

able to compete with them in these. For this reason, it is further said, the governments of nearly all states have adopted the policy, in an unanimity from which alone it can be concluded that it is justified to issue restrictive laws against this nation and to deviate, in its case alone, from the principle of furthering a continuous rise in population. They could not concede to these people who are harmful to the welfare of the rest of the citizens the same rights, and had to adopt the stipulation of a certain amount of property for those permitted to settle down, as guarantee for compliance with the laws and abstinence from criminal activities.

If I am not entirely mistaken there is one error in this reasoning, namely, that one states as cause what in reality is the effect, quoting the evil wrought by the past erroneous policy as an excuse for it. Let us concede that the Jews may be more morally corrupt than other nations; that they are guilty of a proportionately greater number of crimes than the Christians; that their character in general inclines more toward usury and fraud in commerce, that their religious prejudice is more antisocial and clannish; but I must add that this supposed greater moral corruption of the Jews is a necessary and natural consequence of the oppressed condition in which they have been living for so many centuries. A calm and impartial consideration will prove the correctness of this assertion.

The hard and oppressive conditions under which the Jews live almost everywhere would explain, although not justify, an even worse corruption than they actually can be accused of. It is very natural that these conditions cause the spirit of the Jew to lose the habit of noble feelings, to be submerged in the base routine of earning a precarious livelihood. The varied kinds of oppression and contempt he experiences are bound to debase him in his activities, to choke every sense of honor in his heart. As there are almost no honest means of earning a living left to him it is natural that he falls into criminal practices and fraud, especially since commerce more than other trades seduces

people to such practices. Has one a right to be surprised if a Jew feels himself bound by laws which scarcely permit him to breathe, yet he cannot break them without being punished? How can we demand willing obedience and affection for the state from him, who sees that he is tolerated only to the extent that he is a means of revenue? Can one be surprised at his hatred for a nation which gives him so many and so stinging proofs of its hatred for him? How can one expect virtue from him if one does not trust him? How can one reproach him with crimes he is forced to commit because no honest means of earning a livelihood are open to him; for he is oppressed by taxes and nothing is left him to care for the education and moral training of his children?

Everything the Jews are blamed for is caused by the political conditions under which they now live, and any other group of men, under such conditions, would be guilty of identical errors. . . .

If, therefore, those prejudices today prevent the Jew from being a good citizen, a social human being, if he feels antipathy and hatred against the Christian, if he feels himself in his dealings with him not so much bound by his moral code, then all this is our own doing. His religion does not commend him to commit these dishonesties, but the prejudices which we have instilled and which are still nourished by us in him are stronger than his religion. We ourselves are guilty of the crimes we accuse him of; and the moral turpitude in which that unfortunate nation is sunk—thanks to a mistaken policy—cannot be a reason that would justify a continuation of that policy. That policy is a remnant of the barbarism of past centuries, a consequence of a fanatical religious hatred. It is unworthy of our enlightened times and should have been abolished long ago. A look at the history and the origin of the present regulations concerning the Jews will make this clear. . . .

If this reasoning is correct, then we have found in the oppression and in the restricted occupation of the Jews the true source of their corruption. Then we have discovered