

BY WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

The apparently compulsive anti-Semitism of the Black Panthers is a phenomenon of greater interest than the purely eccentric biases of an insidious little hate group. It is recognized (though not by name) as such in a wordy but interesting essay in the January issue of Commentary ("The Black Revolution on the Jewish Question") and, again indirectly, in the best-selling book by one of America's shrewdest and most readable social commentators, Ernest van den Haag, "The Jewish Mystique."

Why the allure of anti-Semitism? The Black Panther journal of June, 1967, gives one the flavor of it: "Jew land, On a summer afternoon/Really, Couldn't kill the Jews too soon/Now dig, the Jews have stolen our bread/Their filthy women tricked our men into bed . . ." And, at a more general political level, we hear from our old friend Eldridge Cleaver, who as recently as Dec. 31, 1969, called on his followers in America to fight the "Zionist puppet of American imperialism in the Middle East."

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Van den Haag's engrossing book examines the historical sources of that kind of thing. He punctures a great many myths, such as the altogether prevalent myth that anti-Semitism is the invention of Christianity. Far from it, the Jews were a persecuted people long before Christ, their principal sin being their monotheistic arrogance, which ironically the Christians accepted, and indeed proclaim as central to their faith. I am the Lord thy God and thou shalt not place false gods before me. The First Commandment, alike for Jews and Christians.

The contemporary Jewish stress on the values of pluralism is only in part related to their recognition that after all the Jews are a minority people in America. It is also a historical reaction against restressing one of the principal causes of resentment by other peoples.

Van den Haag examines the widely held assumption of superior Jewish abilities in the arts, in the sciences, in an analysis which is both deft and profound, but which does not lose the reader's attention. No other conceivable hour or two are better spent than in reading this book.

Earl Raab (in Commentary) says important things, in predicting larkly the probable return of national anti-Semitism, kindled paradoxically

enough by the black militants. Paradoxically because the Jewish liberal community has been extremely active in arguing the cause of civil rights which is the grandparent of what is now going on.

Raab traces the movement as in three stages. The first was the equal opportunity stage, during which the civil rights legislation was passed. The second, which he calls Black Positivism, involved efforts to do something concrete for the Negro, for instance the poverty programs. The incumbent stage he calls Black Expressivism. "Expressive politics may be defined as the externalization of internal frustrations, bearing little direct relation to the solution of the problems which caused the frustrations."

Extremism Raab defines as essentially antidemocratic, disorderly reactions to socially frustrating events. The Jew is, for the emerging Negro even as for the emerging Italian and Irishman, the quintessential white man. "The release of democratic restraints, the substitution of jungle for law, of conspiracy theory for reason, of confrontation politics, of repression for social politics—that is the Jewish Question, as it has come to have special meaning for modern society." The Jew—educated, successful, powerful, largely endogamous—is the ever-convenient enemy.

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Will there be a backlash? Unquestionably, especially at the hands of a people who have a right to be hypersensitive to anti-Semitism. The special challenge in the days ahead is, however, not to close one's ears to the inherent cogency of analysis which is all too easily dismissed as backlash.

The National Committee for Furtherance of Jewish Education has come out now with a strong statement against bussing: against, in effect, the forcible integration of the schools in the cities—and indeed, it is in the cities where the Jewish population mostly lives.

The Committee's reasoning is that bussing has not worked, that it has stimulated racial animosity rather than reconciliation, and that it has done grave intellectual and psychic damage to the Negro. Points that require consideration, and points which, happily, do not collide with Black Expressivism, which whatever its political implications, comes down on the same side of the educational issue.

Black Militants Kindle Fire of National Anti-Semitism

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