among the peasantry or the migration of needy villagers into the towns of Ukraine, where the influx of Jewish capital had been most sudden and the extent of Jewish leaseholding greatest.<sup>16</sup> Awareness of these facts, along with bureaucratic guidance and anti-Jewish prejudices, must have influenced the work of the commissions. At least thirteen of these—the record is not always clear or complete—declared for some sort of inhibition on Jewish land purchases in rural districts, most often for the stated purpose of aiding the peasants.

In degree of severity, the new legislation proposed covered a wide range. Four commissions were for an absolute prohibition on Jews purchasing real estate in the villages (Kherson, Ekaterinoslav, Volynia, Mogilev); three (Vil'no, Khar'kov, Chernigov) were prepared to make exceptions for guild merchants who needed land mainly for manufacturing enterprises. Vitebsk, Minsk, and Kiev demanded that no peasant land pass into Jewish possession, and Taurida wished to control such transfers.



Bessarabia wanted to prevent purchase of properties of fewer than 500 *desiatiny* (presumably to attract only buyers with enough capital for commercial farming and to avoid driving up prices for small parcels of land), while Grodno, denying Jews the right to hold mortgages on land since they were barred from owning it, also proposed that to reduce their numbers in the Pale they be allowed to acquire land for agricultural colonies outside its borders.

On the issue of land leasing the pattern of views expressed was roughly similar, with a somewhat greater degree of uncertainty and division due, perhaps, to a reluctance to deprive gentry owners of a steady source of income. Four commissions favored an end to all Jewish leaseholding in the countryside; five wished to see it prohibited for peasant land alone; another four advocated certain lesser restrictions and conditions. For some commissions the question of Jews renting or owning land in the villages was overshadowed by the larger one of their presence there which three opposed altogether and eleven wished to see limited or subjected to control by the village commune. Ten commissions pronounced in favor of a variety of restrictions on Jewish petty traders and produce dealers in the villages.

A sampling of the opinions voiced illustrates the recurrence of familiar themes and fears whose strength and persistence it is difficult to explain simply as the result of ministerial machinations. Kherson deplored both Jewish owning and leasing of land, the latter being thought the most harmful. Even ownership, although it amounted to only 6.5% of the total area, was considered dangerous since it was by way of becoming dominant, making the Jews a landed as well as a moneyed aristocracy. They were already too powerful competitors of the peasants for leases of crown land and had therefore to be kept from bidding for it. Rental of private lands could, unfortunately, not be stopped without hurting its owners more than the Jews.<sup>17</sup> Vitebsk, besides limiting purchase and rental to a maximum of 50 *desiatiny* of gentry land—each exception to require the permission of the governor—was absolutely opposed to the sale of entire estates to Jews and their leasing of peasant allotments.<sup>18</sup> The Mogilev commission found it unthinkable that Jews should be allowed to acquire landed property or even to live outside of towns or *mestechki*. They were an economic and moral threat from which the authority of the landlord could no longer shield the peasants, and a political one as well, as their conduct had shown during the French invasion and the Polish Rebellions of 1831 and 1863.<sup>19</sup>

In Vil'no too it was the decline of the gentry and its desperate need for ready money that was said since 1861 to have caused an influx of Jews into the countryside as lessees of estates, dealers in lumber and grain, brewers, distillers and sellers of spirits. After the relatively well-to-do Jews came a flood of others as their stewards, clerks, agents, and domestics, all of whom engaged in side occupations at the expense of the peasants and settled in their midst. Incomplete figures, the total was implied to be much higher, were cited to show that in 1881 alone there had been up to 1,700 cases of peasants letting out part of their allotments to Jews who were less interested in agriculture than in living among

and off the rural population. There were, moreover, the Jews who lived on the lands of the gentry or other classes as leaseholders of inns, mills, ferries, and other privileges as well as those who were settled on a homestead (*usad'ba*) in or near the small country-towns.

Altogether, the number of Jews who lived dispersed among the Christian people of the countryside without adopting their character or customs exceeded 100,000. Their presence was destroying the peasant way of life and causing an increase in crime and vice. Jewish economic activity admittedly brought certain benefits. This was particularly true of the big firms in the cities which traded in grain, flax, hemp, and other crops. But dependence on them, and even less on the many poor Jews who followed in their wake, was not a natural condition to which for all time the local population need be condemned. It was beginning to be aware of the consequences of Jewish domination and exploitation and to show signs of that dissatisfaction which had led to the outbreaks in the South.<sup>20</sup>

The Grodno commission was disturbed alike by Jews leasing from nobles and peasants and by their intrusion into the villages not to work the land but for "mercantile" goals—to sell vodka, deal in stolen goods, lend money, and solicit legal business. The members of the commission unanimously declared the leasing of peasant land by Jews to be undesirable and asked that it be forbidden by law. The gentry could be expected to look after its own interests which, it was understood, did not include restrictions on the right to free disposition of its property. The governor of the province added his recommendation that only craftsmen be allowed in the villages, where the overall number of Jews had to be quickly reduced while it was still relatively small and before it was too late to guard the peasants and avoid disorders.<sup>21</sup>

In many commissions the Jews were defended, and vigorously so, by men who pointed out that imposing further disabilities would hardly end their isolation and fanaticism or put an end to that selfishness and sharp dealing to which poverty and discrimination had driven them. A minority of the Chernigov commission took this position; it nonetheless asked that Jews be removed from taverns and distilleries and denied the right to buy land in rural districts.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, Count A. K. Sivers, Governor of Khar'kov, declared that the only way to avoid Jewish violations of the law was the widest possible extension of rights. But this was to be done gradually and with great caution, especially where it meant close contacts with a rural people that was undeveloped and incapable of looking after its own interests. Since an owner always took the greatest care of his property, Jews should be allowed to acquire land, but leasing, because its purpose was exploitation and quick profit, must remain forbidden.<sup>23</sup> Even when there was a readiness to abolish the Pale of Settlement—and only four commissions recorded on that issue endorsed its removal without reservations—it was often motivated by the need to thin out the Jewish population and to relieve pressure on the land. Five other commissions were willing to see the Pale breached: Grodno for Jewish agricultural colonies anywhere in the Empire; Mogilev in places set aside exclusively for Jewish settlements; Podolia for migration to Asiatic Russia, "provided there were no political

obstacles;" Kherson, Ekaterinoslav, and a minority of Volynia for residence in Russia itself, except in villages.

It is not known whether the Committee of Ministers was at all influenced by the deliberations of the provincial commissions or saw the records of their meetings. The ministers, in any case, resisted Ignat'ev's pleas for urgency and adoption of his "temporary rules" on formal as well as substantive grounds. Measures of such scope as he and Gotovtsev requested should not be promulgated outside the normal legislative process in the Council of State; they would cause untold suffering not only among hundreds of thousands of uprooted Jews but would also hurt the many Christians who were linked with them in a web of innumerable commercial relationships; they would aggravate crowding in the cities and heighten the potential for disturbances; in the villages too tensions would rise because the authority given to their assemblies to expel would lead to bribery and abuses of power.<sup>24</sup>

Among Ignat'ev's sharpest critics were M. Kh. Reutern, Chairman of the Committee of Ministers and a former Minister of Finance, and the incumbent of that office, N. Kh. Bunge. They saw administrative arbitrariness and pogroms alike as undermining property rights, the nation's credit and good name, its hopes for economic stability and growth. The State Comptroller, D. M. Sol'skii, seconded them. "Today they are harassing the Jews," he warned. "Tomorrow it will be the turn of the so-called kulaks [. . .], then of merchants and landowners. In a word, if the authorities stand by passively, we can expect the development in the near future of the most terrible socialism."<sup>25</sup>

The Minister of Interior responded by stressing once again that the urban population was very much more capable than the rural folk of defending itself from the economic deprivations of the Jews, a fact which Russian legislation had long recognized, and that an added reason for concentrating Jews in a smaller number of towns was the greater ease of insuring their safety and public order than if they were scattered throughout the countryside. Having weakened the strength of his argument by admitting that most of the pogroms had arisen in cities and towns, Ignat'ev fell back on a second position. If the Jews now living in the villages were not to be expelled, others must at the very least be kept henceforth from coming into them. On that basis he was prepared to drop the request for closing villages outside the Pale to Jewish artisans. But he did not retreat from another of his demands: that the Jews be forbidden to sell drink in the villages; it was near their taverns, he said, that the disorders had begun and might begin again.

For all their suspicions of what they considered to be his reckless, demagogic approach and his lack of sound conservative principles, Ignat'ev's colleagues accepted a milder version of his interpretation of the events of 1881. The official *résumé* of their debates concluded that there was an adequate explanation for the fury with which native Christians had turned upon the Jews: it was extensive indebtedness and dependence on them in nearly every sphere of life and labor. That situation was caused by the low level of literacy and education in town and country, as well as by the special traits of the Jewish race (*plemia*), its aggressiveness and resourcefulness in business. With such a combi-

nation of factors it was all too easy for elements who were ever present and ready, to stir resentment into riot, especially, the ministers pointedly remarked, when the authorities failed to display the necessary determination and firmness. Whatever the root causes of violence might have been, it was the first duty of government to prevent it and to make entirely clear to all that the persons and property of the Jews enjoyed the full protection of the laws; neither their violation by mobs nor their slack enforcement by officials would be tolerated.<sup>26</sup>

Then, after turning down both the original 14 points of the Gotovtsev Committee and the scaled-down emergency program presented by Ignat'ev, the ministers voted, "in the interests of the local population," to yield to his urging on three points.<sup>27</sup> Jews not already living there were forbidden to take up residence in the villages (it might help to forestall trouble), to acquire rural real estate through lease, purchase or any other device, or to conduct business on Christian holy days. The prohibition which Ignat'ev and most of the provincial commissions wished to see put on the liquor traffic was rejected, either for fiscal or humanitarian reasons, although some minor restrictions were authorized. Alexander III gave his assent to the "Temporary Rules of 3 May 1881," the so-called May Laws. This legacy of Ignat'ev's year-long ministry survived until 1917, as did its underlying premises. His colleagues had not refuted them and they continued to loom large in the bureaucratic mind. Twenty-three years later, to the day, the Committee of Ministers expressed the opinion that the deplorable outbreaks of 1881 had demonstrated the abnormal relations between Jews and other Russian subjects and that the source of that abnormality was the "economic oppression of the rural population by the Jews. This basic thought informs the legislation issued in the reign of the Emperor Alexander III. . ." <sup>28</sup>

A more important reason for the concessions his colleagues made to Ignat'ev than their wish to help prevent a renewal of pogroms was their belief that the rules agreed to were a purely partial and temporary treatment of a problem requiring careful study and a comprehensive solution. Since Gotovtsev's Jewish Committee had failed in that regard, they asked the Emperor to appoint a High Commission which would not only examine the projects developed by its predecessor but the entire body of laws and regulations bearing on the Jews. Its recommendations would then be presented to the Council of State for discussion, imperial approval, and enactment. Ignat'ev's successor, Dmitrii Tolstoi, made this idea his own. Having taken firm steps to prevent a recurrence of pogroms, he convinced the Emperor in February 1883 that for their lasting prevention the High Commission should immediately begin its task, and appointed as its chairman a former Minister of Interior, L. S. Makov, who died shortly thereafter and was replaced by Count Kh. I. Pahlen, a member of the Council of State and Minister of Justice from 1867 to 1878. Usually known by the name of its second chairman, the High Commission included representatives of the chief state agencies concerned with Jewish matters. In five years of collecting and sifting materials and discussing the conclusions to be drawn from them, they did not shy away from questioning the presuppositions that had governed

past policy and which they knew to be held and respected in high places.<sup>29</sup>

It was the majority of the Pahlen Commission<sup>30</sup> that laid bare and disposed of many of the grounds on which existing laws and disabilities were based. In the process it made the most informed, systematic, extensive, and dispassionate assessment ever to be made by an official body of the part played by the Jews in Russian life. Here at last was the thorough-going examination of Ignat'ev's charges which the lack of information or time, caution or tactical considerations, had kept the Committee of Ministers from making in 1882. Regarding the reports of the provincial governors and commissions as tainted or ill-founded, and aware of the almost total lack of reliable statistics on nearly every aspect of Jewish life, the High Commission itself collected, or caused to be compiled by outside experts, the data on which alone informed decisions could be based.

To begin with, the Commission addressed itself in the volume which summarized its findings and recommendations to the question of Jewish numbers<sup>31</sup> which were usually inflated by enemies who saw them multiplying at a frightening rate and hiding from the tax collector and recruiting officer. There were, in 1881, just over four million Jews in the Russian Empire, or four percent of its population; their rate of increase was no higher and possibly lower than that of other groups. One million lived in the Kingdom of Poland where they made up 13% of the inhabitants; 2.9 million, or 12.5% of their total population, lived in the fifteen Russian provinces of the Pale of Settlement, with the heaviest concentration in the nine former Polish *gubernii*. Of that number, 1.9 million were to be found in the cities; 1.13 million in the townlets; 580,000 in the villages. The 164,000 Jews outside the Pale were distributed as follows: 66,000 in the three Baltic *gubernii* (3% of the total, with 13,000 in the villages); 54,000 in 32 Great Russian provinces (0.10% of the total, with 13,000 in the villages); 29,000 in the Caucasus; 12,000 in Siberia, and 3,000 in Central Asia.

These figures might not quiet irrational terrors of a Jewish flood engulfing the geographical heart of Russia and especially its villages, but unless they were simply dismissed as false, it would be difficult to represent the threat as both real and imminent. Even in the Pale itself there could hardly be talk of a disproportionate number of Jews in the villages. In only one of the 151 rural districts studied did the percentage of Jews go as high as 15.7; in the villages of the remaining districts the percentages ranged from five to ten (27 districts) and one to five (106 districts). In 17 districts, located for the most part in Poltava, Taurida, and Ekaterinoslav, the number of Jews in the villages fell below 1/100 of the inhabitants. In view of the fact that "at the present time, over the whole extent of the territory which the law has marked out for the permanent residence of the Jews, only the towns and townlets are open to their settlement and migration,"<sup>32</sup> the picture was not likely to change much, if at all.

Although the absolute number of Jews in the country districts of the Pale grew, largely by natural increase, by 22.8% between 1881 and 1897 (the year of the first general census), they were a declining proportion of the Jewish population, down from 20 to 16 percent. Finally, the figures

given for Jewish landowning and leasing—1.4 and 3.9 percent respectively in the 12 *gubernii* for which there were reliable data—together with the listing of legal restrictions on further acquisitions, should have served to put the Jewish danger in this area into perspective as well, even if in three provinces from 8.4 to 10.6 percent of land was in Jewish hands and from 5.3 to 7 percent in five others. Here too the May Laws would do their work. By 1900, the area of land owned by Jews had declined by almost a half and leased land by 85.1%. Nor did police or court records support contentions of significantly higher rates of criminality among Jews.<sup>33</sup>

The pogroms, the Pahlen Commission concluded, had “without doubt” been triggered by Jewish exploitation of the *narod*; but this was not why habitual, minor clashes had turned into major riots. In the North-West, for example, where both the soil and the people were poorer and Jewish exploitation worse than in the South, all had remained quiet, thanks to the precautions taken by Governor-General E. I. Tottleben. It was the weakness or ineptness of the police and military that had in the majority of cases made possible the escalation of the disturbances in a region where the memory of past popular movements against the Jews was still alive and where the people had come to believe that their renewal would be ignored or go unpunished by the authorities. This was as true in the countryside as in the towns, although the troubles had always spread from the latter to the former. People in the more remote villages, however, who dealt neither directly nor constantly with Jews in the towns, had largely remained immune to the infection. They continued to live in harmony with the few Jews among them, although they could have settled accounts with them with impunity. A distinction had, therefore, to be made between immediate and deeper causes of pogroms, and since the latter could only be removed over a long period of time, it was the government’s first task to maintain law and order and protect Jews from violence.<sup>34</sup>

This was the Commission’s answer to those who saw improved economic relationships between Jews and *narod* as the only way of pacifying outraged popular feeling. True, such feeling was justified and the charges against the Jews were supported by men who had an intimate knowledge of provincial life. But in the picture which the Commission presented of Jewish economic activity benefits balanced liabilities, and more often than not the latter were ascribed to the peculiar conditions imposed by law and custom. If the Jews, for example, were over-represented in trade, this was so because other spheres were closed to them; moreover, they had introduced advanced business methods and a more “European” organization which had carried trade in the Pale to a much higher stage than its still largely primitive state in the interior. In petty retail trade, the commissioners found to their surprise, the Jews were not as numerous as was generally believed—in the Pale as a whole they accounted for less than half—but the number of Jewish shops in towns and townlets was great and growing, with most of them dealing in items that were essential for the rural population. In addition, the Jews played a large and useful role in local fairs and markets.<sup>35</sup>

Whatever the nature of their business, it was characterized by the

quick turnover of capital, the wide availability of credit, fierce competition and, as a result, moderate costs and low profits, benefiting consumers and sellers. None of these advantages, however, had made Jewish businesses, large or small, any more resistant to the prevailing economic crisis than their Christian competitors. On the contrary, together with the May Laws it had increased business risk and the rivalry among them, as well as from Armenians and Greeks in the South, Germans in the West, and Old Believers in the interior. In the lumber trade, there was growth of competition from Russians, in Ukraine from landlords who had begun to market their own grain, and everywhere there were more Christian shops. For the Jews, the end result was a falling rate of profit and for the already marginal small retailers an existence not much above beggary. For those who dealt with the Jews it meant a better selection of goods, better prices, and a wider choice of outlets.<sup>36</sup>

The Jews were undeniably guilty of many abuses, especially as producers and sellers of liquor and lenders of money. The traffic in spirits in the Pale was largely in their hands, and almost entirely so in the villages and smaller towns. Much of it was illegal, though carried on with the help and connivance of peasants and others for whom it was a convenience, a necessity, or a source of profit. And far from enjoying economic power, many rural Jewish tavern keepers were unable even to pay for their licenses out of their earnings and operated without them. If so many Jews nonetheless turned to this business, it was because each tavern had a bit of garden and land attached to it and on a manor the possibility of keeping a cow to help feed their families. When the sale of vodka yielded enough to pay for license and rent, the tavern keeper might consider himself lucky; otherwise he had to seek side earnings as a craftsman, peddler, or, most often, moneylender in which capacity, needless to say, he was not always perfectly honest.<sup>37</sup>

Yet if Jewish taverns, moneylending, and usury were widespread in the Pale, so was the ready availability of credit, and there was no conclusive evidence to show that either the incidence of drunkenness or interest rates were higher than in the rest of the country. Jews did evade paying their taxes and license fees, used false weights and measures, and adulterated the products they sold, but they were driven to do so in part by extreme poverty. Such abuses were not unique to Jewish trade. They would begin to disappear with a general raising of standards in Russian commerce; with the education of the Jewish masses and their absorption in productive work other than trade; with the gradual removal of the exceptional legislation which had made them outcasts and outlaws and had helped to perpetuate and strengthen the racial passion for gain at the expense of others.<sup>38</sup>

The most common accusation against the Jews, that they exploit their Christian neighbors, was not without foundation, whatever extenuating circumstances might be found in poverty, ignorance, insecurity, and oppression. For that reason, the state could not stand by passively when peasants were defrauded or borrowed money at ruinous interest. But given the need, the free agreement of both sides and observance of the law, the state neither could nor should forbid the Jews to traffic in liquor, lend money, live in the villages, or take up farming. Repression

and regulation had not worked in the past, would not do so in the future, and were bound to be counter-productive. Since the issuance of the May Laws, for example, the number of Jews living in the countryside had increased and the prohibition on leaseholding had not prevented the conclusion of verbal agreements or contracts through Christian intermediaries. There was neither point nor humanity, therefore, in continuing the system of legal coercion.<sup>39</sup>

Instead, the state must do all it can to achieve what should be the two broad aims of Jewish policy—to weaken Jewish particularism and exploitation by a balanced, “organic,” and liberal approach. Pursued consistently, cautiously, and gradually such a middle course between repression and non-intervention would in time unite the Jews with other Russian subjects under the rule and shelter of common laws. It would be wrong, however, the Commission warned, to hope that gradual emancipation would lead eventually to assimilation. It had never yet been achieved anywhere and was made impossible by the too sharply pronounced characteristics of the Semitic race. Nor was assimilation necessary. The interests of the state required no more than that the nationalities which formed part of the Empire serve its welfare and greatness with sincerity and devotion, without having to abandon either their identity or their active membership in the national community.<sup>40</sup>

The Commission’s advice that the government exercise its tutelary and protective role only when there were flagrant transgressions of the law derived from the belief that it was both self-defeating and illogical for society to enlist the state in its battle against the Jews. Were Russian merchants and landlords really incapable of holding their own against them; were they really as inexperienced and defenseless as their endless appeals and complaints suggested? What prevented them from shunning the Jews if they truly feared them? What kept them from forming their own professional or class organizations for mutual aid, credit, and trade if it was not the unhealthy habit, acquired over a century, of looking to the authorities for help? Self-help, self-reliance, self-defense, hard work and sobriety—these were the weapons that would alone paralyze the economic power of the Jews, and they would not be forged and used unless the state withdrew from the contest. This was as true of peasants as it was of the upper and middle classes, despite the fact that ever since 1861 the former serfs had been treated like wards of the state who required special care and protection. In the indictment of the Jews it was always the peasants who figured as the hapless victims, peasant ignorance and impotence that necessitated and justified anti-Jewish measures. But those who clamored for them did more than exaggerate the peasants’ plight and the Jews’ power. They betrayed a contempt for the common people of rural Russia and a lack of faith in their native endowment.<sup>41</sup>

There were not a few well-to-do peasants in the Pale, the Commissioners pointed out, who would not deal with Jews and owed their well-being, in part, to that fact. Others, it was true, were often forced to turn to the Jews to borrow money, especially after emancipation because of new taxes and redemption payments, and for this the Jews were not to blame. Nor were they responsible for the peasants’ need and passion



for vodka and all the evil consequences. If the liquor business was exclusively in Jewish hands it was the result of circumstances which had prevailed for centuries; and if it went together with moneylending, usury, and exploitation, the source was peasant drunkenness. It was really too much to expect that the Jews should to their own detriment become the people's moral guides and preceptors in sobriety, the more so since the advantage was not invariably theirs. Frequently it was peasants who swindled Jewish employers or tenants and, in the extreme case, settled scores with them in pogroms in villages near cities or townlets. Peasants too must at last stand on their own feet and carry on their own shoulders the burden of resistance to Jewish exploitation. If they did not, even the best of laws would not prevent the ever deeper penetration of the countryside by Jewish economic power, by poverty and drunkenness. Old-Believer peasants in the Western provinces had shown that sturdy, shrewd, hard-working Russian folk were quite capable of holding their own against the Jews.

“To shift the center of gravity of the struggle against the harmful influence of the Jews from the government to society itself, to all its strata, does not, however, mean that the government would become the silent onlooker of the conflict and adhere to a policy of non-intervention. At the same time it cannot yield, at one point, to popular dislike of the Jews; insist at another that all its subjects be treated alike, and then invoke considerations of equal economic opportunity. It must combine all these approaches, pursue them simultaneously, yet leave the economic struggle to follow its own course without allowing it to go too far.”<sup>42</sup>

For all the contradictions, hesitations, and cautions of the Commission's recommendations—it held, for example, that peasant land should continue to be denied to Jewish tenants<sup>43</sup>—its majority spoke clearly in favor of gradual emancipation and against the proposition that peasants were in greater need of the sheltering hand of the state than any other segment of society. It may well have been the fear of putting that proposition to the test that contributed materially to the rejection of its work. To a regime convinced of its duty and ability to guide the nation's development it was little reassurance to be told that its past instructions had failed of their purpose and were constantly evaded. It could be and was taken as a call to renew and redouble efforts at control. As the government's actions would show, when the tranquility of the countryside or the putative welfare of its people was at stake, it refused adamantly to dismantle the legal barriers that were to keep Jews separated from peasants and the land.

It was a policy which enjoyed a considerable measure of public sympathy,<sup>44</sup> not all of it from the right wing of the political spectrum. The belief that an inexperienced and simple people should not be left to fend for itself in an increasingly competitive market economy was not necessarily an unqualified endorsement of government policies or held only by anti-Semites.<sup>45</sup> Yet even those who regarded the Jews as only a symptom rather than the cause of the general phenomenon of

capitalist exploitation unwittingly strengthened the hand of administrators who sought, by proceeding against the Jews, to diminish the unsettling impact of commercial and industrial change and the dangers it posed to social stability and the docility of the masses.

Their most influential spokesman was Konstantin Pobedonostsev. Director of the Holy Synod (1880-1905), the Tsar's tutor and confidant, he had become disillusioned with the reforms of Alexander II. Even serf-emancipation, that "great and holy idea," had only given to the "dark masses" a freedom which had left them without supervision and allowed them to waste their time in drink and sloth, to fall into the hands of publicans, usurers, and Jews. His countrymen's infatuation with novelty, their loss of respect for authority, the decline of social discipline and private virtue had all set in with the reforms and before long the general corruption, the destruction of honor and duty came in his mind to be linked with the Jews. "They have engrossed everything," he wrote to Dostoevsky in 1879, "they have undermined everything, but the spirit of the century supports them." And that was as true in Russia as it was in Romania and Serbia, a fact which for Pobedonostsev emphasized Russia's vulnerability and the need to maintain defenses against the Jews. It was their superior talents and industry, their intelligence and abstemiousness, qualities which most Russians lacked, that obliged the state to come to the aid of the most backward and helpless of its people.<sup>46</sup>

Deprived of the guardianship of the landlord and without a native middle class in town or country, Pobedonostsev said in 1891, the rural population could only turn to the state for assistance against Jewish exploitation and deceit. The decline of the commune, the spread of industry and capitalism made it all the more important that the state control and guide the forces undermining the old order. It should prevent merchants, Jews, and kulak-usurers from acquiring communal lands; it should guarantee the peasants' indivisible and inalienable ownership of land and supply them (and small businessmen) with capital and credit to restrict the influence of Jewish usurers and forestall the emergence of a landless, disgruntled urban proletariat. The commune, Pobedonostsev conceded, might be doomed; roads and railways had to be built. But the state, "the guardian of the highest interest," had to soften the shock of economic and social change.<sup>47</sup> The laws of 1886 and 1893 which tied the peasants more firmly to their village communes, and the institution in 1889 of the "land captain," formalizing their wardship to the state, made it a certainty that the bonds of the Jews would not be loosened when Russians were being restricted to prevent their doing or suffering harm.<sup>48</sup>

Aside from the May Laws, the most painful of the new disabilities which the government of Alexander III imposed on the Jews did not come in the area of rural residence and occupation. More ominous for their prospects of relief were the restrictions of access to higher and secondary education, to the legal and medical professions, the brutal expulsions from Moscow and other cities, the total or partial exclusion from local government, public service, corporate management, and stock exchanges. If Pobedonostsev and others truly dreaded the Jews as

the advance guard of the forces of decay and dissolution that were invading Russia together with factories and foreign capital, they made their stand and concentrated their effort in the right places. Yet for all the evidence that was becoming available that the peasants benefited from the proximity of the Jews or that the latter were losing their economic power and importance in the villages as the century drew to its close, there was no relaxation of vigilance against the small Jewish trader in foodstuffs or manufactured goods, the middle-man, and tavern keeper.<sup>49</sup> Official opposition to them was more determined, in fact, than that which was being made to the Jewish industrialist or banker, large-scale grain merchant, or exporter of lumber. Either the enemy was being attacked where he was thought to be weakest and to have the fewest defenders, or where the Jews were still believed to be as numerous and dangerous—perhaps because of their own poverty and despair—as they had always been.

The impressions of an American traveller<sup>50</sup> in the Pale, recorded in 1892 or 1893, may stand as a summary both of what he heard about the Jews locally and of what was echoed by newspapers and officials throughout the country. The Russian peasant, he was told by officers, officials, and acquaintances had a traditional hatred of Jews with whom he was only too eager to get even as the author of his ills. And very little that the government had done in the years after 1863 to settle and strengthen Russian peasants in the Western provinces had borne fruit.

“You begin to inquire, and you find that the Jew not only owns the tavern, but trades in all the articles which peasants have to buy. You learn also that the Jew is creditor to nearly every peasant for miles around, and has a lien upon everything which that peasant may grow upon his land. You find that the peasant cultivates his land not only for himself, but for the Jew, and that all his reward is the privilege of bare existence. There are many patriotic and humane Russians who have given it to me as their deliberate opinion that the Russian peasant would be better off today had he never been emancipated.”<sup>51</sup>

The condition of the Russian peasant reminded the American of that in which the Negro slave had found himself after being freed, and he shared the widespread belief that the Jewish question in Russia had not become serious until after 1861 when the serf's owner was no longer able to shield him from the consequences of his improvidence. With emancipation the gulf between peasant and lord had become as wide as that separating the Black from his former master; and between these two classes there had entered an army of Jews who alone profited from the edicts of 1861, victimizing the peasants through their love of drink and the landlords through their need of money and ignorance of management.

“I am informed on good authority that, in spite of laws to the contrary, a very large proportion of the land within the Pale is practically in Jewish hands, to say nothing of the peasants who work upon it. To how great an extent this is the case is as difficult to find out as to give the exact number of Jews in Russia, for

they have a direct interest in deceiving the government in regard to both of these matters, and have, so far, succeeded very well."<sup>52</sup>

That view had been held in the bureaucracy for over a century and had been changed neither by the findings of the Pahlen Commission nor by the May Laws. These were as ineffectively enforced, the Governor-General of Vil'no observed in 1884, as if they had been suspended.<sup>53</sup> Late that year, new regulations were issued for nine provinces of the Pale nullifying all contracts concluded in contravention of the laws of 1864 and 1865 and authorizing governors to proceed against Jews and Poles who had leased or bought land through such illegal contracts.<sup>54</sup> The May Laws and their increasingly strict interpretation by the Senate made purchases of non-urban real estate impossible for all but the very few Jews who had the right of universal residence. The prohibition on leasing was from the start applied more rigorously by local officials who extended it to all forms of real property, including even the rental of living quarters in villages. In this instance the Senate held that the law had intended to bar Jews only from leasing agricultural land for agricultural purposes, but that leasing other real property, whether for commercial, industrial, or residential use was permissible without, however, conferring the right of residence on tenants who had not lived in a rural locality before 3 May 1882.<sup>55</sup>

If it was true that the provisions of the May Laws on land purchases had at first been laxly enforced, the same could not be said of the article which closed the villages to Jewish newcomers. While it was understood in some districts to allow Jews who had resided in one village on 3 May 1882 to move to another one, the Ministry of Interior considered such removals as the taking up of a new residence and therefore prohibited. The matter reached the Senate and the Council of State where 23 members agreed with the Ministry and 24 held that changing domicile from one rural district to another was not in violation of the Temporary Rules of 1882. The Emperor sided with the minority, tying the right of Jews to live in the countryside to the village in which they had made their home before 3 May 1882; even temporary departure jeopardized that right. The risk of losing it increased considerably when in 1892 the job of deciding who was or was not a legal resident was shifted from the courts to the police who carried it out with the customary arbitrariness and on the basis of records they had themselves compiled. The only recourse against their decisions was to the Senate which, pending an appeal, might or might not order a stay of execution. In many instances it came too late, and expulsions were numerous.<sup>56</sup>

In 1891 the American Minister to St. Petersburg recorded signs that for some months the May Laws were being more stringently executed.<sup>57</sup> It is impossible to tell whether his comment that they had theretofore "been so loosely and lightly observed as to have been practically inoperative" reflected the true state of affairs or the unhappiness of informants who were congenital pessimists when it came to the adequacy and effectiveness of anti-Jewish measures. It is certain that there were men in the government who thought that even the strictest enforcement of the May Laws would not stop the growth of Jewish numbers and

power. Viacheslav Pleve, then Assistant Minister of Interior and head of the Conference which had been charged with the work of the Pahlen Commission after its dissolution, was one of them.

He began in 1890 to circulate a program of Jewish legislation in the bureaucracy that went in some respects beyond the original Ignat'ev-Gotovtsev proposals. The Pleve project, of which no firsthand evidence has survived, is thought to have envisioned the setting up of ghettos in a number of large cities, the reduction of Jewish commerce, and the return to the Pale of the privileged Jews who had left it. Those whom the Rules of 1882 had allowed to remain in the villages were gradually to be cleared from them. Young people would have to leave rural localities, even their birthplaces, once they came of age; anyone who had temporarily absented himself from his village of registry was not to be readmitted. Rental agreements concluded in violation of the May Laws were to be treated as crimes, and to inhibit contacts between peasants and Jews, things would be made still more difficult for Jewish money-lenders, tavern keepers, traders, and artisans.<sup>58</sup>

Pleve's drastic plan never became law. When the Minister of Finance, A. I. Vyshnegradskii, learned of it he intervened with Minister of the Interior I. N. Durnovo to delay its submission to the Council of State. It never reached that body, possibly because Vyshnegradskii, after the Moscow expulsions of 1891 and the protests to which they had given rise abroad, warned the Emperor of the still greater damage continued persecution of the Jews would do to Russia's credit abroad and her economy at home.<sup>59</sup> He and his successor Sergei Witte were less successful, however, in pleading the country's economic advantage and financial needs against a series of controls and conditions which were placed in the years 1892 and 1894 on mining and oil companies with Jewish or foreign shareholders or directors.<sup>60</sup>

That foreigners as well as Jews were affected by these new laws made it more difficult to counter the patriotic argument that Russia's most valuable and strategic resources had to be controlled by Russians. The same point was made with reference to land. Once it was made more difficult or impossible (1887-1892) for foreigners to buy or lease it in Poland, nine Western and two Baltic provinces, as well as in Turkestan and five other districts of Central Asia (where the prohibition extended to all non-native non-Christians), it became improbable that Jews would be exempted from laws inspired by nationalism, concern for Russian peasants and for the security of the borderlands.<sup>61</sup> On the contrary, from the mid-eighties the Committee of Ministers allowed the acquisition of rural real estate by joint stock companies and partnership only if their articles of incorporation or bylaws specified that a majority of officers or board members were non-Jews and that company land not be managed, held or otherwise put at the disposal of Jewish officers and shareholders.<sup>62</sup>

The rationale in this case was conformity with the May Laws, and although it was on more than one occasion recognized that these regulations hampered business and industry as much as the Jews,<sup>63</sup> they were only modified after 1906 but never abandoned. The advantages, as described officially in 1913, outweighed the drawbacks: "The introduction of these conditions minimized the undesirable effects the Jewish element

might have on the inhabitants of rural districts without, at the same time, entirely precluding Jewish participation in joint stock enterprises."<sup>64</sup> In other words, Jewish capital was welcome as long as its owners could be kept away from places which it had been thought necessary to close to them.

As Minister of Finance from 1892 to 1903 and chief proponent of Russia's industrialization with the help of foreign loans and investments, Sergei Witte stressed in his recollections how much opposed he had been while in office to the whole system of persecution and discrimination as irrational and subversive of the goals of economic growth and social peace. He had, it is true, deplored the anti-Jewish biases of the Tsars and their ministers, called for a relaxation of oppressive laws, for moderate extensions of Jewish rights and even, on one occasion, for the gradual abolition of their disabilities.

As the country's first Prime Minister and head of the cabinet under the new constitutional arrangements of 1905 Witte revealed himself, however, to be a very much more cautious advocate of Jewish rights and relief than in his own version of events. There was reason for caution in 1905 and 1906 when he was attacked by Right and Left and unsure of the backing of an indecisive and suspicious monarch who had no love for Jews. But Witte's commitment to Jewish emancipation had always been qualified, and his attitude to the Jews, like that of other Ministers of Finance, was informed primarily by calculations of utility rather than by firm principles. Thus, while he opposed massive expulsions from the villages of the Pale which several governors had suggested, he nonetheless cited the Jewish presence there to support the introduction of the state liquor monopoly in the Western provinces.

In the memorandum<sup>65</sup> which Alexander III approved on 11 July 1894, Witte referred to the reports of the provincial commissions of 1881 to show that the liquor traffic had given the Jews a powerful means for the exploitation of the local population and that this trade was almost always connected with the lending of money, the favorite occupation of the Jewish tribe. The Jewish village tavern was everywhere the source of peasant ruin and depravity and none of the laws passed or proposed were capable of putting an end to this in view of the peasants' hankering for vodka. The forcible removal of millions of Jews might indeed have the desired effect, but Witte dismissed it as impracticable and as a violation of the property rights and economic interests of Jews and non-Jews. In an apparent reference to Pleve's project, Witte declared that closing the villages to males who had come of age and to women who had married outside them could lead, if consistently applied, to the eventual disappearance of Jews from the countryside. Yet this was a remedy for the distant future. In the meantime, provoked by chronic persecution and expulsions, the Jews would grow even more rapacious and become a worse affliction for the towns and townlets.

To solve the Jewish question, Witte wrote in language reminiscent of that used by the Pahlen Commission, priority should be given not to repressive but to organic measures which would protect the native population, raise the moral level of the Jews, and weaken their racial exclusiveness and religious separatism. His ideas on that score he

would communicate in a separate memorandum to the Minister of Interior. For the moment he wished only to address the urgent question of the Jewish liquor traffic and to submit that the best means of removing its baneful consequences and solving the pressing political difficulties created by the alien Jewish nationality was to introduce in the Pale the state sale of alcoholic beverages without waiting for the results of its experimental introduction in Samara, Perm', Ufa, and Orenburg.

There is no reason to believe that Witte ever submitted a project for the solution of the Jewish question. Perhaps the Emperor's assent to his immediate request made the matter less urgent, while the accession of Nicholas II in October 1894 was bound to cause a temporary cessation of governmental initiatives as the new ruler and his father's ministers took each others' measure. For the Jews the change of rulers brought no change of status or prospects. In the course of 1896-1898 most of the privately owned taverns in the Pale were replaced by state liquor stores. Some 200,000 Jews were deprived of the scanty livelihood they had derived from them and increased by half the number who were described in official statistics as being "without definite occupation."<sup>66</sup>

#### IV

The state liquor monopoly did not end official preoccupation with the presence and role of Jews in the countryside and the young monarch received much contradictory advice on the subject. Bunge, now Chairman of the Committee of Ministers, maintained as he had in 1882 that the village Jews, for all their vices, were as yet indispensable to the peasants whom they served as sellers of produce and suppliers of tools and consumer goods. A way had therefore to be found, short of expulsion, to put limits on the Jews' perniciousness without depriving the peasant of his services. The problem, as Bunge saw it, was the Jews' "privileged position"<sup>67</sup> *vis-à-vis* the villagers. Registered in the urban estates, they were subject neither to the authority nor the obligations of the peasant estate from which they were barred. The assemblies of village and *volost'*, their elders, officials, and courts could neither tax nor discipline them, make them carry their share of labor duties—such as road mending—or even hear complaints against them.<sup>68</sup>

To this anomalous situation of supposed peasant impotence and supposed Jewish impunity, much of official and non-official opinion had attributed the pogroms. By the end of his life, Bunge too had come close to that view and to the acceptance of Ignat'ev's formula of the abnormality of economic relationships between Jews and Russians of the lower classes. In order to escape from it he now called for extending the jurisdiction of peasant institutions to Jews living in the villages and requiring them to assume the same fiscal and labor duties as the peasants. Yet they were still to have no part in peasant government as electors or officials and to be barred from buying or leasing land they did not work themselves. Jewish landownership was fraught with dangers for agriculture itself, for industry, and for the state. At best, permanent village

residents might be allowed to own a house and enough land for a kitchen garden.<sup>69</sup>

Bunge's belief in the continued utility of Jewish traders and artisans to the rural economy, especially in remote areas, was echoed by a number of reports and studies.<sup>70</sup> Some of these asked for a modification of the May Laws to make it possible, for example, for Jewish tailors, blacksmiths, and grain brokers to live where they were needed. Several governors of the Pale also requested revision or clarification of the Regulations of 1882 which were, after all, only temporary and presented them with difficult problems of interpretation and application. The distinction between urban and rural localities was frequently unclear and in the congested towns, unemployment and political unrest were on the rise. In December 1895 Nicholas ordered his Minister of Interior to determine how the May Laws might be changed or supplemented.<sup>71</sup>

I. L. Goremykin moved slowly and cautiously, beginning his task by requesting from local officials data and opinions of which there can have been no lack in St. Petersburg. It was the absence of reliable and concrete facts, Goremykin told the Committee of Ministers in February 1897, that made it impossible for him as yet to submit specific amendments to the Temporary Regulations of 3 May 1882 or to recommend their enactment as regular laws;<sup>72</sup> more likely it was the difficulty of steering a safe course between those who opposed relaxation and those who favored it. Where, precisely, the young Emperor stood was still unknown. He had, it is true, agreed that the May Laws needed reexamining when the Governor of Volynia in his report for 1895 had raised the issue, but had disapproved of the governor's suggestion to abolish the Pale.<sup>73</sup> He had also been disturbed when several governors in the years 1897 to 1900 told him of extensive Jewish purchases of land and forests in the non-Pale provinces of Smolensk, Novgorod, Pskov, and Kursk (where Jewish capitalists were building sugar refineries on gentry land) and insistently asked that something be done about this "undesirable development."<sup>74</sup>

The Commission which was set up in 1899<sup>75</sup> to deal with the question of the May Laws was well aware, therefore, of the limits set to its work even if the Tsar, in charging it, had not explicitly ruled out their abrogation. Composed of representatives of several government departments and headed by Assistant Minister of Interior Baron Alexander Uexküll-Güldenbandt, the Commission nonetheless thought it advisable to ask for a modification of Ignat'ev's Rules by exempting gentry land from the prohibition on leasing. While peasant and adjacent land should remain inaccessible to Jews because its owners lacked the business acumen to deal with them, the government need not worry about the ability of noble landowners to look after their own interests. Since existing regulations not only deprived them of the right freely to manage their estates, reducing their value and leading to all kinds of circumventions of the law, it was best to change the law.

Provision having been made to forestall subletting to peasants, Jews should be free to lease gentry land either for their own cultivation or for the construction of factories, to operate mills, fisheries, quarries, and other gentry properties. Jewish leaseholders would be enabled to make an honest living and *pomeshchiki* to increase the profitability of their



estates. As if to show that it was not indifferent to the welfare of the peasants, the Commission also thought desirable the adoption of Ignat'ev's idea that village communes be empowered to expel offending Jews, balancing it with a recommendation to open rural districts to those who had the right of universal residence. None of these proposals was adopted and policy continued to flounder uncertainly between the defense and preservation of peasants and land on one hand and the need to minimize the economic, legal, and administrative complications created by the May Laws on the other.

On 27 March 1902, for example, Minister of Interior D. S. Sipiagin submitted to his colleagues a memorandum suggesting that a number of localities in the Pale which were officially designated as rural but had lost their rural character because they were situated near railroads or industrial establishments be exempted from the effect of the May Laws. Yet in May the Senate ruled that Jewish agriculturalists settled on state lands did not have the right to acquire additional land from peasants and, in December, that Jews in the Pale could not acquire real property in those townlets where the organs of local government were of the village rather than the municipal type.<sup>76</sup>

It was obvious that the Temporary Rules were susceptible of conflicting interpretations, in constant need of clarification, and the source of many abuses and irregularities. In supporting Sipiagin's initiative, the chairman of the State Council's Department of Civil and Religious Affairs declared that it was only the first step towards a full review of the Temporary Rules which had fettered the Jews without achieving their purpose. It was Sipiagin's successor, V. K. Pleve, reputed to have had a hand in drafting Ignat'ev's program and himself the author of the more rigorous project of 1890, who carried Sipiagin's plan forward and defended it in the Committee of Ministers. To those who wanted to reduce the number of nominally rural settlements which Pleve proposed to open to Jewish residence, he answered that the towns and townlets were overfull of Jews, that most were unable to support themselves, and that their extreme poverty constituted a threat to public order and security. On 10 May and 9 December 1903 the Emperor approved a list of 158 localities to which the May Laws no longer applied.<sup>77</sup>

Even before the outbreak of the bloody Kishinev pogrom (April 6-8, 1903)—for which he was held almost universally responsible—supplied Pleve with a motive for pacifying outraged opinion at home and abroad, this most reactionary and unpopular of Nicholas's ministers had recognized the explosive anger of the Jewish masses of the Pale and the need to weaken it by minor concessions. Pleve was convinced of the political and moral unreliability of the Jews and of the government's right and duty to take protective measures against them. Yet he was also a pragmatist and believed that some moderation of existing policy was required if the alliance which he was sure existed between Jewish financiers abroad and Jewish revolutionaries at home was to be broken and Russia's prestige restored.

To that end Pleve had championed Sipiagin's proposal, restored educational quotas (cut a few years earlier) to the level of 1887, and in August 1903 let it be known to Jewish contacts that he was disposed

to let yeung people with a secondary or higher education live outside the Pale, to permit the rental of rural land as well as the purchase of small plots for Jewish agriculture within it, and possibly to offer other concessions. In the same month he informed governors of the Pale of his intention to summon yet another Commission for the Revision of Jewish Legislation and invited their opinions. The sources disagree what the Commission would have advised if its sittings had not been terminated about two weeks after they began by the outbreak of the Japanese War. Most of its members appear to have favored an easing of the May Laws (as did a number of governors) and possibly their abolition; a minority definitely did so.<sup>78</sup>

The minority included Count K. K. Pahlen, Governor of Vil'no and son of the head of the Pahlen Commission. His response to Pleve's August circular; a report submitted to the Tsar in late 1903 or early 1904 by Pahlen's immediate superior, Prince P. D. Sviatopolk-Mirskii, Governor-General of Vil'no, Kovno, and Grodno; and the memoirs of Prince S. D. Urusov, Governor of Bessarabia at the time of Kishinev and, like Pahlen, a member of the 1904 Commission, may be regarded as representative of liberal bureaucratic opinion on the Jewish question. While Pahlen and Sviatopolk-Mirskii may not have been prepared to go as far as Urusov's call for the total abandonment of exceptional Jewish laws, the three men agreed on the urgent necessity of doing away with the May Laws.<sup>79</sup>

Their criticisms of these were hardly novel: they had created administrative chaos, encouraged the corruption of local officials, and by closing the villages to the Jews had failed either to contribute to their improvement or to that of the peasants. The tens of thousands of Jews who had on expiration of their leases been forced to leave the countryside and their customary work—truck and dairy farms, orchards and mills, workshops and taverns—had not only lost their homes and livelihood; their leaving had also deprived the rural population of necessary and useful services. Nor had the exploitative tendencies of the Jews been checked by the May Laws, since those whom they had allowed to remain in the villages were now less constrained by competition from outsiders and those who entered them illegally were the most ruthless and immoral element.

One form of exploitation, Sviatopolk-Mirskii observed, had however been much reduced by the state liquor monopoly, others should be combatted by the stricter application of criminal laws and penalties to individual lawbreakers, not by preventing Jews in general from living and working in rural settlements. This had merely aggravated their density, insecurity, and poverty in the towns and made them fertile soil for anti-governmental activity. For Pahlen and Sviatopolk-Mirskii the growth of Jewish socialism (the Bund) and nationalism (the Zionist movement) made a powerful argument for the proposition that since repression had failed, it was time for a change of course, for admitting that the chief cause of Jewish dissidence was the "abnormal position of the Jewish population in general, and of the working class in particular," and to end this abnormality by repealing the May Laws.

It is improbable that Pleve would have embraced these views in

their entirety even if an overwhelming majority of the Commission had done so, and certain that the Emperor would have rejected them. Pleve's perception of the Jewish problem was narrowly tactical, lacking in broader perspectives, and based on the assumption that it could be dealt with by palliatives, the opening of safety valves. Meeting with Theodor Herzl in August 1903,<sup>80</sup> he told the Zionist leader that the ultimate goal for Russia's Jews was assimilation, to be achieved through higher education and economic betterment. But, he admitted, the process of assimilation was painfully slow; nor could it be greatly speeded, for economic conditions in the Pale were bad, an expansion of educational opportunities would mean displacing Christian graduates, and the whole problem had recently been complicated by Jewish adherence to radical parties. He would therefore welcome the establishment of a Jewish state to absorb several million Jewish emigrants while keeping in Russia the most capable and prosperous Jews who could be assimilated.

What, Herzl asked, could in the meantime be done for the ones who remained and to facilitate their pacification? Would the minister consider extending the right of residence to Courland and Riga and agree to let Jewish farmers buy up to ten *desiatiny* of land? Pleve declared himself not opposed to Jews moving into the Baltic provinces. There, facing Germans and Latvians (rather than Russian peasants, it was implied), they could not put the population at an economic disadvantage. Individual land purchases were another matter. He had, he said, launched the idea of authorizing the acquisition of from three to five *desiatiny*, but opposition in the government had been so great that he had been forced to withdraw it. What might be feasible and acceptable were Jewish agricultural settlements—*des bourgs juifs*—in which individuals could hold in private possession part of the communal land.

The question of land was not brought up in the interview which Pleve gave in October to the English journalist and "Foreign Secretary of Anglo-Jewry" Lucien Wolfe. For the rest, he told him much the same as he had told Herzl about the difficulty of assimilating the bulk of poor and uncultivated Jews, about the desirability of easing Jewish emigration, and about the steps he had taken to relieve Jewish misery in the Pale by reclassifying a number of villages as townlets. More important, and more revealing of his and the government's basic attitudes, was the firmly stated commitment to retention of the Pale. "He shares the opinion of those," the text of the interview approved by Pleve reads, "who find it difficult to grant free access to the Russian interior to the Jews, for the Russian peasant, who is himself very poor, would then have to share the little that he has with the newcomers who belong, for the most part, to the non-productive classes."<sup>81</sup>

Pleve's death at the hands of a Social Revolutionary in August 1904 made impossible the testing of his intentions. Those of his successor, the harbinger of the brief liberal "Spring" which was to reconcile state and society, were made public when he left Vil'no to assume his new post. Sviatopolk-Mirskii told a Jewish delegation that the anomalous situation of the Jews would have to undergo a radical change for the better; to foreign journalists he stated his intention of reducing disabilities. A government declaration of 12 December spoke of greater religious

toleration and freedom of conscience, of lessening religious and national discrimination insofar as this did not run counter to the interests of state and people. For all his good intentions the new minister accomplished little, and the ground for what he was able to do before he was dismissed in January 1905 had been prepared by Pleve.<sup>82</sup> Whether it was because of the opposition of other ministers or that of the Emperor, because of their anti-Semitism, their fears of popular protest or of Jews flooding the countryside, a fundamental reform of Jewish policy was as unattainable for the "liberal" Mirskii as it had been unthinkable for the reactionary Pleve. And so it was to remain. Whatever the attitude of the head of government or of his colleagues, there would be only minor improvements and these could be followed or even accompanied by new restrictions.<sup>83</sup>

On the occasion of the baptism of the heir to the throne, an imperial decree of 11 August 1904 widened the residence rights of several categories of Jews: university graduates, first-guild merchants, veterans, artisans, dentists, druggists, medical assistants, and midwives. They were henceforth allowed to move into the rural districts of the Pale and, while living there, to lease real property for residential, industrial, or other non-agricultural purposes. It was a gesture which might have been significant if it had been followed by others. As it was, it affected only a small number of individuals—and with the possible exception of masons, carpenters, gardeners, and others for whom the new privilege was in any case conditioned on plying their trades—these were not much interested in the opening of Pale villages or benefited by it.<sup>84</sup>

In the midst of the revolutionary storm that engulfed all classes and nationalities of the Empire in 1905, the Jews themselves were no longer content to ask for relief or likely to be satisfied even if the May Laws had been abolished altogether. More insistently than ever before their demand was for full and equal rights, and it could no longer be met by enlarging the list of villages to which they might move (as was done in November 1905)<sup>85</sup> or the categories of those who might move into them. There was a profound and almost willful misunderstanding in the government of what was needed to placate the Jews whose anger was believed to be a chief ingredient of the revolutionary opposition. Even ministers who saw that justice as much as politics required that oil be poured on troubled waters still thought and talked of granting favors or privileges rather than general rights, and incongruously called on the Jews for restraint and patience while events were moving at dramatic speed.

In part, this failure to act decisively and generously reflected the confusion and conflicts, the inability to gauge correctly the country's mood, that afflicted the governmental apparatus and its personnel in the face of unprecedented challenges from every quarter. The lack of firm leadership and the very magnitude of social and political turbulence inspired divided counsel and contradictory action, a mixture of repression and liberalization, Durnovo and Witte, punitive detachments and the October Manifesto. With respect to the Jews and to the problems and demands they posed, the issue was felt to be even more compli-

cated. The men in charge of policy not only wondered whether removing Jewish grievances would have the desired effect of checking Jewish dissidence or inflaming it. They also worried that yielding to the pleas of the Jews might free the government of pressure in one quarter only to increase its hazard from other directions. Not all the men who opposed Jewish equality did so in genuine dread of mass violence against the Jews *and* the authorities if the latter should opt for emancipation. Nonetheless, this was a risk which it was universally felt imprudent to ignore. Pogroms—whether spontaneous, inspired, or instigated—were widespread before and after the issuance of the October Manifesto and they might break out again to make more difficult the work of pacification or reform.

There were, thus, two schools of thought in the government during the revolutionary crisis as to what should be done about the Jews: one holding that discriminatory laws and practices must be relaxed in order to improve Russia's standing and prospects for loans abroad, to deprive the government's enemies of an inflammatory issue, and to isolate Jewish radicals; the other insisting that liberalization was but the first and possibly fateful step in the direction of abandoning all safeguards and that it would provoke mass reprisals against both Jews and government. Count I. I. Tolstoy,<sup>86</sup> who held the Ministry of Education in the Witte cabinet, appears to have been the only high-ranking official who made a case for unconditional emancipation and did so on grounds of humanity and justice as well as practical benefits. All other advocates of the expansion of Jewish rights to some degree accepted as real the spectre of popular wrath conjured up by its opponents and stopped short of fundamental reforms, especially when it came to the question of land. Although the revolution had been made and won in the towns, peasant riots had helped it to victory, and unless the government could restore order in the countryside and win to its side at least part of a rural population which was still believed to be possessed of conservative instincts, it would be unable to contain the urban revolution.

This was the warning sounded at the Peterhof Conference of July 1905 by General A. P. Ignat'ev, a member of the State Council and former Governor-General of Kiev, whom the Emperor had sent on a tour of inspection in Ekaterinoslav and Kherson. He reported that villagers in the two provinces had without exception pleaded for the retention of autocracy and opposed Jewish equality.<sup>87</sup> It may be doubted whether the General had made a conscientious or scientific sounding of peasant opinion, but there were others to confirm what he had said. In a letter of 2 November P. P. Migulin, Professor of Economics at Khar'kov University, told Witte that the October Manifesto had been interpreted by the peasants as a call to rescue the Tsar from the clutches of "lords," Jews, and radical students who were preventing the ruler from giving them land.<sup>88</sup>

In the same month General N. V. Dubasov made similar observations in Chernigov where, he said, anti-Semitism had deep roots among the peasants who had received the Manifesto as an imperial license to rob and beat Jews and Polish pans. Dubasov himself saw the Manifesto

as an indirect proclamation of Jewish equality, a warrant for the Jews to show their true colors by offending the patriotic and dynastic sentiments of the Russian majority.<sup>89</sup> In view of what the Minister of Interior told Witte and the Council of State—that there were no adequate forces to cope with widespread disorders in the countryside<sup>90</sup>—it would have been foolhardy for the embattled head of the cabinet to regard such warnings as inspired purely by prejudice or the wish to please the Tsar.

Having learned on taking office that pogroms were being instigated and abetted by certain officials in the police, Witte was strengthened in the opinion he had formed at the time of Kishinev that anti-Jewish riots were the creation of sinister forces inside and outside the government. Yet he could not free himself of the fear that they might also be, or become, genuine outbreaks of mass rage. To a Jewish delegation which demanded equal rights he said that he believed in emancipation but that it had to come slowly and required Jewish abstention from oppositional politics. To give full citizenship to Jews at once might lead to real pogroms in the countryside. His sincerity on that occasion has been questioned and his caution attributed to lack of conviction or courage. However, when he was speaking for posterity in his memoirs, Witte reiterated his belief in the existence and explosive potential of popular anti-Semitism. "As long as the Jewish question is not dealt with in a correct, dispassionate, humane, and statesman-like fashion, Russia will not find peace. But I am very much afraid that full rights, if suddenly given to the Jews, may create much new turbulence and will once again complicate matters."<sup>91</sup>

What the people might want or tolerate, popular will and popular sentiment, were invoked also in discussions which A. P. Stolypin, who became Premier in July 1906, had with moderate oppositionists during the summer and later in the year with his cabinet. Stolypin's wish to defuse the Jewish issue before elections to the Second Duma by removing the least essential and most offensive kinds of discrimination by decree, ran into opposition from constitutionalists as well as reactionaries, with both groups insisting that a step so important to the people's conscience and rights could only be taken by their elected representatives. Stolypin's own commitment to Jewish relief was, at best, tactical; in large measure it reflected the urging of his Minister of Finance, V. N. Kokovtsev, who was being told by his contacts in London and Paris that concessions to the Jews were a precondition for the placement of a Russian loan. In a circular of 24 August Stolypin announced his intention of lifting as quickly as possible restrictions that had outlived their usefulness and served only as irritants; questions bearing on essential aspects of the relations between Jews and Russians would be submitted to the Duma.<sup>92</sup>

In October the matter came before the Council of Ministers where Kokovtsev was the spokesman for a policy to which, according to some testimony, Stolypin no longer gave the firm backing which was needed if an imperial veto was to be avoided. The limits of Kokovtsev's own philo-Semitism were set out in a letter of 28 July 1906 to Edouard Noetzelin of the Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas to whom he confided his doubts that making the Jews full-fledged citizens would solve the Jewish question,

end Jewish exploitation, or Jewish leadership of the revolutionary movement. Nonetheless, he was not in principle opposed to granting legal equality and thought it high time to abolish most of the exceptional measures against the Jews.

“But it would hardly be in their interest if this were carried to the point of full equality with the indigenous Russian population. There is one area—landownership—in which this would do more harm than good to the Jews. It must be remembered that there are seven million Jews in our population of 140 millions. Giving them equal access to the land would arouse the land-hungry peasant masses against them; in view of age-old discords and the exploitation practiced by the Jews, this would lead to inevitable and for the Jewish landowners ruinous clashes with the peasants.”<sup>93</sup>

With that exception, Kokovtsev concluded his letter, the fetters hobbling Jewish activity should be removed and the May Laws repealed. This is what he would urge the Council of Ministers to do immediately, without waiting for the Duma.

He did so when the Council met on 27 October for the first of three debates on Jewish legislation.<sup>94</sup> To change by administrative fiat the principles which had guided Jewish policy for nearly a century and a half, Kokovtsev said, was unthinkable and could be done only by the legislature, and that applied in particular to the Pale. What the Council could and should do was to revoke most of the more recent curbs so that the Empire would consist of two distinct areas: one entirely open to Jewish residence, the other closed to all but some privileged groups. With respect to the land, finer distinctions had to be made.

Jewish purchase or leasing of peasant allotments, homesteads, or lands acquired with the aid of the Peasant Land Bank should unconditionally be forbidden everywhere. Other lands in private ownership might, in the Pale alone, be made available for rental or purchase in order to relieve Jewish economic distress. Outside of the Pale Kokovtsev favored maintaining in full force the restrictions issued on 10 May 1903, while allowing those Jews who had the right to live in the interior the renting of real estate for residential and other non-agricultural purposes. All inhibitions on trade and industry should be ended, including those which were designed to keep Jewish shareholders and employees from managing or holding land owned by corporate enterprises in rural districts.<sup>95</sup>

It is revealing that Kokovtsev's colleagues should begin discussion of his proposals by turning first to “the most basic question” before them, “the rights of Jews to the land;” they doubted that widening these would be expedient or timely. They cited what they called incontrovertible evidence that the Jews had shown neither liking nor aptitude for tilling the soil. All the government's efforts and expenditure to attract them to agrarian pursuits had been futile and were finally abandoned because the Jews were leaving the agricultural colonies for the cities or letting out their land to be farmed by Christian tenants. There was no reason to think that the Jewish character had changed. If in past years Jewish capitalists had bought landed property it was exclu-

sively for speculative purposes, with the most harmful consequences for the condition of the soil and the welfare of peasants. It was these considerations that had led to the law of 10 May 1903;<sup>96</sup> they still retained their validity.

Indeed, they had become more potent because the question of Jewish landownership had now to be seen in the context of the all-important problem of agrarian reform. To satisfy peasants who had little or no land, state and crown had made generous assignments of land from their domains; to admit to the market a new and large contingent of Jewish capitalists would be a serious obstacle to the realization of the government's plans and cause a sharp rise in land prices. Moreover, the transfer of gentry properties to Jews could give rise to violent protests on the part of peasants who saw the land leaving their reach or who found themselves having to buy it at a price which included the Jews' profit in the transaction. Finally, the horrendous political implications of Jewish domination of the land had to be kept in mind, the intolerable thought that the territory of Russia, a Christian state, should fall into the grasping hands of a race which had ever been hostile to Christian states, "Therefore, the Council of Ministers declares that the question of allowing Jews to acquire ownership of real property outside of urban settlements can only be decided in the negative."<sup>97</sup>

Unanimity broke down when leasing was discussed, with most ministers—the journal does not record their names or number—disposed to extend to the Pale the somewhat looser regulations prevailing outside of it. They were opposed by Stolypin and State Comptroller P. Kh. Shvanebakh on the ground that the principle governing the ownership of land must apply to all forms of tenure and use. The circumstances still existed which had caused the May Laws to be issued and they imposed on the government the duty of guarding peasants from the ruinous exploitation of Jewish leaseholders who ravaged the land or sublet it at exorbitant rates. Land hunger, the two men told their colleagues, was not confined to the interior provinces; it was predictable, therefore, that adoption of the proposed measure would dangerously intensify the deep enmity for the Jews of a peasantry which saw itself condemned to perpetual payment of high rents to Jewish leaseholders. Even if the law was frequently evaded and if evasion benefited the gentry, this did not make it useless as a deterrent to harmful practices. It would be dangerous for the Council to act on so important a question as land without concurrence of the Duma.<sup>98</sup>

The recommendations which the ministers agreed on 1 December 1906 to submit to the Emperor contained no indication of the divisions which had surfaced during sittings. According to one of the participants, Stolypin had asked for a unanimous opinion in order to avoid placing on the Tsar the onus of affirming (as was customary) either a majority or minority view and thereby antagonizing the adherents of the losing side. It cannot, in any case, have remained a secret to Nicholas that Stolypin and others did not agree with the majority of their colleagues or one or more of the proposals which reached him; their reservations must have made it easier for him to heed "the inner voice" which commanded him to veto the Council's proposals. It may be assumed that



Nicholas, like the Council minority, was disturbed by what seemed to him to be an abandonment of the watch which the country's rulers had for so long kept over the land.<sup>99</sup>

Such a supposition is strengthened by the fact that of the resolution's twelve paragraphs only three can be considered as being fundamental departures from established policies, and that the very first of these would have proclaimed the right of free movement and domicile throughout the entire territory, urban and rural, of the Pale and the Kingdom of Poland. Paragraph II merely reaffirmed the statutes allowing certain categories of Jews to live outside the Pale (except, according to VI, in the districts of the Don, Kuban, and Terek Cossacks), while III removed all limitations on the conduct of business and trade by Jews where they had the right of residence. IV restated the prohibition on concluding contracts for "ownership, possession, or use of real estate outside of urban settlements," but gave implicit sanction to such informal or short-term arrangements as were possible outside the Pale. V stated the applicability of II and III to Poland but specified that earlier restrictions concerning landed property remained in force as, according to VII, did disabilities which applied to all non-Christians. Remaining sections abolished financial penalties for the families of men who evaded military service; repealed the requirement that passports of converts note their former religion; made it easier for families of Jewish convicts to follow them to Siberia and allowed corporate firms to petition for the modification of statutes excluding Jews. Two final paragraphs were of a technical nature.<sup>100</sup>

There is much that remains unclear about Stolypin's role in this less than determined effort to better the Jewish condition. While he wished to take the wind out of the sails of the opposition, to placate foreign bankers and politicians, he also wanted to cover his right flank in order not to antagonize the support he needed for carrying out his agrarian reform. Stolypin's reluctance to push through even the least contentious of the Council's resolutions by using article 87 is in sharp contrast with his willingness to legislate by decree on October 5 and November 9 to expand peasant rights and to modify radically the laws on communal tenure. Indeed, caution in one area may be explained by boldness in the other. When the first Congress of Delegates of the United Nobility met in November 1906, the very first of its resolutions expressed alarm over the rumor that the administration was contemplating the abandonment of special Jewish legislation just when it had enabled the peasants to dispose of their land allotments and freed them from the control of the commune. No changes in Jewish law, the Congress demanded, should be made on the basis of article 87 and without the Duma<sup>101</sup>. So greatly did conservative proponents of Stolypin's land reform fear that peasants who received land in private ownership would sell it to unscrupulous Jews that many in the extreme Right, and even a few moderate Rightists, voted against the reform when it came before the Duma in 1910 and 1911.<sup>102</sup>

Long before then the government had ceased to worry about Jewish rights as an issue which a powerful opposition might seize and turn against it. With the new electoral law of 3 June 1907 there was a reversal

of roles between the cabinet and a Duma dominated by conservatives, with the latter resisting even such minor concessions as the former was willing to make and taking the lead to make sure that Jews would not share in any new rights granted to Russian citizens. Thus, a bill introduced in the Third Duma to create a *volost' zemstvo* stipulated that Jews were not to participate in its electoral assemblies or to be elected to its general meetings. Another bill, on the inviolability of the person, specifically excluded Jews from its provisions on freedom of movement and choice of domicile. In view of the majority's sentiments, there was little ground for hope or fear that the resolution to abolish the Pale which was brought in on 31 May 1910 by 166 deputies (136 oppositionists, 26 Octobrists, and 4 non-party moderates) would win the assent of the House or of the Council of State.<sup>103</sup>

On the other hand, Stolypin's successor Kokovtsev did not yield to pressures for additional safeguards against the Jewish advance or for a more stringent enforcement of those already on the books. It was not until after his dismissal in January 1914 that the cabinet again took notice of complaints by right-wing organizations, anti-Semitic publicists, and government officials that Jewish exploitation and possession of lands and forests were growing at a frightening rate and that the authorities were not doing enough to stop these largely illegal practices.<sup>104</sup> Some ministers expressed particular concern over the intrusion of large corporate landowners into the villages and the opportunities this created for Jewish shareholders or officers to circumvent the law.

In this instance, however, the Council of Ministers did not wish to stop the influx of Jewish or foreign capital to Russian enterprises and resisted the far-reaching proposals of the Minister of Agriculture and two of his colleagues. Instead, the majority of the ministers and the Emperor agreed to limit Jews to a minority of directorial or managing positions in companies owning or holding landed property; and in areas where they did not have the right to own or lease land to forbid their serving on boards of directors or as corporate officers.<sup>105</sup> As late as February 1916 the Senate reaffirmed existing prohibitions on Jewish land tenure in rural districts<sup>105</sup> and in April of that year the Council of Ministers denied the petition of several branches of the Union of Towns and Zemstva that Jewish refugees be admitted to villages to relieve crowding in the towns. The Minister of Interior was empowered to grant such requests only on an individual and selective basis and only for the most compelling of reasons.<sup>107</sup>

Whether many, or any, such applications were made and granted is not known. It is probable, however, that Krivoshein was right, or nearly right (if for the wrong reasons) when he declared during the ministerial debates of July and August 1915 that the Jews had no interest in settling in the villages. The Provisional Government's removal of the legal disabilities imposed on Russia's Jews did not lead to their massive migration into the countryside, although it must be remembered that the stormy and violent years of revolution and civil war offer no reliable test of what might have happened in more normal times.

## V

When Krivoshein denied the likelihood of the villages being inundated by a Jewish flood, yet insisted that the dikes erected to control it must be maintained, was he being as hypocritical as the historians of Russian Jewry believed all the representatives of the old regime to be who displayed a paternal and protective concern for the welfare of the lower classes, and in particular the peasants, at the expense of the Jews? Were not their expressions of fear merely a pretext for their deep and abiding Jew-hatred, a pretense of weakness and impotence to justify the restraints imposed on a supposedly ruthless and powerful adversary in the economic and political struggle?

Jew-hatred there certainly was; conscious or unconscious rationalizations of it there must have been as well. There was also an abiding conviction among Russia's rulers that the people whose guardians they considered themselves to be had to be sheltered from the worst forms of economic insecurity and the state from the social turbulence to which it might lead. Clearly, this conviction did not lead to policies that were consistently or effectively solicitous of the popular welfare when the larger interests of the state were at stake. Russia's tax and tariff structure, its agrarian and labor policies were hardly inspired by an exclusive or overriding regard for social and economic justice. Indeed, the regime's obvious and frequent failure to live up to its paternalistic rhetoric and its inability to do so if it wished to achieve industrial and military might without profound systemic changes may well help to explain the emphasis it placed on controlling the one problem of many that seemed susceptible of management without excessive risk—the Jewish problem. And this was particularly true where the Jewish problem impinged on those of peasants and the land, in view as much of their symbolic as practical importance in the Russian scale of values.<sup>108</sup>

Even if official Russia did not, in the first instance, worry about the peasants as human beings or the carriers of endangered national virtues, there was genuine concern for them as potential rioters, tax payers, and soldiers or as a counterweight to Polish landlords. To the question, *cui bono*, there is no answer that can be made in simple terms of ruling class power or pressure. While it is true that before 1861 concentration on the harm caused by the Jews was in part an avoidance of the deeper problem of serfdom, and while denying them access to the land and the villages after 1861 was connected with the failure to face the larger issues of agrarian reform and peasant poverty, it is also true that some of the measures proposed and taken after emancipation infringed the rights and interests of the landowning nobles and their ability to dispose of or use their property as they wished. In that sense the state was above class interests; at least its actions cannot be simply regarded as designed to benefit its noble supporters.

This applies also to the bourgeoisie whose wish to displace Jewish rivals Plekhanov, Martov, and other Marxists saw behind much governmental and public anti-Semitism.<sup>109</sup> Envy and competition there were,

but it is to be noted, first, that the supposed spokesmen for business in government, the Ministers of Finance, were usually the defenders of the economic role of the Jews; and, second, that the initiative for restricting that role came usually from government, not from business or industry. It was motivated either by the wish to keep such critical resources as minerals, oil, or land in Russian hands or had the purpose of denying to Jews control or management of rural real estate owned by corporate enterprise. Russian capitalists were as much hampered by these restrictions as were Jewish ones, yet the goal of reducing the undesirable effects of the Jews on the rural inhabitants was paramount.

“The undesirable effects on the rural inhabitants. . .” Preoccupation with these was so widespread and persistent in the government that it cannot simply be dismissed as deliberate deception or window-dressing. It was a form of paternalism that was deeply rooted in the reality of rural poverty, ignorance, and proneness to mass violence. Reality, needless to say, was magnified and distorted by the search for a scapegoat and for explanations of stubborn difficulties, by age-old prejudices, deep-seated fears and, possibly, by a still deeper sense of guilt on the part of the country’s rulers that they had not assured the well-being of the rural masses after emancipation.

Even if the Jews did not really want to live in the villages or buy up lands which the peasants were going to receive as part of the Stolypin reform, to have made it possible for them to do so would have been tantamount to an open surrender of the government’s claim that it was the champion of the masses and the impartial arbiter of conflicting interests. Especially after foreigners were forbidden to acquire land in various parts of the country, there was little prospect that Jews—considered an alien element—would be freed from prohibitions that were inspired by rising nationalism, concern for the security of the borderlands, and by the determination to preserve the symbols and sources of national strength and greatness—the land and the people on it.

Most importantly and most realistically there was the dread of what an enraged peasantry might do to private property and public order. At different levels of intensity and awareness that dread possessed every one of the Tsar’s officials. It was there when there had been talk of the necessity of aiding starving peasants in White Russia before emancipation, and it became still stronger after the pogroms of 1881 and the agrarian disturbances of the twentieth century. “A Jewish pogrom, said a rightist, anti-Semitic Duma deputy, is the beginning of anarchy all around. It is the beginning of the so-called black rebellion.”<sup>110</sup> The fear of it was shared by sensible men who were not rabid anti-Semites. The explosive ingredients for pogroms and agrarian riots were demonstrably present and ready to be set off either by spontaneous combustion or the spark of agitation, and with particularly devastating effect where local nationalism or separatism complicated the government’s job of control by adding to, or fusing with, the social problem. A modern student of the economic sources of anti-Semitism has compared the attitude of Ukrainian or Polish peasants to Jews with that of African peasants to the Indian merchant: “a mixture of disdain with admiration for the cleverness of the trading race, or resentment at their pretensions

to superiority and their economic exploitation. Sometimes resentment turned into burning hatred and led to outbreaks of violence."<sup>111</sup>

This, or something like it, is what most Russian bureaucrats believed; this is also how they felt. Their conviction of the peasant's weakness and inferiority and of his fierce resentment of the Jew was so firm because they themselves had these feelings. They saw the Jew as the agent or ally of the many forces that threatened them, the peasants, and the traditional way of life to which they looked as an anchor of safety and stability in a world which was rapidly escaping their grasp. When Russian ministers talked of Jewish financial power as making necessary either defensive measures or concessions, when they deplored Russia's dependence on the European stock-exchange and money market or felt that Russia's poverty made her as vulnerable as Serbia or Rumania, they thought of themselves as Europe's peasants in face of its powerful brokers and bankers. When they proclaimed to foreign journalists or diplomats, to Jews and non-Jews, that they were obliged to protect their simple and undeveloped people from the superior skills, intellect, and subtlety of the Jews, they were also speaking for themselves and their undeveloped country and derived a sense of moral certitude from the identification.

To prove that the land-poor masses were the true objects of their solicitude, the men who made and defended Russia's Jewish policy could also point to the fact that educated and prosperous Jews were free to acquire real estate in the cities in which they were allowed to live. Would anyone in their position, they asked or implied, behave differently? They thought they had no choice and regarded their actions as being little different in character or purpose from what other governments were doing, not least those that were most vocal in their criticism of Russia's treatment of the Jews. Had not the Americans, fearful of being swamped by the cheap labor of Oriental immigrants, taken steps to exclude them for the sake of native farmers and workmen? Had not the English adopted an Aliens Act although protesting Russian persecution of the Jews? And how had the English dealt with the "innocent agriculturists" in the Deccan who attacked Hindu moneylenders exactly as Russian peasants attacked the Jews, and for the same reason. The Indian government did as Ignat'ev had done and sought to remove the cause of the disorders by protecting the peasants against the extortionate practices of the village usurers.<sup>112</sup>

And if there was condemnation from foreign press and politicians of how the Russians treated the Jews, there was also approval and understanding to lend comfort and reassurance that the policies pursued were not universally viewed as reprehensible or misguided. What an Englishman with long experience of Russia wrote in 1914, had in different ways been said by other foreigners, among them a representative of the American government,<sup>113</sup> a high-ranking Austrian diplomat,<sup>114</sup> and a leader-writer for *The Times* of London.<sup>115</sup>

"In an advanced state like our own, with education permeating every section of the community, public opinion demands that all classes, whether Jew or Gentile, must obey the laws that have

been enacted. [. . .] This, however, does not apply in a community where millions of the population have but recently emerged from a state of subservience and serfdom. Such being the case in Russia, where ninety percent of its population can neither read nor write, and its peasantry is ever on the verge of destitution, it follows that full protection should be given against usury, extortion, and evasion of the law on the part of the Jews, and it is not for England to dictate when the special protective laws should be abrogated and emancipation from them be accorded. In my opinion, the time is yet far distant before equal rights can with safety be applied."<sup>116</sup>

It is doubtful that Tsarist Russia's leaders would ever have thought that a time of safety had come. In the meantime, the steps they took to protect themselves and the people in their charge from Jewish danger only served to breed new difficulties.

There were, as we have tried to show, objective dimensions to Russia's Jewish problem. Besides the anti-Semitism of men, there was what Vladimir Jabotinsky, the founder of Zionist Revisionism, called the anti-Semitism of things which was born of objective realities. He thought that these were inherently and organically hostile to a scattered minority whose situation could at most be aggravated or alleviated by the action of governments but never normalized.<sup>117</sup>

There was, in truth, something abnormal, however it had come about, in the situation of the Jewish minority, in its concentration in certain classes, regions, and economic activities; and that abnormality was most pronounced in a rural and agrarian context. It is even more true, of course, that the Russian government's actions nourished and perpetuated this abnormality, and that the only hope of ending it in the long run would have been to start by lifting all restrictions, abandoning the Pale of Settlement, allowing Jews to distribute themselves over the entire country, to enter any profession they chose and thus to shed the peculiarities and particularism with which they were always taxed. This, however, was not an option which Russia's rulers thought was really available to them. Unexamined beliefs and traditional biases played their part here too. But these were transformed into insurmountable blocks by an inability to think about the long run when the country's leaders were confronted with the complex Jews-peasants-land. More accurately, they did not dare to do so. They shied away from far-sighted and far-reaching measures of which the outcome was uncertain and which, in the short run, might make matters irreparably worse. Nor were they emotionally or intellectually prepared to accept "abnormality" and difference as desirable forms of variety which would enrich the nation and its people.

While it would be going too far to say that the perceived need to keep Jews away from peasants and the land was *the* determinant of Imperial Russia's Jewish policy, it appears to have been a key element in its remarkable persistency. As long, therefore, as the country's evolution had not yet reduced the economic vulnerability and the social and political significance of the peasantry in the eyes of its governors,

they would resist Jewish emancipation and justify, to themselves and others, their prejudices by their interests and those of the people whose guardians they felt themselves to be.

Los Angeles, 1975.

1. *Obshchaia zapiska vysshei komissii dlia peresmotra deistvuiushchikh o evreiakh v Imperii zakonov (1883-1888)* (no place, no date) : 86-91 ; S. M. Dubnov and G. Ia. Krasnyi-Admoni, eds., *Materialy dlia istorii antievreiskikh pogromov v Rossii* (Petrograd, 1919-1923), II: 184-279; Mina Goldberg, *Die Jahre 1881-1882 in der Geschichte der russischen Juden* (Berlin, 1934).
2. *Obshchaia zapiska. . .*, *op. cit.*: 82-84.
3. *Ibid.*: 80-82.
4. V. Iu. Skalon, *Po zemskim voprosam* (St. P., 1905), I: 338-352.
5. M. Goldberg, *op. cit.*: 45.
6. The fullest account of Ignat'ev's views and plans on the Jewish question is by I. Gessen, "Graf N. P. Ignat'ev i 'Vremennye pravila' o evreiakh 3 maia 1882 goda," *Pravo*, 30 and 31 (1908), cols. 1631-1637 and 1678-1687. The quotation is from No. 30, col. 1632. For what follows, also see his *Zakon i zhizn'; kak sozhdalis' ograniчител'nye zakony o zhitel'stve evreev v Rossii* (St. P., 1911): 153-161 and his *Istoriia evreiskogo naroda v Rossii* (Leningrad, 1925-1927), II: 215-227; P. A. Zaionchkovskii, *Krizis samodержavii na rubezhe 1870-1880 godov* (Moscow, 1964): 413-419; V. M. Khizhniakov, *Vospominaniia zemskogo deiatelia* (Petrograd, 1916): 109-114; Julius Eckhardt, *Russische Wandlungen* (Leipzig, 1882): 389-390; *Evreiskaia entsiklopediia* (hereafter *EE*), I: 130; V: 815-822; IX: 690-691; E. A. Perets, *Dnevnik, 1880-1883* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1927) : 130-133.
7. The activities and recommendations of the Gotovtsev committee are summarized in "Anti-evreiskoe dvizhenie v Rossii v 1881 i 1882 g.," *Evreiskaia starina*, I (1909), part II: 268-273.
8. *Ibid.*: 269.
9. *Ibid.*: 274.
10. I. Cherkover, *Antisemitizm i pogromy na Ukraine, 1917-1918 gg.* (Berlin, 1923): 19.
11. S. B. Weinryb, *Neueste Wirtschaftsgeschichte der Juden in Russland und Polen* (Breslau, 1934): 21, note 5.
12. I. G. Orshanskii, *Evrei v Rossii* (St. P., 1872): 24, 28.
13. P. A. Zaionchkovskii, *op. cit.*: 379.
14. It deserves to be mentioned that General E. I. Totleben, whose determined action had forestalled pogroms in the North-West, agreed with Ignat'ev—with whom he agreed on little else—that Jews should be forbidden to settle in the villages. (S. M. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland* (Philadelphia, 1916), II: 276.)
15. In summarizing the conclusions of the provincial commissions, I have used, besides their *Trudy gubernskikh komissii po evreiskomu voprosu*, 2 vols (St. P., 1884) [subsequent citations, since pagination is not consecutive, will be to *Trudy*, the name of the province, to volume, and page], the *Obshchaia zapiska. . .*, *op. cit.*, of the Pahlen Commission: 97-206; 212-217; 228-239 and "Anti-evreiskoe dvizhenie. . ." *art. cit.*, part I: 88-109. (See note 7 above.)
16. I. Gessen, *Istoriia evr. naroda. . .*, *op. cit.*, II: 219-220.
17. *Trudy*, Kherson, II: 1091-1093; 1105; *Obshchaia zapiska. . .*, *op. cit.*: 213.
18. *Trudy*, Vitebsk, I: 25, 35.
19. *Ibid.*, Mogilev, I: 9-10, 23, 29; *Obshchaia zapiska. . .*, *op. cit.*: 212.
20. *Ibid.*: 212, 228-229 and *Trudy*, Vil'no, I: 60-76.
21. *Ibid.*, Grodno, I: 4-5, 9-10, 21 and *Obshchaia zapiska. . .*, *op. cit.*: 212, 229.
22. M. Khizhniakov, *op. cit.*: 109-114.
23. *Trudy*, Khar'kov, II: 27. Cf. Vil'no, I: 88-113, 119-123, 178 and M. E. Mandel'shtam, "Ignat'evskaia komissiiia v Kieve, 1881 g.," *Perezhitoe*, IV (1913): 56.

24. I. Gessen, "Graf N. P. Ignat'ev. . .," *art. cit.*, 31, cols. 1678-1685.
25. E. A. Perets, *op. cit.*: 133.
26. I. Gessen, "Graf N P. Ignat'ev. . .," *art. cit.*, 31, col. 1682; *Istoricheskii obzor deiatel'nosti komiteta ministrov, 1881-1894* (St. P., 1902), IV: 183.
27. "Anti-evreiskoe dvizhenie. . .," *art. cit.*, part II: 275.
28. *Zhurnaly komiteta ministrov po ispolneniiu ukaza 12-ogo dekabria 1904 goda* (St. P., 1905). For other examples of the acceptance of Ignat'ev's explanation of pogroms and of his proposed remedies, see *Ministerstvo iustitsii za sto let* (St. P., 1902): 213-214; "Reshenie obshchago sobraniia senata, 1888 g., no. 25," *Pravo*, 17 (1905), col. 1365; Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del, *Spravka ob ogranicheniakh v lichnykh i imushchestvennykh pravakh evreev* (St. P., 1906): 5.
29. P. A. Zaionchkovskii, *Rossiiskoe samoderzhavie v kontse XIX stoletia* (Moscow, 1970): 131-132; *EE*, I: 832; V: 862-863; S. M. Dubnow, *op. cit.*, II: 309-312.
30. The Commission's printed report, the *Obshchaia zapiska. . .* (*op. cit.*), bears on its final page the names of eight members for the majority view and five for the minority. In the copy which I consulted, one of the latter is written in by hand. Zaionchkovskii cites archival evidence to the effect that one member of the majority adhered, in fact, to the opposition. Cf. S. M. Dubnow, *op. cit.*, II: 336-337, 362-369.
31. *Obshchaia zapiska. . .*, *op. cit.*: 2-24.
32. *Ibid.*: 5-6.
33. *Ibid.*: 58; I. M. Bikerman, *Cherta evreiskoi osedlosti* (St. P., 1911): 44-45; *EE*, III: 86-87; Evreiskoe Kolonizatsionnoe Obshchestvo [EKO], *Sbornik materialov ob ekonomicheskoi polozenii evreev v Rossii* (hereafter EKO, *Sbornik*), I, xxvii-xviii: 171, 178-181. According to the 1897 census, 48.84% of all Russia's Jews, including those in Russian Poland, lived in towns, 33.05% in townlets, and 18.11% in villages. (*Encyclopaedia Judaica*, XIV: 450.)
34. *Obshchaia zapiska. . .*, *op. cit.*: 93-95.
35. *Ibid.*: 110-120.
36. *Ibid.*: 121-130.
37. *Ibid.*: 102-103, 132, 147.
38. *Ibid.*: 150-153.
39. *Ibid.*: 271-272, 290.
40. *Ibid.*: 286.
41. *Ibid.*: 289, 293.
42. *Ibid.*: 294.
43. *EE*, III: 85.
44. S. Ettinger (Hebrew University, Jerusalem), "The image of the Jews in Russian public opinion (until the 1880's)," paper delivered at University of California, Los Angeles, March 1972.
45. See, for example, "Vospominaniia V. V. Bervi," *Golos minuvshago*, 5/6 (1916): 267; Walter G. Moss, "Vladimir Soloviev and the Jews in Russia," *Russian Review* (Apr., 1970): 186; S. Iuzhakov, "Evreiskii vopros v Rossii," *Otechestvennye zapiski*, 5 (1882): 5-6, 9, 13, 25; A. M. Pushchin, *Ocherk poslednikh itogov razrabotki evreiskago voprosa v Rossii* (St. P., 1882): 18-21.
46. S. M. Dubnow, *op. cit.*, III: 10; R. F. Byrnes, *Pobedonostsev* (Bloomington, 1968): 205-206.
47. *Ibid.*: 301-302; 331.
48. The law of 1893, besides making more difficult the redemption of land by individual peasants without the express consent of the commune, also forbade the latter to sell allotment land to non-peasants.
49. Arcadius Kahan (University of Chicago), "The impact of the industrialization process in Tsarist Russia upon the socio-economic conditions of the Jewish population," paper delivered at UCLA, March 1972.
50. Poultney Bigelow, *The borderland of Czar and Kaiser* (N.Y., 1894).
51. *Ibid.*: 107-108.
52. *Ibid.*: 113. Cf. the remarks of N. K. Giers to the American Minister, C. E. Smith, in *Foreign relations of the United States, 1890-1891* (Washington, 1892): 735.
53. Jackson Taylor, "D. A. Tolstoy and the Ministry of the Interior, 1882-1889," unpubl. doctoral dissertation, New York University (1970): 48; *Osobyie zhurnaly komiteta ministrov* (1907), 157: 11-12.
54. *EE*, VII: 734.
55. M. I. Mysh, comp., *Rukovodstvo k russkim zakonam o evreiaxh*, 4th ed. (St. P., 1914): 151-152, 154, 327; G. B. Sliozberg, *Dela minuvshikh dnei* (Paris, 1933), II: 4-5.



56. *Dnevnik gosudartsvennogo sekretaria A. A. Poloutsova* (Moscow, 1966), II: 59, 473.
57. *Foreign relations of the United States, op. cit.*: 741.
58. P. A. Zaionchkovskii, *Rossiiskoe samodержavie. . . , op. cit.*: 135; G. B. Sliozberg, *op. cit.*, II: 165-168; S. M. Dubnow, "Furor judophobicus v poslednie gody tsarstvovaniia Aleksandra III," *Evr. starina*, 10 (1918): 27-59.
59. *Dnevnik. . . A. A. Poloutsova, op. cit.*, II: 59, 314; V. N. Lamzdorf, *Dnevnik, 1891-1892* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1934): 52-53, 72.
60. *Handbuch des gesamten russischen Zivilrechts*, ed. Klibanski (Berlin, 1911), I: 434; II: 469; M. I. Mysh, *op. cit.*: 384-385; Lucien Wolf, ed., *The legal sufferings of the Jews in Russia* (London, 1912): 92.
61. K. Korol'kov, *Zhizn' i tsarstvovanie Aleksandra III* (Kiev, 1901): 176-177; V. N. Lamzdorf, *op. cit.*: 386; G. B. Sliozberg, *op. cit.*, II: 82; *Istoricheskii obzor deiatel'nosti komiteta ministrov, op. cit.*, IV: 165-182; V: 27-28; Theodor von Laue, *Sergei Witte and the industrialization of Russia* (N. Y., 1963): 185, 189; Ia. I. Gimpel'son, comp., *Zakony o evreiakh* (St. P., 1914): 392-395; *Spravka po voprosu o pravovom polozenii evreev v Rossii*: 119-120. Compiled by the chancellery of the Council of Ministers and bearing the classification Sekretno on its title-page, this volume was obviously prepared for use by government agencies and, judging by internal evidence, printed in 1914.
62. *Istoricheskii obzor deiatel'nosti komiteta ministrov, op. cit.*, V: 123-124; M. I. Mysh, *op. cit.*: 397. E. B. Levin, ed., *Sbornik ogranichitel'nykh zakonov i postanovlenii o evreiakh* (St. P., 1902), contains a list of companies whose articles of incorporation or by-laws included restrictions on Jews.
63. Th. von Laue, *op. cit.*: 124.
64. *Spravka. . . , op. cit.*: 136-161. See above n. 61.
65. "Evreiskii vopros pri vvedenii piteinoi monopolii. Vsepoddanneishii doklad S. Iu. Vitte," *Evr. starina*, VIII (1915): 405-410. For a fuller discussion of Witte's views see H. Rogger, "Russian ministers and the Jewish question, 1881-1917," *California Slavic Studies*, VIII (1975): 46-52.
66. S. M. Dubnow, *op. cit.*, III: 22-23; *EE*, V: 614 gives the number of those displaced from the trade in spirits by the state monopoly as 100,000. There was, in addition, a substantial reduction in the number of Jewish distilleries and breweries and, consequently, of the hands employed by them. The Governor-General of Khar'kov estimated in 1882 that there were 150,000 Jews in the drink trade.
67. N. Kh. Bunge, "1881 - 1884 gg.; zapiska naidennaia v bumagakh N. Kh. Bunge," in Komitet ministrov, *Materialy i zapiski razoslannye chlenam komiteta ministrov na zasedaniia 15, 22 i 23 marta, 5 i 15 apreliia 1905 g. po delu o poriadke vypolneniia p. 7 Vysochaishago ukaza 12 dek. 1904 g. v otnoshenii 9 zapadnykh gubernii*: 137 p.
68. According to M. I. Mysh, *op. cit.*: 49, Jews were also removed from the jurisdiction of the land captains.
69. N. Kh. Bunge, *art. cit.*: 31, 37-39.
70. B. D. Brutskus, "Ekonomicheskoe polozenie evreev i voina," *Russkaia mysl'*, 4 (1915): 28, 41-42; Dmitrii Drutskoi-Sokol'ninskii, "Antisemitizm na zapade i v Rossii," *Vestnik Evropy*, 7 (1900): 96-118; S. M. Dubnow, *op. cit.*, III: 339; S. W. Baron, *The Russian Jew under Tsars and Soviets* (N. Y., 1964): 64; Leo Errera, *Die russischen Juden* (Leipzig, 1903): 103-104; Harold Frederic, *The new exodus* (N. Y., 1892): 102-103.
71. *Osoby zhurnaly komiteta ministrov* (1907), No. 157: 12.
72. *Svod vysochaishikh otmetok po vsepoddanneishim otchetam general-gubernatorov, gubernatorov, voennykh gubernatorov i gradonachal'nikov za 1895 g.* (St. P., 1897): 29-31.
73. *Ibid.*: 29.
74. *Osoby zhurnaly komiteta ministrov*, No. 157: 10; *Svod. . . za 1897 g.* (St. P., 1899): 42 and *Svod. . . za 1898 g.* (St. P., 1901): 127.
75. I. Gessen, *Zakon. . . , op. cit.*: 171; *EE*, III: 85-86; V: 821.
76. M. I. Mysh, *op. cit.*: 120-123, 346, 354.
77. I. Gessen, *Zakon. . . , op. cit.*: 172-173.
78. On Pleve, H. Rogger, *art. cit.*: 30, 38-45; *Osoby zhurnaly komiteta ministrov*, No. 157: 14-15. On the Commission, *EE*, IX: 692 and S. M. Dubnov, *Noveishaia istoriia evreiskago naroda* (Berlin, 1923), III: 380.

79. *Tainaiia dokladnaia zapiska Vilenskogo gubernatora o polozhenii evreev v Rossii* (Geneva: Tipografiia Bunda, 1904); Sviatopolk-Mirskii's report was first published, in a French translation, by Pawel Korzec in *CMRS*, XI, 2 (1970): 278-291, and in English in *Soviet Jewish Affairs*, 2 (1972): 87-95, with an introduction by Dr. Korzec which also touches on the Pahlen memorandum. Urusov's views may be gleaned from his *Zapiski gubernatora* (Berlin, 1907), especially pp. 202-210.
80. *Theodor Herzls Tagebuecher, 1895-1904* (Berlin, 1923), III: 463-466, 477-483.
81. A. Braudo, "Beseda V. K. Pleva s L. Vol'fom (1903)," *Evr. starina*, IX (1916): 121-125.
82. V. I. Gurko, *Features and figures of the past* (Stanford, 1939): 279; S. E. Kryzhanovskii, *Vospominaniia* (Berlin, n.d.): 17, 21, 26; S. M. Dubnov, *Noveishaia istoriia . . .*, *op. cit.*, III: 383; A. V. Bogdanovich, *Tri poslednikh samodervzhtsa* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1924): 303, 309; Shmarya Levin, *The arena* (N. Y., 1932): 277.
83. Thus, the 10 May 1903 reclassification of rural localities was accompanied on the same day, by new restrictions on the acquisition of real property outside of towns by individuals who had the right of residence in non-Pale provinces. (M. I. Mysh, *op. cit.*: 364.)
84. *Ibid.*: 126; I. Gessen, *Zakon. . .*, *op. cit.*: 173-175; *Osobyie zhurnaly komiteta ministrov*, No. 157: 15.
85. N. I. Lazarevskii, ed., *Zakonodatel'nye akty perekhodnogo vremeni* (St. P., 1909): 190-195, lists the localities opened for Jewish residence on 24 November 1905.
86. I. I. Tolstoi i Iulii Gessen, *Fakty i mysli; evreiskii vopros v Rossii* (St. P., 1907), preface and conclusion.
87. *Petergofskoe soveshchanie o proekte gosudarstvennoi dumy* (Berlin, n.d.): 34-35.
88. H. D. Mehlinger and J. M. Thompson, *Count Witte and the Tsarist government in the 1905 Revolution* (Bloomington, 1972): 187.
89. "Agrarnoe dvizhenie v 1905 g. po otchetam Dubasova i Panteleeva," *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 11-12 (1925): 183-185.
90. G. L. Yaney, "Some aspects of the Imperial Russian Government on the eve of the First World War," *Slavonic and East European Review*, 100 (1964): 72.
91. S. Iu. Vitte, *Vospominaniia* (Moscow, 1960), II: 214-440; III: 327-329; L. Aizenberg, "Na slovakh i na dele," *Evr. letopis'*, III (1924): 31-34.
92. D. N. Shipov, *Vospominaniia i dumy o perezhitom* (Moscow, 1918): 461-466; A. F. Koni, *Sobranie sochinenii* (Moscow, 1966), II: 367; Sidney Harcave, "The Jewish question in the first Russian Duma," *Jewish Social Studies*, 2 (1944): 162; S. M. Dubnov, *Noveishaia istoriia. . .*, *op. cit.*, III: 405.
93. "Perepiska V. N. Kokovtseva s Eduardom Netslinym," *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 4 (1923): 134-135; E. A. Preobrazhenskii, ed., *Russkie finansy i evropeiskaia birzha v 1904-1906 gg.* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1926): 329.
94. V. I. Gurko, *op. cit.*: 504-506; V. N. Kokovtsev, *Iz moego proshlogo* (Paris, 1933), I: 237-239. The Council's debates are summarized in *Osobyie zhurnaly komiteta ministrov*, No. 157: 60 p.
95. *Ibid.*: 20-23.
96. See note 83 above.
97. *Osobyie zhurnaly komiteta ministrov*, No. 157: 28-32. Even after the Stolypin reform, peasants were still not entirely free to dispose of their land as they wished; it could not be sold to non-peasants who were not native inhabitants (*rodnye obyvateli*) of the Empire. (*Ibid.*, No. 19: 15.)
98. *Ibid.*, No. 157: 32-37.
99. The letter of Nicholas and Stolypin's reply are in *Krasnyi arkhiv*, 5 (1924): 105-107.
100. *Osobyie zhurnaly komiteta ministrov*, No. 157: 56-60.
101. *Svod postanovlenii I-X s "ezdov upolnomochennykh ob"edinennykh dvorianskikh obshchestv, 1906-1914* (Petrograd, 1915): 38.
102. R. S. Edelman, "Russian nationalism and class consciousness: the rise of the All-Russian National Union, 1907-1912," unpubl. doctoral dissertation, Columbia University (1974): 96.
103. *EE*, VII: 369-375.
104. V. N. Kokovtsev, *op. cit.*, I: 481; M. M. Artsibashev, *Griadushchaia gibel'*

*Rossii* (St. P., 1908); *Novyi voskhod*, 22 sept. 1911, cols. 22-23; Report of Governor A. F. Girs, of Minsk, for the year 1913 to Nicholas II; undated manuscript in Russian Archives, Columbia University.

105. *Spravka*. . ., *op. cit.*: 141-155. See above n. 61.

106. *Pravo*, 7 (1916), cols. 474-475.

107. *Ibid.*, 17, col. 1042.

108. Even Witte, the great industrializer, who believed that Russia could become powerful only when she ceased to be an exclusively agricultural country, would sing the praises of the rural way of life. The Russian people, he wrote in 1885, were above all agrarian; they loved the land and despised work in the mills. Their spiritual essence was intimately tied to the "beautiful, exalted, and ennobling work on the soil." (Th. von Laue, *op. cit.*: 55, 68.)

109. B. P. Baluev, *Politicheskaia reaktsiia 80-kh godov XIX veka i russkaia zhurnalistika* (Moscow, 1971): 301-302; Iulii Martov, *Obshchestvennye i umstvennye techeniia v Rossii* (Leningrad-Moscow, 1924): 123-124; E. Ia. Drabkina, *Natsional'nyi i kolonial'nyi vopros v tsarskoi Rossii* (Moscow, 1930): 37.

110. V. V. Shul'gin, "The sleeping car," *Slavonic and East European Review*, 15 (1927): 475.

111. S. Andreski, "An economic interpretation of anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe," *Jewish Journal of Sociology*, 2 (1963): 207.

112. Olga Novikoff, *Russian memories* (N. Y., 1916): 113-116, 121.

113. *Report of the Commissioner of Immigration upon the causes which incite immigration to the United States* (Washington, 1892): 303-305.

114. Hans Heilbronner, "Count Aehrenthal and Russian Jewry, 1903-1907," *Journal of Modern History*, 4 (1966): 394-406.

115. Quoted in *Darkest Russia*, 129, 17 June 1914.

116. George Hume, *Thirty-five years in Russia* (London, 1914): 234.

117. Vladimir Zhabotinskii, *Evreiskoe gosudarstvo* (Kharbin, 1938): 24-30.