

## Trudy Gold | Stalin, Zionism, and Israel

- Good evening, everyone. And I hope you're all staying safe and keeping indoors. And tonight, I am continuing of course with Russia. And I hope you listened to William yesterday because what we're trying to do is by the end of next week, we will have given you as a reasonably comprehensive look at Russia before the August programme, which as I've already explained, is going to be much lighter before we turn back in September to, again, looking at different strands of history with us all taking different angles, and of course bringing in special guests. So that is the plot. And now we look at Stalin, Zionism, and Israel. And the first thing I've got to say is that of course, when you're dealing with somebody like Stalin, or really with anyone perhaps, you can never look for a rational approach that begins at the beginning and ends at the end. Stalin was one of the most ruthless characters in history, and he did things in the end to suit Stalin. But having said that, he believed it was in Russia's interests for Russia to actually sponsor the establishment of the state of Israel. And can we please have a look at the man, if you don't mind, Judi. Yes, there he is. And now I'd like to turn immediately to extracts from the speech that Gromyko gave at the time of the partition vote, November 1947. And this is the Russian representative speaking about the partition vote. "Large numbers of the surviving Jews of Europe were deprived of their countries, their homes, and their means of existence. Hundreds of thousands of Jews are wandering about in the various countries of Europe in search of shelter. A large number in displaced persons camps and are still continuing to undergo great privations. The United Nations cannot and must not regard this situation with indifference, since this will be incompatible with its charter, which provides for the defence of human rights, irrespective of race, religion, or sex. The time has come to help these people, not by word, but by deed. The delegation of the Soviet Union thinks that it is essential in the following circumstances. Past experience, particularly during World War II, has shown that no adequate assistance was provided to the Jewish people by any western state. There was no defence for the rights or for their very existence from the violence of the Hitlerites and their allies. This explains the aspirations of the Jewish people to establish their own safe state." And important to remember, Russia was the first country to give not just de facto recognition that came, America first, then Russia second, but Russia gave de jure recognition.

Now, why was it that Stalin decided to actually support the existence of a Jewish state in Palestine? And of course, take Churchill's great quote. "An iron curtain has descended upon Europe. If you think of the dying months of World War II, Stalin had played a brilliant game." "The Red Czar", that's the title of course of Montefiore's book. "The Red Czar had taken back or was about to take back practically all the lands that had been part of the Czarist empire." And he was extending

it. Think about the division of Germany. Think about how far the Soviet Union extended its authority. Don't forget the battle for Warsaw. When the Polish underground finally rose up against their oppressors, they of course were representing the Polish government in exile in London, which was totally opposed to the communists. Stalin's army was the other side, and they allowed them to fight it out. Stalin wanted, he wanted to take it all. However, think Cold War. Think about the British in the Middle East. Think about the French in the Middle East. Think about the Arab countries. Can I see the next slide, please, Judi? This is a quote from the Daily Worker. The Daily Worker is a communist newspaper in London, the one that Jeremy Corbyn, the ex leader of the Labour Party, caused the best British paper. Now, fascinating. This is September 1948, and it would be rather wonderful if those on the extreme left who are so very anti-Israel, look at the history of a paper they so admire. So this is the extract from the Daily Worker, September 1948. "The reactionary war is being conducted by leaders of the Arab League under British control. There are Iraqi fascist band, Lebanese irregulars, professional trans-Jordanians, legionnaires, Egyptians, Britishers, and a few German Nazis, Anders Poles, that's of course Colonel Ander's army, even Yugoslav royalists." So that's an extract. And they're talking about a reactionary war being conducted against embattled, brave little Israel. Now, there's quite a few things to say on this. If you remember, it was Czechoslovakia under Masaryk who had given so many arms to the embryonic state. Now, this would not have happened without the acquiescence or actually the control of Stalin. So what have we got here? Who was in power in the Arab world? Well, you had king. If you think about it, you had King Abdullah in Jordan. You had the Saudi monarchy. You had, in Egypt, it was under, very much under British control. Think of the Suez Canal. You had Farouk. It was Farouk who made that fascinating statement when he said, "By the year 2000, there were only be five kings in the world." Clubs hearts, what is it? Clubs? I can't even play cards anymore. Clubs, hearts, diamonds, and whatever the other one was. Someone you immediately tell me. And the king of England. So there is no way that Russia is ever going to get any support or have any real influence from these feudal monarchies. And please don't forget that Jordan, the British-trained Arab legion, the best fighting force in the Middle East, the British had their control in Iraq and in Egypt, the French in Lebanon and Syria. So consequently, if we're going for a global Cold War, and that's what's emerging, it's soon going to hot up, of course. But this is the time of the Cold War. Then what on earth would best serve Russian interests? And something else to consider. Think about the make up of the politics of what emerges as Israel. Those who took control were left wing, and not only left wing, many of them, we can go as far extreme left wing verging on communism. So what Stalin thought at this stage, although he's vehemently anti-Zionist, if you remember, which we talked about last week, it was Jewish. So basically, it's in the interest at this stage of the game for Stalin to back the establishment of the state of Israel. And when he talks about a few

German Nazis, don't forget that through the Vatican, through an Austrian bishop, many, many Nazis, ex-Nazis are coming into the Middle East, and it's going to happen even more so after the feudal monarchies fall. So it's a very interesting, rather dark pattern that's emerging. But then something happens.

Can we see the next slide, please? Yes. Golda Meir, an extraordinary woman, she is appointed the first Israeli ambassador to Russia. Now, that must have been absolutely extraordinary for her. After all, she'd been born in Eastern Europe under Soviet rule. She'd then gone to America when she was three years old. She had been so much involved in the Yishuv, very close to Bangorian, a real socialist. She tried life on a kibbutz. And now, and there you can see her in the crowd. When she comes to Moscow as Israel's first ambassador, she announces that she wants to visit the synagogue. Now, the point is, there were still synagogues as there were still churches in Russia. But if you wanted any kind of career, it didn't work for you. But she, because it's Rosh HaShanah, the secular Golda goes to the synagogue as an affirmation with the Jewish people. And 50,000 young Russians came out to meet her. It was an ecstatic mob. Now, this is when it appears that Stalin realises he has a problem. In fact, Ilya Ehrenburg, who was the famous Jewish writer, he warns Jews. He said, "Don't get too close to Zionism because it could lead to danger." One has just to think about what had happened in Russia in the '30s, the great purges, when millions of people who were contrary to Stalin's wishes were in fact removed. Now, so when she again went to the synagogue on Yom Kippur, fewer people came out to meet her. And this was something that was being circulated. We have no God, we have not Torah, we only have the letters of the Yiddish alphabet. By November 1948, Jewish bookshops are being purged. The great Sholem Aleichem library of 130,000 books in Birobidzhan, that was destroyed. Jewish schools were closed. The Jewish museum in Vilnius was established at the end of World War II was closed. The Historical Museum of Georgian Jewry was later shut down in 1951. So this, if you like, is a signal to Golda and to the world. How is Russia going to fair? And then I want to turn to something that I've already been talking to about. Can we go to the next slide, please? Yeah, the night of the murdered poets. But before I can do that, in my last talk, I was talking about the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee. So I want to give you a bit more information on that so that we can see actually what happened to them. Now, if you remember, when Stalin and Hitler signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop agreement, from August 39 until the Nazi invasion of Russia in the summer of 1941, the Russians kept to their part of the bargain. There was no anti-Nazi propaganda. Jews removed as bourgeois elements. It's only after the invasion of Russia that Stalin decides to act in a way to see if he can induce Jewish support in the West. And to do that, he founds the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee. He began in the autumn of 1941 by taking two Bundists out of jail. Of course, the Bund was illegal. Henryk Ehrlich and Victor Adler, he thought they could set it up. They were activists. However,

it didn't work that way. He reimprisoned them. And then he asked a man called Solomon Mikhoels, who was the head of the Moscow State Jewish Theatre, and a brilliant actor to actually set it up.

Now, he had had an incredible career. He'd actually adapted shalom aleichem's tevya the milkman for the Moscow Jewish Theatre. He had starred in the Yiddish production of King Lear. I would love to have seen that. He commissioned a play about Bar Kochba, but it had a socialist twist. According to Jeffrey Veidlinger, who is emerging as one of the greatest historians on these kind of subjects, although the plays, if you sat and watched them, you would think they were supportive of the Soviet Union. According to Veidlinger, what you have now, that if you read them very, very close, you can see a critique of Stalin and also, almost an assertion of Jewish national identity. Now, the point was, how on earth is Stalin going to get support from America? America's not yet in the war. So he sends Mikhoels, and as his deputy, Itzik Feffer. Can we see Itzik Feffer please, Judi? There's Mikhoels. And if we could see his friend there, Itzik Feffer. He was one of the most important of the Yiddish poets. He only ever writes in Yiddish. He was an absolutely extraordinary man. More about him when it comes to his trial. So these are two incredibly important Jewish writers. And they have now been asked by Stalin to establish an anti-fascist committee. And the whole plan is to utilise Jewish opinion, particularly in America. They're not just going to visit America. They're going to go to Britain. They are going to go to Mexico. They're going to go to Canada to actually manage to induce American Jewry, British Jewry, Canadian Jewry, to give money for the Russian war effort. And I began to talk about this, but I ran out of time because it was a huge event. This is the biggest pro-Soviet demonstration that America had ever seen. Remember, it's in the war years, and it's not until December 41, of course, that America enters the war. And although Roosevelt is tacitly supporting the Allies, there is still a huge backlash in America about getting involved in a war in Europe. So let's have a look at them. And I've already told you who they are, but I think most of you know, of course, it's easy to some of them, but it's LaGuardia, Chagall, the wonderful Paul Robeson, who I'm going to talk about later. Charlie Chaplin. Charlie Chaplin was a great fighter for human rights, as was Albert Einstein. He was the chair of the committee. You see Feuchtwanger who of course had written Jew Süss, The Oppermanns. He was a brilliant German Jewish writer. Fortunately, he had been in America on a tour. He was actually having dinner with the German ambassador to Washington when Hitler took power. And the ambassador said, "I don't advise you to go back." Robeson is a great fighter for Jewish rights, for all rights, for rights for everyone, an amazing man, as was Charlie Chaplin, who for a long time, lived with the Jewish actress Paulette Goddard. And of course you see the great Chaim Weizmann and Rabbi Stephen Wise. So these are the people that ran the committee that was addressed. Over 50,000 people attended, and it was one of the great events. And huge funds were raised. \$16 million was raised in America, not just from

the wealthy. These are ordinary left wing Jews giving a little bit of money to help. A million was raised in Mexico. They went 75,000, by the way. It was raised in Palestine. It wasn't just money. It was other help that was given that was so useful to Stalin machinery, medical equipment, medicine, clothes, ambulances, all being sent out to help Stalin's Russia. And on July the 16th, Pravda reported that Mikhoels and Feffer had received a message from Chicago that the joints have financed a thousand ambulances for the Red Army. Now, the joints, of course, a fascinating organisation that was involved so much in helping the Jews of Europe. Now, towards the end of the war, the Jewish anti-fascist committee, and by the way, the great filmmaker, Sergei Eisenstein, was also in it. They all became involved in documenting the Holocaust.

Now, this ran contrary to Soviet policy. At the end of the war, even though the Russians had liberated many of the camps, never forget that it was a Ukrainian attachment to the Red Army that had liberated the largest camp of all Auschwitz. Stalin, the ruthless Stalin, has to hold a people together. He knew how many Ukrainians had worked with the fascists. He knew how many East Germans had worked with the fascists. He knew how many Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians had worked with the fascists. So what happens, it is known as the great patriotic war where everybody suffered as a result of fascism. The Jews were never singled out as a special case. When we taught in Belarus, which of course is still a communist country, we always had to teach under the auspices of the great patriotic war. It's terribly important. When I first visited Auschwitz, the sign did not point out the Jews. It talked about the millions of Poles and people of other nations who had died there. Jews were not mentioned under communism. So now, you have members of the anti-fascist committee who had lost so many of their families. I mean, the wonderful Vasily Grossman who had worked. He wasn't well enough to serve in the Army. So he had actually written articles for the Red Army. And he had lost his mother in Berdichev. Dov Hofshiteyn, a very important poet. His mother and his younger brother were murdered at Babi Yar. And some of the committee, the anti-fascist committee, were supporters of Israel. And because they had international contacts, this makes them vulnerable to charges. Now, Stalin is already worried about 50,000 young Jews coming out to meet Golda Meir. And I shouldn't use the state, the term worried. Stalin had to find a solution. What are you going to do with these writers, these poets? I mean, for example, if I'm talking about Grossman, he covered many of the major events of the war. And as early as 43, he began to collect details of the murders. And he had written an article, "The Hell of Treblinka," which was actually used at the Nuremberg trials. He also participated, Grossman participated in the assembly of what they called the Black Book. And it was to be published in conjunction with US organisations. Now, what they wanted to do, jointly in America and Russia, was to find as many of the destroyed communities as possible to begin to print the name so that they can never ever be forgotten. This, of course, takes us into the

whole theory behind Yad Vashem. You record, you record, you record. The names must never be forgotten. But what happened to Grossman? At first, the authorities decided to change the text to actually conceal the anti-Jewish atrocities that had been perpetrated by people who were now subjects of the Soviet Union. For example, there was a real problem with the Ukrainian guards. How on earth are you going to be able to deal with it? So many of them had actually worked for the Nazis. In the end, the Black Book was published in New York, but no Russian edition ever appeared. And unfortunately, Mikhoels who had had so much connection with the West, it was a controversy over Mikhoels' death. What happened was he dies in Minsk in January 19 at 49. His body and that of another man was found by the side of the road. It was put about that he died in a hit and run. But the majority of people believed that he was actually taken by the secret police and murdered. And then his body was dumped. So Itzik Feffer and the others, what is going to happen to the members of the anti-fascist committee? And Stalin then arrests the majority of the main members of the anti-fascist committee.

Can we go onto the next slide, please, Judi, if you don't mind? No. No, you need to go to the first slide, The Night of the Murdered Poets. I beg your pardon, Judi. Thank you very much. Here you see Mikhoels. This is when he is in a period of greatness. Now remember, Mikhoels is dead, and I'm going to read you the names of the defendants so you can see how important they were. And because we should remember their names. Peretz Markish. They're all going to be executed apart from one. He was a Yiddish poet. He was the co-founder of the School of Yiddish Writers, bearing in mind that Yiddish was allowed in Russia. David Hofstein, another Yiddish poet. Feffer that I've talked about. And Feffer had actually, at one stage, given information to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. He later recants, but he does give a certain amount of information. Leib Kvitko, Yiddish poet and a children's writer. David Bergelson, a novelist. Solomon Lozovsky, the director of the Soviet Information Bureau and Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs. Remember the role that the Jews had played in the hierarchy of the Soviet Union. So many of them had died in the great purges. But as I said to you last week, it's complicated. Was Stalin an anti-Semite? Was he turning specifically against Jews? Or was he just turning against anyone he hated or anyone he saw as a threat? Now, this is when he turned specifically against Jews. Boris Shimeliovich, who was the chief surgeon of the Red Army, and the medical director of the Major Moscow Hospital. Benjamin Zuskin, who was after Mikhoels' assassination, director of the Moscow State Theatre. Joseph Yuzefovich, researcher at the Russian Institute of Sciences and a trade union leader. They're taking out many of the great intellectuals, but also Jews who have high positions in Soviet affairs. Leon Talmy, who was an important translator and a journalist. Ilya Vatenberg, editor of the anti-fascist paper, and he had been a labour Zionist in Austria before returning to Russia in 1935. He was taken as an internationalist. Khayke Vatenberg, who was wife of Ilya.

She was a translator. Emilia Teumin, deputy editor of the Diplomatic Dictionary, and the editor of the division of the Soviet Information Bureau paper. So there are people who've had lots of contacts with the West. Solomon Bregman, deputy commissar, Foreign Affairs. He fell into a coma after the trial and died in prison. Lisa Stern. Now, she was a terribly important biochemist. So important that they didn't kill her. They sent her to a camp. She was too important. And in fact, she died later on. And tragically, the trial begins on May the eighth. They're sentenced on July the 18th. There was no prosecution or defence counsel. It was all done in camera. Sentencing. All properties confiscated. They're stripped of all their honours. And what happens is it's what happens to the families. The defendants' families were charged with being relatives of traitors to the motherland. They're exiled in December 1952. They didn't know the fate of their families until 1955 when the case was reopened. And ironically, it was decided that Stalin had made was wrong. Now, it was in 1955 that the military collegium of the Supreme Court determined there was no substance to the trial. So that's The Night of the Murdered Poets. Another important poet, and you will know him as Denista. He was arrested and died in a labour camp. Yitzhak Musinov who was a literary critic. He died in prison. More and more of them were taken away. The great Yiddish poets, the great period of Yiddish literature, they're taken away and they are executed. Now, this is when there's a change in the tactics. The campaign against Zionism begins. Zionism is going to be seen more and more as the enemy of the Soviet Union. And what I'm going to show you in the next couple of presentations is how it leaves Russia and it transports west. And I'm going to find for you many of the scurrilous accusations against Israel that you will find embedded in Soviet policy from then on. So in December the 1st, 1952, this is a speech of Stalin's at the Politbureau. "Every Jewish nationalist is an agent of the American Intelligence service. Jewish nationalist thinks that their nation was saved by America. They think they are indebted to the Americans. Amongst doctors, there are many Jewish nationalists." And of course, on January the 13th, what do we see? What do we see on January the 13th of 1953? You see the doctors' plot. Jewish doctors were accused of trying to poison Stalin. The fact that he died meant that they managed to go free. Zion, more and more, it begins to appear in the press. So let me go back to Stalin's speech. "They think they're indebted to the Americans. Amongst doctors, there are many Jewish nationalists." This is actually a speech by Stalin. Now, 1952 also begins a campaign of Stalin to root the Jews out of the security services. Why? Because they have too much knowledge of the West.

Can we go onto the next slide if you don't mind, Judi? Go through them, go through them. The Slansky trial. Yeah, it's the Slansky trial I want now. Thank you very much, Judi. Okay. The Slansky trial, which I covered when I looked at Czechoslovakia, what happened at the Slansky trial is that 11 members of the Czechoslovak government, 13 members were arrested, 11 of them were Jewish. It was predated in 1949

in Hungary when Laszlo Rajk and six other defendants were arrested and charged with Titoism, Trotskyism and Zionism. Six of the defendants were Jewish. They were all arrested and executed. Now, you come to the Slansky trial where Rudolf Slansky was number two in the Czech government. So 11 very important Jewish communists in government are arrested and they are charged with Zionism, Titoism, and Trotskyism. And the Soviet advisor to the Czechs, because what happens is the Soviets sent over their advisors to make sure the trial was handled properly. This is Lijhachev. This is what he said to one of the defendants. "You are a dirty Jew. That is what you are. Israel is your real fatherland. And you have sold out socialism to your bosses, the Zionist imperialist leaders of World Jew. Soon, we will have to exterminate all your kind." And basically, it really does begin to spread. So Stalin's paranoia, he begins to believe that every Jew in Russia is a potential threat because they have a dream of a motherland. The reality was that any Jew who'd become a communist, they were so anti-Zionist. Think back to the dream. Think back to that era under the hot last years of the Czars. Jewish intellectuals fighting each other, the Bund, the Zionists, the international socialists. And the other point to make is that ironically, the leadership of many of the communist parties after the war in Poland, 50% of the leadership were born Jews. In the Czech Republic, in what became later on the Czech Republic, wherever you see a communist government, you see a disproportionate number of Jews. And now, Stalin is turning against them. Israel, he already sees as a problem. And then something else happens. So keep it on the Slansky trial. And that is something that was so contentious in Israel that's going to have ramifications for the Soviet Union. And that's the relationship between Israel and West Germany. What you have to do is to pull together lots of different threads. You have to look at Stalin. The Cold War is really underway. It's hotted up. You need also to think of the, if you think of the Nuremberg War crimes trials as well, at first, it was a movement to bring the guilty to justice. But it never really happened. Why? Because in the end, communism was seen in the West as the real enemy, and finding Nazis when many of those ex-Nazis could be useful to you against the communists. And all you have to do is to look at those who've been imprisoned for life and how many of them were let out. So in the end, there wasn't much justice at the end of the war. That's another story we are talking, but I want to turn to Israel and West Germany. Remember, West Germany is divided into zones, whereas Russia, of course, isn't in control of East Germany. And ironically, the Russians were using ex-Nazis as well in the Secret Service along with Jews. It must have been a very, very peculiar situation. And never forget how many of the top Nazi scientists were taken either by the Russians or the Americans or the British. The man who was responsible for the V-2 programme, Wernher von Braun, he finished up, heading up the American Atomic Commission. So what a world. Anyway, Israel and West Germany. Can there ever be any real reparations for the show? The question of reparations was actually mooted as 1941 by Dr. Nahum Goldmann. And it was further developed by

Jewish refugees. Amongst them, Dr. Siegfried Moses. And in December 1944, a council was established, a council for the protection on rights and interests of German Jewry. And at the Paris Reparations Conference in late 1945, what is going to happen, what will happen to all Jewish claims in neutral countries? And the Paris Reparation Conference actually said that there can be no reparations for Jews in occupied countries. But what about in Germany? Now, Adenauer was an anti-Nazi. And he desperately needed his nation to be rehabilitated. And already, you had the beginnings of submission of individual applications, each of whom had to be approved by separate German states. It was a terrible thing. You are dealing with Holocaust survivors or German Jews who'd been uprooted from their countries and had lost everything. And by 1953, there was 110 thousands and \$83 million were paid out for loss of liberty, limb and occupation. That was actually to those German Jews. But between 1949 and 1950, Dr. Noah Barou, who was vice president of the British section of the World Jewish Congress, began to discuss with West German officials alternative means of securing compensation for Jewish people. He made 40 different trips. And in March 1950, there was confirmation from the West Germans that the principle of collective indemnification was valid and would serve as a basis for negotiation. Because what the Israelis wanted, the Israelis wanted to be accepted as the heirs to the Holocaust of those who had no more heirs, because the Israelis had actually worked out for every Jew that came to Palestine. And just remember how many survivors did come to Palestine. It cost them \$3,000.

Now, of course, there can be no monetary compensation for what had happened, but the Israelis, the Israeli state, they'd have to absorb 52 different peoples from 52 different countries. Just think Israel in 1948. They didn't just have to fight a war. They had to absorb. They have to mother up. They had no natural resources. And they had to forge a nation. And in the end, there's confirmation that it would happen. In January 1951, the Israeli government sent notes for the four Allies, asking for indemnity to the amount of 1.5 billion. And this was based on Israel saying that they would absorb over a million victims of the shoah. That they would absorb a million Jews. The Russians, of course, totally ignored the note. The Western Allies said there's moral justification. But said basically to the Israelis, why don't you negotiate directly with Bund? So Ben-Gurion is in a very difficult situation. Again, you get to the moral issue now. Do you deal with the devil? And for many Israelis, they were the devil. The Germans, even Adenauer, who was an anti-Nazi, you cannot deal with the devil. And in fact, when it goes to the vote in the Knesset, there is a huge rally that is organised by begging. And two people died in that terrible rally outside the Knesset. And again, if you think of the passion that was ignited by it all, and Ben-Gurion, as I said, he said he tried to make it happen. He said, "Look, Adenauer has acknowledged his nation's responsibility. Germany must make amends." How can you make amends for the shoah? You can't make amends for the shoah. You

know that there are those who say it's the only, you can't even talk about it. So the ramifications are with us and will always be with us. But the world has to go on. And it divided Israel. The talks actually had to begin in Holland. And in the end, it was agreed that Germany would pay three billion Deutsche marks in goods also over 14 years, plus individual compensation. 450 Deutsche marks to any survivor living outside Israel. And ironically, Israel was asked to refund the value of Knights Templar property, which had been confiscated in Palestine. I mean, I would've a problem with that myself. And of course it needed ratification and it was difficult. It was difficult not just to get it through the Israeli parliament, but it was also difficult to get it through the German parliament and the Russians of course. The Russians were totally against it because West Germany is allied to the West, and it is the enemy of the Soviet Union. So you can imagine the anti-Israel propaganda that lights up the Russian press. And the Arabs actually announced, as a result of that, they won't trade or grant any licences to German firms. So you have disagreement everywhere. You have disagreements in the Knesset itself. You have bad blood between members of the Knesset. Huge, huge debate. But it did mean that Israel did get an incredible amount of goods. And I'm sure many of you will remember the Agate buses, but they will remember German cars coming into Israel. It's a very, very complicated system. It was passed finally on March the 20th, 1953 in Germany, March the 20th in Israel. So basically, this growing relationship between West Germany and Israel, it's incredibly contentious. And there's so many stories about it. And what is going to happen is that this thread that begins with the Adenauer-Ben-Gurion agreement is going to really develop in Soviet propaganda, because obviously, after Stalin's death, the anti-Israel propaganda continues. Even though, for example, it was considered that the murder of Yiddish poets was wrong, Israel more and more becomes a bit more. And there's a very important political reason for this. Think the world scene. You've already had the Korean War. Sides have been drawn. One of the main interests of the Russians was to find allies in the emerging third world. When the feudal monarchies begin to fall, who are they replaced with? They are replaced in Egypt with Gamal Abdel Nasser, who is going to introduce a very strange blend of socialism and nationalism. He wants to be the new Saladin. He, between 1958 and 1961, creates United Arab Republic. The Arabs more and more, and there's huge hostility between all the various groups. Think about it. The Sal dynasty. The Sal dynasty come to power having replaced the family of the king of Iraq and the king of Jordan. They murdered the family. But you have to think back to the first World War. When the British do a deal with the Emir Hussein, Sharif of Mecca, he is replaced by the south. One of his sons becomes emir of Iraq, king of Iraq. Another one of his sons becomes king of Jordan. So their descendants, until, of course, the dynasty is wiped out in Iraq in 1958. But this huge enmity between the Souths and the Hashemites, plus they all hate each other. They also have problems with the Palestinians, particularly Haj Amin al-Husseini, who is still officially the leader of the Palestinian Arabs. The Palestinian Arabs,

the tragedy of the Palestinians, many of them flee to Gaza. 10% of them flee to Gaza. The Egyptians closed the border and incarcerate them. Many flee to the West Bank, which of course becomes Jordan. The Jordanians shut it off. So they're left to fester in refugee camps. Israel is absorbing all the immigrants. I'll be doing this in much more detail as we go on. But what I'm trying to look at here is Russia. Russia can find allies in the Arab world. Nasser is far more likely to want to play with a national socialist regime in Syria than perhaps we have an ally. And this is going to be exacerbated under Khrushchev. So basically, going back now to propaganda, bearing in mind, and it's so important to keep on reiterating this, Russia is a totalitarian society. It is still, in my view, a totalitarian society. We treasure freedom of the press. We lose it at our peril. So you can imagine the alliance inverted commerce between Adenauer and Ben-Gurion is going to be the beginning of the most evil accusation that is posed against the Jewish state, which finds its way into extremist left wing politics in Britain and in America. And I'm going to be talking about that, because this notion of collusion came to its head in Britain in a horrible play called deception, which I expect your pardon, called perdition, which I'm going to talk about.

Now, this is where it begins. So it's also going to be aggravated by, take that theme, think the Kastner trial. Think what happens in the Kastner trial. And I did this in a lot of detail a while back. So just to briefly remind you, Kastner was a minor official of the Israeli government. He was a very, very able man. And back in Hungary, he had been a member of the rescue committee. Now, you will all know that Hungarian Jewry was not attacked by the Nazis until April 1944. Even though they were ill-treated, even though non-Hungarians had been deported, the bulk of Hungarian Jewry, 800,000 people were still alive. Horthy, the regent of Hungary, believed that the German's going to lose the war. He wants to do a deal with the Germans, so Hitler invades. And following Hitler comes Eichmann. And we are now in April 1944. Eichmann summons two members of the rescue committee, Brand and Kastner. And he offers them the blood for good deal that basically, make concessions for us with the allies, and I will sell you the Jews of Hungary. Now, there's a lot to say about this, but I'm looking at this specifically from the point of view of Russian propaganda. The point was, a man called Michael Gruenwald, who had lost his family, his Hungarian Jewish family, he was incredibly litigious. He defamed Kastner. And because Kastner was working for the government, he said that Kastner had cooperated with the Nazis, and that Kastner because he was working for the British government, the Israeli government, the Israeli government decided that they would bring him to trial, that they would bring Gruenwald to trial for libel. A brilliant young herotnic called Shmuel Tamir defended Gruenwald. And what came out at the trial, unfortunately, Kastner was quite an arrogant character, but all the pent up bitterness and tragedy of Hungarian Jewry came out at the trial. Now, the point was, Kastner had asked for a pledge. He actually said to Eichmann, if you're serious, allowed me, show me a

pledge. And Eichmann allowed over 1,300 Jews to be released. And Kastner tried to make an ark, a sort of Noah's ark. According to the Russians, what is going to come out, Kastner for money saved the Jews. Kastner saved rich Jews and allowed the others to be dust. It's further exacerbated by the Eichmann trial, the kind of rhetoric that is going to come out of the Russian press, and I'm going to do with this with you in a lot of detail because you need to see it for yourselves. And I thank the late great Robert Wistrich for all the work he did in this research.

If you look at the Eichmann trial, according to Soviet propaganda in Pravda and his Izvestia, the reason the Israelis wanted to execute Eichmann is that he knew he knew about all the Nazis who were working for the Bund government. Plus he knew about Jewish collusion in the shoah. Now, the other thing that the Russians begin to point to is something called the Haavara agreement back in 1933. Bearing in mind, between 1933 and 1941, what Hitler wanted was a (indistinct). He didn't want any Jews in his fear of influence, and he wanted to rob them blind. And he was going to legally, socially, and politically exclude them with terror to make them leave Germany. Hitler comes to power. Three months later, shocked the head of the Reichsbank, does a deal with a brilliant young lawyer, German Jewish lawyer living in Palestine called Haim Arlosoroff. It's called the Haavara Agreement, the crossing over. Jews who go to Palestine were allowed to take property with them, provided they had paid for it in Reichsmark. Germany was short of currency. Arlosoroff was actually shot when he returned to Tel Aviv. Who killed Arlosoroff? I'd given presentations on it, it's as a fascinating story. But I'm looking, remember, I'm looking at Russian propaganda. From the Russian point of view, Arlosoroff did a deal with the Nazis and something else. We know that Eichmann visited Palestine in 1937. Now, all these events, and there was a whole bureau in Moscow that was looking at Jewish matters to try and spin this evil web, because I don't know about you, but I would've had a conversation with the devil if I believed it could save my family. And to me, there is no case to answer. But if you take a grain of a sand and you twist it away, and you look at Israel and all the pain of the Slansky trial, because in the end, the Nazis and their allies did it, plus the indifference of the world who let it happen. That's my analysis. Apart from 35,000 wonderful individuals who are honoured at Yad Vashem. To me, that's the story. But can you imagine the bitterness of some of the survivors in Israel? Some of them were off their heads. So consequently, what happens is you have this propaganda coming out of Russia that begins to talk about collusion. And it is going to develop right up until 1967, when of course the six day war, it's going to explode. I'm just going to give you, this is from a Soviet publicist. The Zionist wanted to pull off a big political coup by presenting racist and aggressive Israel in the eyes of world public opinion as a fighter for justice and not a home for criminals. As early as 1964, there's a drawing in Izvestia. West German arms was sold to Israel. And in this cartoon, the star of David

becomes a symbol of destruction. And the caption, "I recommend these weapons. They were tried and tested in Auschwitz and used in the Warsaw ghetto." So this is about alliances now. These are about alliances being created and how Russia realises there will never be an alliance with Israel. And gradually, after Stalin's death, this whole atmosphere of Israel becoming the bete noire, the republishing of the protocols. And also, the number of leaders of the Arab world who were trained in Russia, including Mahmoud Abbas, who went to the Patrice Lumumba University. And his PhD was actually on the blood libel. Let me stop there. It's a complicated story, but I will be returning to it when I'm going to look at how it comes out of Russia, and then I'm going to do another presentation on what happens to it when it comes to the West.

So let's have a look, Judi. Can you still hear me all right?

- [Judi] All good, Trudy.

#### Q & A and Comments

- Thanks, darling. Adrian's asking for end of term exams. That's a good one, Adrian. Why on earth don't you all, I know what's fun. You define the word Jew. Do it with your families.

Susan, Stalin may have wanted to have his Jews just leave for Israel. No, Susan, under no circumstances. No, no, no one can leave. Why would anyone leave the perfect society?

Q: Why is Israel a state, not a country?

A: That's a very, very interesting. The state of Israel, the state of England. That's interesting. I'm going to ask somebody about that.

This is Monty. I grew up near East London, in South Africa, and some of the chickens we raised fainted. My mother revived them by holding a street corps. Oh, spades.

Thank you, Sherry.

Q: Golda was born in chariot Russia. What do you mean?

A: Not Soviet. No, she was born in Czarist Russia. I hope I made that quite clear. She was born in 1903, yes. One of her earliest memories was, no, she was born in 1898. One of her earliest memories was of a pogrom.

Q: If Stalin supported the establishment of the state of Israel, why did he not let the Jews go?

A: Tim, why are you so logical? Nobody leaves the perfect Soviet Union.

This is Simon. The joint is helping Jews in Eastern Europe as is World Jewish relief. Yes, of course. They are amazing organisations.

Tanya, Golda's sister was a member of the Bund. That I can believe. Oh, Monty Golden. Dara Horn's brilliant book, she's recommending, "People Love Dead Jews." It's a brilliant book.

Sue's asking, how can I get rid of the transcript? That question will have to be answered by-

- [Judi] Well, there's the buttons at the bottom that say live transcript. And you can actually turn them off from your device. If you have an iPad, I'm not sure how you can't turn them off, but on a normal PC-

- Thanks. Thank you very much. So if you've got, I have an iPad, I can't turn them off, but I know you can from a computer.

Q: Tim, can you actually charge someone being related to a traitor?

A: You could in Stalin and Khrushchev's Russia, I'm afraid. Yeah, look, you are in a Kafka world. You are in a world of upside down.

Q: Could we have a list of the murdered poets?

A: Yes, I will provide that.

Oh, this is Mona's recommending, Anna Shternshis of the University of Toronto gave a lecture on the Night of the Murdered Poets.

This is from Helen. It's nearly impossible to grasp the enormity of these purges and murders on experiential level. Somehow, as I listen to you, the images and associations that put up on the scenes from the movie, "Burnt by the Sun" that depicts the beginning of the KGB and Stalin's purges. Yes, we are looking, I totally agree with you. We're looking at such devastating, appalling events that how on earth can we even begin to understand? You're really looking at the darkness of the human soul, aren't you? Golda was born in Kiev, though most of her childhood was in Pinsk. Chaim Weizmann was also from Pinsk. He was from Motal town. And actually, I know that Golda went with her mother to Minsk to sell bread when the father went off to Russia. Went from Russia to America to wait for him.

Oh, Adrian's telling us there's an excellent Tom Lehrer song about Wernher von Braun. Yes, I missed Wernher. I very much missed the music of Tom Lehrer. I think we should ask David Pima to give us another session. Von Braun was the space programme. Beg your pardon? That's

that line, isn't it? "Once the rockets are up, who cares where they come down?" "That's not my department," says Wernher von Braun. If you were in France, you didn't get reparations. That's what they meant.

Wendy, in '48, they have to fight the British mandate. Well, no, the British left. The British actually left on May the 14th, 1948. It was one of the most ignominious ends to any issue of the British Empire. It was awful. Of the 20 million Russian Stalin murdered, how many were Jews? That is a very, very, very difficult question to answer. As I said to you, Jews were murdered, up until this period, they were murdered if they were in a category of Stalin's paranoia. Look, yes, of course he was an anti-Semite. He was anti everybody. How on earth, I mean, how on earth do you get inside the mind of that man?

Judith, Austrians were slow to offer reparations. Austrians were too willing to take up the Nazi cause. My late mother said Austria was waiting for the survivors to die to avoid pensions to Jewish survivors. I have hope for today's Austrian. Sure, yeah. I mean, when the Austrians wanted to join Ira, they couldn't until they paid up at reparations. Yeah, Austria's a fascinating place. And please don't forget, the Allies allowed them to become the first victims of Nazism because of the Cold War. Look, a third of the SS were Austrian. Hitler was Austrian. Kaltenbrunner was Austrian. Eichmann was Austrian. It was, yeah. But the Allies, that's why I'm so cynical about this. The Allies needed a buffer against communism. Never forget, Blood and Guts Patton. He had his army in Europe and he said, "Let's go against Russia now, because we're going to have to at some stage." Putin paid a visit to Iran today.

Q: Monty, after World War II, many South African Jews refused to buy anything made in Germany. But that changed when they saw all German made products when they visited Israel. Putin bombarded the Babi Yar Memorial in almost the first days of the current war. What did it say about his relation to the Jews?

A: The last week of July, we're actually going to be looking at Babi Yar. David Pima is going to look at the poem and Dennis Davis will look at the Shostakovich Symphony. And I will look at the history. Look, did Putin form it on purpose? Probably not. But we all know Putin's. Look, he's just banned the Jewish Agency in Israel. He's banned the Jewish Agency in Russia. And he's become very religious, whatever that means. And I mentioned to you that his confessor was at a conference when they talked about the ritual murder of czar.

Q: How did the Soviets have explained their pact with Hitler?

A: Shelly, you are committing a terrible crime. You're being logical. When you control the media, does it matter? You control information. How do you know what I'm saying to you is true? How do you know I haven't just made all this up? You know why you know that? Because you

have access to libraries, you have access to all sorts of medium. You have access to the net, you have access to books, you have access to documentaries. You might disagree with the balance I give, but I would imagine when I said I give you a date for the night of the murders poets, you would believe me. But what if you live in a society where night is dark, where night is day and day is light, and light is dark and dark is light? That's what happens when you live under totalitarianism. That's why the burning of the books to me is such a symbol.

So. Ben Hecht's "Perfidy". Susan is recommending a Kastner affair, Ben Hecht's "Perfidy". The problem with Ben Hecht's "Perfidy" is it is very one-sided. He tells it from one side. It's brilliant. And of course Ben Hecht was the screenwriter, but he worked for the Irgun. Never forget that. So the whole of the, you know, maybe it's too soon to be able to deal with this in a rational way, Susan. Look, I read Ben Hecht. My partner and I didn't speak for a week over it. That's the kind of thing we used to rad about.

Haavara means transfer, yes. It started as a counterweight to the American Jewish proposal to boycott Germany and destroy the economy. Look, American Jews tried to do that and so did the British Jews. But there was no way. Not all of them. In fact, the British Jewish establishment didn't want a boycott. They were worried about their own position, as were the American Jews. Never forget that. The German Bund was very strong in America, Leslie. And also, something else. If you think of some of the great heroes like Lindbergh, he was pro-Nazi. It was a complicated time. There were many southern states, senators who didn't want, not just in the Southern states, but it was very vocal who didn't want America involved in another war.

This is Rona. My husband was part of the 3000 Jews that Kastner saved in a deal called "Jews On Ice" that Kastner made with Eichmann. Instead of Auschwitz, they were sent to farms and factories in Austria. Those sent to farms were later sent to Bergen-Belsen, to a special camp called the Hungarian camp. Yes, Rona, that's very, very interesting. You see, Kastner saved, you called saved. Kastner had no power. No power. The Nazis had all the power. You can only negotiate, the same with the Haavara agreement. You can only negotiate if you've got chips.

This is Adrian. You must read The Inferno by Yoel Pagli, who was survivor of the Paratroops, who landed in Hungary in his meeting with Kastner. Adrian, yes. But Palgi, and of course, that is the story of the amazing Hannah Szenes. But there are those who say his interpretation, it's an interpretation. That's the problem.

And then of course, you can download my talk if you contact Judi, Robert.

Q: Why did Stalin provide the Jews Birobidzhan?

A: Because he was seeing them as a Yiddish-speaking ethnicity, and it was on the Manchurian border. And he thought it would be a good idea to actually settle that area. But it was never a serious. It didn't attract enough. And those who got there, they were promised food stuff. It was to be an agricultural colony. It was way away from the cities. And there was huge corruption.

Jonathan, the joke went that von Braun's autobiography was titled, "I Aim For the Stars (But Sometimes I Hit London)." Yeah, I mean, in Tom Lehrer's song, Tom Lehrer was a very serious man. He was a brilliant mathematician at Harvard, and he wrote these satirical. So it's really worth getting hold of his political songs. I think they're on the net. Have a look at Wernher von Braun. And also, "Who's Next" is funny. Sandy is saying Germany furnished Israel with the Sheruts. Yes, yeah.

This is Susan. I love your comment about Perfidy. My husband and I had a disagreement about it, and I spoke to Shimon Peres about Ben-Gurion's decision. He defended Ben-Gurion by saying he had to keep his eye on Israel being a state or was a conflict. Yes. Yes, and you see, if you think about it, that division, that real division in Perfidy that you saw in the response to the agreement with Germany that you kept on seeing, the bad blood between Begin and Ben-Gurion. In the end, they were both heroes of Israel in my view.

Q: What was the Bund, Erica?

A: That was the labour organisation. The Bundist were a group of Russian Jews who wanted to fight for the revolution. And they wanted Jewish autonomy is, they wanted Jewish autonomy in Russia after the revolution.

Tom Lehrer is on YouTube. Thank you for that, Elaine. And also, listen, he's done a wonderful, it's called "Hanukkah in Santa Monica." He's weaved all the Jewish festivals together. It's beautiful.

Congratulations to Anita Lasker Wallfisch on her 97th birthday. Yes, I saw her this morning. I actually went round there at eight o'clock to have a cup of coffee with her. She's fine. She's fine. She has a fan. She is moaning about the heat, but she is amazing. And she is still, I hope she's not listening, but she is my moral compass. She'd hate me for saying that.

Q: What did the average USSR Jew think about the anti-Israel government position?

A: Shelly, keep that question until we go on further, because it's a big question. It's a good question, but I cannot give you a quick answer.

Della. Hi, Della, how are you?

Q: Do you think that another reason that Stalin gave support to the establishment of Israel, that he thought that one day, he could use Israel to spread unrest in the region for his benefit?

A: Sure. Look, if you think about it, Della, when Israel came into being, the Arab countries were all feudal states, either allied or subjected to the colonial powers. So he believed, look, the more trouble he could make for the West, the better. And he hoped, but I think Golda's visit was a shock. Being Jewish is not dead in the Soviet Union. You see, the dream of communism was to create a space where all the differences between people would disappear. What is fascinating is all this anti-Israel propaganda is going to feed its way back into the Trotskyite organizations in the West, which were so anti-Stalin. An ironically, Trotsky, in a letter of 1938, he actually describes what's going on. He said, "The world is divided up into those countries that won't let the Jews in and those countries that don't let the Jews live." Even Trotsky, he still thought that the Soviet, of course, he thought that what had happened in Stalin's Russia was a complete fast and ghastly and evil. But he never gave up the dream. I wonder if he'd lived to 45 and seen the shoah, whether he would've changed his mind.

Netflix. Netflix has a documentary on Shimon Peres.

Thank you. I think that's it. Thank you, Judi.

- [Judi] Thanks, Trudy. Sorry, I lost my place.

- I hope nobody melts. How many of us were online today?

- [Judi] Just over 1100, Trudy. So people are keeping up.

- So people are keeping cool and keeping in.

- [Judi] Yes, they are.

- I'm glad to hear that. Everyone keep safe, and I will see you from Cornwall on Thursday.