

Spiking Hitler's Weapon

By Doxey Wilkerson

In Baltimore not long ago, a Negro barber confided to me: "The Jews sure have this town sewed up. A colored man can't make a move without being blocked by some Jew."

My informant is generally a good citizen, but here he was doing a vicious thing—as he was quite ready to admit before our conversation ended. He was spreading a dangerous political poison which has come to infect large numbers of white and Negro Americans.



In this period of sharp political crisis, this cancer of anti-Semitism will have to be destroyed by government, or it will come to threaten the very existence of our free institutions.

The Baltimore incident is one reason why I got special satisfaction out of the fact that it was a Negro who last week introduced an excellent resolution on anti-Semitism in the Assembly of the State of New York.

Assemblyman Hulan E. Jack's resolution approaches the problem of anti-Semitism in the only manner which is now consistent with the safety of our nation—as a serious political menace which our agencies of government must move swiftly to uproot. It is an approach which states and communities throughout the country must increasingly adopt if we are to emerge from this war still a free nation.

HITLER'S WEAPON

Assemblyman Jack's resolution correctly characterizes prejudices and discriminations against racial and religious minorities as "weapons in the hands of fascism by which national unity can be destroyed and the promise of victory over our enemies taken from us."

Hitler, himself, confirms this judgment. The Nazi master once declared that anti-Semitism "is without doubt the most powerful weapon in my political arsenal."

The resolution then points out that Hitler's agents are among us, actively seeking "to divide the people of this nation . . . by stimulating hatred and distrust among us against Jews, Negroes, and other minorities, seeking to repeat in this country their successes in other lands now overrun."

Hitler further confirms this analysis. "Anti-Semitic propaganda in all countries," he says, "is an indispensable medium for the extension of my political campaign."

The resolution next declares that the "recent resurgence of anti-Semitic violence . . . bears all the indications of a deliberate program designed to promote racial disturbances as a means to impede the successful prosecution of the war and must be halted by all the means at the disposal of the people of this State if the victories of our armies in the field are not to be in vain." It might have gone on to point out that precisely those pro-fascist forces in our country which seek to sabotage the war effort on every front, which now call openly for a "negotiated peace" with Hitler, are the most active organizers of anti-Semitic violence.

The resolution concludes: "Be it resolved (if the Senate concurs) that it is the policy of the State of New York to adopt every means available against the manufacturers of racial and religious hatreds and most particularly against anti-Semitic terrorists; and that we call upon the Mayors of all the cities in New York, upon the sheriffs of the various counties, upon all law-enforcement and educational agencies, upon the non-governmental civic agencies, to mobilize all their resources to counteract the effect of anti-Semitic propaganda, and to

uncover and punish those responsible for such propaganda and for the shameful acts which flow therefrom, as anti-American and anti-democratic in origin and purpose."

LACK OF ENFORCEMENT

It should be noted that New York probably has the best set of anti-discrimination laws in the country. The trouble is lack of enforcement. Just when our nation sorely needs the protection which these laws can give, their observance is left largely to one's own conscience.

Assemblyman Jack does not propose a new law, but rather a resolution which is a statement of policy. Let the New York Assembly be deluged with letters and telegrams urging its adoption. A truly vigorous campaign around this resolution would serve notice on State and city enforcement officials that our people are in a mood no longer to tolerate the immunity from punishment which active anti-Semites now enjoy.

Anti-Semitism is not a problem of the Jewish people. It is a serious national problem which must be dealt with by the nation as a whole.

Anti-Semitism is no longer a question of personal attitudes to be corrected solely through prolonged processes of education. It is now a public political menace which government must destroy for its own protection.

Our country and our allies move swiftly toward victory over the fascist enemy on the field of battle. We look forward to a long period of democratic peace and reconstruction. But let us ever bear in mind that these perspectives of Tehran can be realized only through unceasing struggle against the enemies of democracy here at home. Their weapon of anti-Semitism is one of the most dangerous we must destroy.