

# Facists Willed the conversion of Jews to Zionism

Winfried Martini, the then correspondent in Jerusalem of the Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung who, according to his own testimony, had “close personal ties with Zionism” remarked later on the “paradoxical fact” that all papers, it was the Jewish [i.e. Zionist] press that for years retained a certain degree of freedom which was completely withheld from the non-Jewish press,”<sup>28</sup> He added that in the Judische Rundschau there was very frequently to be found a critical view of the Nazis without this in any way leading to the banning of the paper. Only with the end of the year 1933 onwards did it lead to a ban on selling this paper to non-Jews. **The Jews should, according to the wish of the fascists be converted to Zionism**, even if this were done with arguments directed against the fascists. In this fashion, the circulation of this Zionist paper, which had until then been small, <sup>29</sup> underwent a rapid swing upwards.

That the Zionist newspaper could congratulate itself on being in the good books of the fascist leaders is understandable, when the position of the paper vis-a-vis the boycott of the Jews on April 1, 1933, is considered. This organized pogrom against Jewish citizens in Germany which aroused indignation all around the world and anger and revulsion in all decent Germans was not condemned outright by the paper; rather it was evaluated as a confirmation of Zionist views “the fatal error of many Jews that one can represent Jewish interests under another cloak is removed,” wrote the Judische Rundschau referring to the pogrom “The First of April 1933 can be a day of Jewish awakening and Jewish renaissance.”<sup>30</sup>

The freedom of activity for the Zionists included the publishing of books as well as the newspaper. Until 1938, many publishing houses (among others, the Judische Verlag in Berlin- Charlottenburg and the Sehochen- Verlag, Berlin) could publish Zionist literature unhindered. Thus there appeared with complete legality in fascist Germany works by Chaim Weizmann, David Ben Gurion and Arthur Ruppin,

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