

Financial Crisis Sparks Wave of Internet Anti-Semitism

October 24, 2008

As the financial crisis continues to affect markets around the world, anti-Semites are still using it to promote conspiracy theories about Jewish involvement in the crisis, and anti-Semitic statements and other anti-Jewish messages are appearing on a daily basis on financial Internet discussion groups and on websites and blogs both in the U.S. and abroad.

The crisis has also given birth to new anti-Semitic conspiracy theories. One of the most common rumors being circulated on the Internet suggests that just prior to the collapse of Lehman Brothers, “\$400 billion was frantically transferred to banks in Israel” by the company.

That conspiracy theory, which has no basis in fact, is reminiscent of the one that emerged immediately after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, which claimed that “4,000 Jews” did not report to work at the World Trade Center that day because they had advance warning that an attack was imminent. That “big lie” is now believed by many around the world.

Posts and public comments on financial message boards, websites and blogs have perpetuated anti-Semitic stereotypes and conspiracy theories alleging Jewish control of the U.S. economy, banking and government and blaming Jews for the country’s financial turmoil. Some posts have gone so far as to resurrect Nazi-era propaganda with threads such as, “The Jewish Problem...They need to be stopped...” or comments such as, “The Final Solution 2??”

Anti-Semitic posts regarding Lehman Brothers, American International Group (AIG) and other companies began appearing in mid-September 2008, on the Yahoo! Finance group and other financial message boards as these companies’ financial difficulties received increasing media attention. While some websites hosting finance boards have been quick to remove offensive statements, new posts have continued to appear as the financial crisis has unfolded.

BLAMING THE JEWS

Starting in mid-September 2008 and continuing through October 2008, numerous posts have scapegoated the Jews for causing the economic crisis in the United States and have claimed that Jews purposely cause crises in order to benefit themselves. These posts, as well as videos on YouTube, depict Jews as evil plotters whose only goal is to do harm by lying, cheating, and manipulating others.

Some examples include:

- In mid-October, *La Voz de Aztlan*, an anti-Semitic online news service that claims to represent the Hispanic community, posted an article that blamed Goldman Sachs, a company founded by Jews, not only for the financial crisis in the United States but for causing a similar crisis in Mexico. Ernesto

Cienfuegos, the author of the article, evoked an anti-Semitic conspiracy theory claiming that Jews in American financial companies sent money to Israeli banks during the crisis and that Goldman Sachs and Israeli banks benefited from the crisis. He wrote, “Preliminary findings by the the [sic] Mexican Congress indicate that during the onslaught on the peso on Friday, billions of dollars flowed into the coffers of Goldman Sachs in New York and certain banks in Israel. As a result of the heist on the Banco de Mexico, Mexican families and small businesses are now experiencing great economic distress...”

- In the same article, Cienfuegos claimed that Goldman Sachs “also spends millions of dollars to buy the favors of elected government officials.” He added, “The recent \$700 billion Wall Street bailout passed the US Senate easily primarily because of the huge contributions Goldman Sachs made to US senators.”
- In an earlier article in October, Cienfuegos used deliberately vague language implying that the anti-Semitic comments in the article were coming from the American public and not from *La Voz de Aztlan* itself. The article stated, “The Federal Reserve is a private cartel of banks controlled by international Jewish families say the Americans who are blaming the Jewish lobby and Israel for the financial crisis...These Americans say that the Federal Reserve Act of 1913 was the creation of New York ‘banksters’ and approved by crooked congressmen in the pockets of the Jews.”
- An online group devoted to astronomy, which features hundreds of anti-Semitic posts, started a thread in October 2008 entitled “The Lehman Brothers Were Jews Who Made Their Money off Slavery.” Another thread was called “Why bail out Jewish bankers?” On that thread, “Warhol” wrote, “Instead of bleeding ourselves dry paying for Jewish wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, we ought to wage war on World Jewry and the State of Israel, which are waging war on us.” “Don Ocean” commented, “Don’t be a purveyor of the Talmudic murderous laws.”
- In a September 2008 thread on Yahoo! Finance group that blames the Jews for the current financial crisis as well as the financial market’s problems after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, “Richlynchjunior” wrote, “Jews are behind the bubbles which started from the creation of all these new speculative hybrid financial instruments...”
- That same month, in another thread on Yahoo!, “Farmerangels” commented, “jews [sic] do not pay for their sins. they [sic] only glorify their sins as they bask in their keen ability to lie, get others to kill and maim for them, and partner with the psychopath gentiles...”
- In September 2008, on AOL Money and Finance pages, “Youngmike11” pitted Jews against the rest of the population by asking, “jews helping jews when do we Amaricans [sic] stand up?”
- Also in September, on Raging Bull, a financial blog, “jacknorthernest” commented, “Alas there is nothing we can do. It is the Jews, the Jews I tell you...”
- A September 2008 video on YouTube entitled “The Court Jewsters” displayed articles and pictures of failing banks and companies while repeatedly depicting Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke, former Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, as well as other Jews with the implication that they have led America into this crisis.

- Judicial Inc., a virulently anti-Semitic website, reposted a mainstream article about the collapse of Lehman Brothers and entitled it “Lehman Brother’s Zionist owners laugh all the way to the bank.” The September 2008 article alleged Jewish control of the bank and echoed the broader anti-Semitic argument that Jews hold complete power in government and the financial services.

STEREOTYPES OF JEWISH GREED

On the Yahoo! Finance message boards, Google groups, YouTube, online discussion groups and newspapers, individuals have asserted the stereotype of Jewish greed to blame Jews for the collapse of the financial market and for harming the country. Anti-Semitic conspiracy theories that accuse Jews of taking Americans’ money and hiding it in Israel or fleeing to Israel with the funds have begun to appear all over the Internet.

In the following posts and articles, Jews are depicted as purposely allowing the financial market to crash so they could benefit while non-Jews suffer. In some articles, there is an implicit call for violence against Jews.

Alleging Jewish profiteering to harm non-Jews

In an October 20, 2008 article in the *American Free Press*, an anti-Semitic conspiracy-oriented newspaper that also appears online, Michael Collins Piper accused Jews of being the biggest threat to America and of purposely “pillaging” the American people. He declared that “their crimes constitute treason and they should be treated as the traitors they are.” Piper wrote:

While viewing Manhattan from their \$25 million penthouses, weekendng on Long Island at the exclusive Hampdens [sic], and spending time at their vacation homes in Israel, these racketeers have been pillaging the American people and now they come asking for the cash-strapped, debt-burdened taxpayers to bail them out...The Lehman Brothers were hailed as financial geniuses, princes of the Earth. Maurice Greenberg of AIG was crowned as a high priest of money. It turns out that they were nothing less than big-time crooks, highly paid henchmen of the international House of Rothschild. Their crimes are greater than fraud and theft. Their crimes constitute treason and they should be treated as the traitors they are...They are fear-mongers, war-mongers, hate-mongers—demagogues of the first and worst order. They tell us that unless we pay them off, our economy will collapse. In truth, they will take the money and run. They will cash in U.S. dollars for gold and Swiss francs and head for them thar’ hills—the Seven Hills of Jerusalem...

A post the day before on the anti-Semitic blog, Zsidozas, made similar claims and stated that Jews should be “confronted and dealt with”:

A New Dark Age of unchecked Jewish hegemony descends upon America and possibly the entire developed world unless these nation-wrecking/war-mongering international economic parasites are eventually confronted and dealt with in an organized, methodical, humane, and rational manner by those of us who care about humanity and do not wish to continue to see humankind perpetually exploited by these highly dangerous Jewish swindlers.

Earlier in September, “Harryslon,” a member of a Google group devoted to Jewish culture, also accused Jews of cheating taxpayers out of their money to make a profit:

These institutions created this subprime bad debt to inflate their balance sheets so their Jewish owners could boast higher profit figures...The Jewish [sic] insiders at these investment banks get rid of their stock ... then speculate against their own banks to profiteer further, while their financier and executive friends continue to walk away with appalling bonuses. Finally when the penny drops and these securities are shown to be worthless (which the Jews knew all along), the taxpayer is left to pick up the bill, and the Jew profits at the expense of the general public.

Depicting Jews as swindlers and cheaters

In an early October 2008 post on the Yahoo! finance group, “stockguygolfer” wrote, “the heebs are just stealing all the cheap shares they can get... it will turn soon...you got to know how these heebs work, all a bunch of thieve [sic] and whores.”

In the same time period, “flavia,” a poster on an online discussion group about Israel, wrote, “The simple fact is that KAK JEW-Controlled government ‘agencies’ have concocted a financial bailout SCAM to financially protect corporate KAK JEWS to the tune of \$700/\$800 BILLION DOLLARS charged to and taxed back upon the common U.S. Citizen whether currently employed or not.”

A month earlier, in September, “Uswarcriminals” commented, “It’s difficult, if not impossible, for one honest investor to neutralize the efforts of thousands of Jewish swindlers.” Following the same theme, “Zimmyzee” wrote, “They’ve infiltrated Wall Street and Government and have ruined our country.” “Hoghedge25” commented, “What is a GS Jew? Goldman Sachs? Jews are greedy, rotten slimeballs.” “Liffaga” added, “They run Wall Street so they should be to blame. There is at my count roughly 1500 of them that should be in the penitentiary. Not a single one will suffer.” “Horizon_blue” commented about Jews, “They love money nothing else, no faith or religion can be so heartless to their victims.”

A series of statements that are part of a YouTube video, “We the People” posted in September 2008, blamed Jews for “enslaving” non-Jews to serve their own interests and greed. The video stated, “... the same Jewish bankers have been robbing us in this same manner for nearly an entire century now. And we continue to allow them to. Like the willing and loyal slaves that we all are.”

ALLEGING JEWISH OR ISRAELI CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT

Some posts on Yahoo! Finance group have tied the country’s financial problems to alleged Jewish or Israeli control of the U.S. government. A few of the posts have also blamed Israel or the Zionists for the economic crisis. Anti-Semitic comments about the financial crisis have also appeared on online discussion groups, websites and blogs.

“Zionists” dictating American policy caused the crisis



This anti-Semitic image accompanied a blog article about the financial crisis, which referred to Jews as “nation-wrecking/war-mongering international parasites” and accused Jews of perpetually exploiting humankind.

James Petras, a retired professor of sociology and the author of numerous books and articles that advance an anti-Israel and anti-Semitic narrative blamed the current economic crisis on the power of the “Zionists” to control the U.S. government and world events. He focused on the activities of what he called the “Zionist Power Configuration” or “ZPC.” Petras wrote:

It was the massive infusion of financial contributions that allowed the ZPC to vastly expand the number of full-time functionaries, influence peddlers and electoral contributors that magnified their power – especially in promoting US Middle East wars, lopsided free trade agreements (in favor of Israel) and unquestioned backing of Israeli aggression against Lebanon, Syria and Palestine...No economic recovery is possible now or in the foreseeable future as long as the US Congress and executives provide trillion dollar bailouts to Wall Street’s insolvent speculators, bankroll 700 billion dollar budgets of ever expanding war spending and while Zionist power brokers dictate US Mideast policies.

In an online group devoted to discussing Israel and which often features anti-Semitic material, “Peace Power” posted sections of an October 2008 article, blaming “Zionist Robber Barons” for the financial crisis. The article written by Khalid Amayreh, a Palestinian journalist based in the West Bank city of Hebron, stated:

Yesterday, America had to allocate 700 billion dollars to bail out another ramshackle American financial institution. I am afraid there will be more bad news in this regard if America doesn’t reclaim its liberty from the Zionist Rober [sic] Barons who have come to tightly control the American financial establishment...It is time ordinary Americans wake up from their slumber to reclaim their country from rapacious Zionism. Because their very future is at stake.

Claims that Israel will benefit from the crisis

In September 2008, on the Yahoo! Finance message board, “Anh2sike” wrote, “With many big Jewish brokerages going down, I’m sure Israel will lose some welfare money coming from America...But I’ll bet Israel is not worry [sic] too much though, because the US govt is always there to issue blank checks to Israel. Americans need to wake up and take control of their lives again.”

That same month, a YouTube video “We the People” asserted, “We have a bunch of foreign citizens (Israelis) that have infiltrated what was once ‘our’ government at the highest levels...The ‘U.S. Government’ is ripping us off for trillions of dollars and giving it to their fellow Jews.”

ANTI-SEMITIC 9/11 CONSPIRACY THEORIES

Some posts on Yahoo! Finance and other websites promote conspiracy theories that blame Jews for catastrophic world events and tie Jewish involvement in the financial crisis to involvement in the 9/11 attacks.

9/11 attacks and economic crisis part of a Jewish “plot”

In a September 2008 thread entitled, “Republican’s...Divorce Yourselves,” “dr.law70” wrote, “Well, the Zionists did 9/11 too...but they didn’t make sure EVERY jew knew not to go to work/ WTC’s that day...only the most powerful-connected 50% were explicitly told an ‘event’ was planned there that day...” That same month, “Cheifmate” commented:

That’s how they work [sic] they short the stock all the way making billions and then cover right it [sic] up sell and then tax payers to the rescue and it is true all those institutions are ran by jews, and yes i heard about those isrealies [sic] video taping before the plane hits from buildings across the street. but i thought they were in custody, i also read that alot [sic] of jews that work at the world trade center didn’t show up for work that morning...

A September 2008 article titled “Taxpayers Forced to Bailout Zionist Gangsters; The Financial Crisis on Wall Street & The Gang of Zionists Behind 9-11,” by anti-Semite Christopher Bollyn appeared on numerous conspiracy-oriented websites, blogs and on-line discussion groups. Bollyn is a former writer for the *American Free Press*, an anti-Semitic conspiracy-oriented newspaper.

He asserted that Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke, who is Jewish, is orchestrating the bail-out of companies owned by some “Zionist gangsters” complicit in the 9/11 attacks. Bollyn claimed that Maurice Greenberg, AIG former chairman and CEO, was “one of the key individuals in the Zionists criminal network behind 9/11.”

EXTREMISTS EXPLOIT FINANCIAL CRISIS

Articles being posted to white supremacist, neo-Nazi, and conspiracy-oriented sites, which blame Jewish greed and self-interest for the economic crisis, are winding up on a wide range of Web site, blogs and even on meet-up groups, thus furthering the spread of anti-Semitism in cyberspace. Claims from one anti-Semitic article about Jews allegedly sending money from their failing companies to Israel, originally posted on a U.S.-based extremist site, has even made its way to the commentary pages of a mainstream newspaper in Europe.

Conspiracy theory about “hiding” money in Israel

TBR News, an anti-Semitic site sponsored by *The Barnes Review*, a Washington, DC.-based Holocaust denial publication, posted an article in early October 2008 falsely claiming that American businesses sent \$400 billion to Israeli banks during the current economic crisis. Under a deceptive headline, “The Voice of the White House,” and masquerading as a genuine news report, the article stated that “it is not necessary to mention that the senders are all Jewish” and “that Israeli-oriented economic criminals will use the Jewish state as a refuge.”

To “prove” this blatantly anti-Semitic claim, this article was juxtaposed with an actual article from the Bloomberg website stating that Lehman Brothers lost more than \$400 billion in assets before declaring bankruptcy. This claim from TBR News has now circulated on various sites on the Internet, including the comments section for articles on the Web site of a mainstream British newspaper, *The Independent*.

One visitor to the comments section, identifying himself as “Errol Flynn,” responded to an article in the paper about the financial crisis by referring to the TBR News claim about the alleged money transfer to

Israel by American businesses. Flynn indicated that the information had come from an “Internet source, giving reliable info in the past.” That comment has since been removed from the newspaper’s Web site.

Conjuring up myths about Jewish banking families

Brother Nathanael, a rabidly anti-Semitic preacher who describes himself as a Jewish convert to Greek Orthodoxy, posted an article, “Jewish Bankers at War,” in October 2008 on his anti-Semitic Web site Real Jew News. In the article, he wrote that Henry Paulson, the Secretary of the Treasury, and other government officials are “puppets of the Jews.” He also alleged that the financial crisis might be a deliberate Jewish “war strategy.”

This followed other anti-Semitic articles related to the financial crisis that Brother Nathanael has recently written and posted to his Web site, including “Is the Bailout a Rothschild Trick?” In that article, he alleged, “Some are blaming the mortgage lenders, legislators, and investment bankers for the current crisis. This is a Rothschild lie spun to perfection by the Jewish occupied press. But the ones behind the lie are the culprits — the Rothschilds, their stooge, Ben Shalom Bernanke, & their propaganda arm, the Jewish occupied mainstream press.” Brother Nathanael’s articles have been posted on Rense.com, a conspiracy-oriented Web site known for articles promoting anti-Semitic stereotypes and Holocaust denial.

American Free Press, an anti-Semitic conspiracy-oriented newspaper, has focused a great deal of its attention of late on the financial crisis. In its September 29, 2008 issue (appearing both in print and online), Willis Carto, a well-known anti-Semite and Holocaust denier who publishes the paper, alleged that the “Federal Reserve System” is privately owned and designed to funnel wealth to its owners. Its creation, he wrote, was the result of an “evil conspiracy” of bankers, and he called it a “Rothschild bank.” The Rothschilds, an old European Jewish banking family, have frequently been invoked over the last 100 years by anti-Semites who charge that Jews control world financial markets.

Blaming same Jews for 9/11 attacks and economic crisis

In September 2008, an article entitled “Taxpayers Forced to Bailout Zionist Gangsters; The Financial Crisis on Wall Street & The Gang of Zionists Behind 9-11,” by anti-Semite Christopher Bollyn also appeared on Rense.com. Bollyn is a former writer for the *American Free Press*.

Bollyn asserted that Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke, a Jew, is orchestrating the bail-out of companies owned by some “Zionist gangsters” complicit in the 9/11 attacks. He claimed that Maurice Greenberg, AIG former chairman and CEO, was “one of the key individuals in the Zionists criminal network behind 9/11.” To Bollyn, the current fiscal crisis and the 9/11 attacks were both part of a vast Jewish conspiracy to control “a nation of 300 million non-Jews.”

Since its appearance on Rense, Bollyn’s article has been reposted in dozens of blogs and forums across the Internet, including Google groups and Yahoo groups, often accompanied by comments like “How dare the f-king government use our money to protect greedy plunderers.”

WHITE SUPREMACISTS DEMONIZE JEWS

Not surprisingly, extremists on white supremacist websites and Internet forums have expressed glee that a Jewish “empire” (Lehman Brothers) had fallen, while others have referred to Jews as “parasites” who “sucked” dry the economy of the United States. Many of the extremists have commented that white Americans will now understand how Jews can impact their lives through their alleged control of banking and the government.

Jews destroying white race and other nations

In an October 2008 speech broadcast on the Internet, Erich Gliebe, the head of the National Alliance, a West Virginia-based neo-Nazi group, claimed that Jews use the economic system to intentionally “destroy the White race.” He stated:

We need TO BAIL OUT of this System. Bail out of this democratic System in which Jew-approved office seekers fly around the country telling the sheep-like masses what they want to hear in an attempt to sit on the perceived seat of power in Washington...Bail out of this System in which the media and the economy are simply tools of the enemies of our people, which are used to gather wealth and power for the Jews and to destroy the White race. The System is run by Jews, and they don't have our people's future in their plan.

Bill White, head of the American National Socialist Workers Party, a Virginia-based neo-Nazi group, posted an October 2008 article to his website that alleged that through “control of the American financial system,” “Jews have destroyed nations” and caused the current financial crisis. The article claimed:

For thousands of years, Jews have destroyed nations by attaching themselves to the banking and trade systems and then using usury and internationalist open borders policies to bleed the countries dry. Jews took control of the American financial system during the Great Depression, then took control of the social system during the 1960s, creating so much chaos that they were able to dictate financial and international policies in the 1980s and 1990s that led directly to the financial collapse of today.

Another article White posted to his Web site, in September 2008, entitled “Major Jew Investment Bank Fails,” alleged Jewish control of financial institutions and world economies and stated that Jews “have bankrupted economy after economy for the past two thousand years, sucking one country dry, then moving on to suck dry another.”

In posts to the forum of the neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement group made in October 2008, individuals claimed that Jews are “parasites” and guilty of “bleeding this economy’s finances dry.” A poster named “Thor” urged readers to “Know who the parasites are!!!” Another poster, “Lone Wolf,” wrote:

Jews are bleeding this economy's finances dry! Israel is just a sliver of a nation! What right do jews have to regulate anything in anyones [sic] country?Just because the lies of the old testament say god favors jews, does not give them the right to infiltrate other nations and steal its currency!!!!

Jews benefiting themselves and Israel

Hal Turner, a New Jersey-based white supremacist, made an October 2008 post to his Web site, implicitly claiming that, through “deliberate action,” “Zionists” caused the financial crisis to benefit Israel.

The present financial meltdown is a product of deliberate action by those who control the banking and finance sectors of most national economies. We all know who “they” are. The reason “they” chose to cause this worldwide financial meltdown has to do with the state of Israel. You see, Zionists wanted - then demanded - the west attack Iran to destroy its nuclear power plants because the Zionists fear those plants will allow Iran to develop a nuclear bomb.

In an October 2008 post on Vanguard News Network (VNN), a white supremacist Internet forum, a poster using the name “Jett Rink” outlined how he believes the Jews manipulate the financial system for their own gain:

This is where jews shine. They get everyone to panic and sell solid companies that are in no financial troubles, then they buy them up at a deep discount and make the price go up, the goys think everything is great and they try to rebuy their old stocks, of course the jews sell and the market goes back down again. Jews walk away with the gold.

In a September 2008 post on VNN, “Socrates” suggested that “Congress should pass a law that bans Jews from working in America’s money-and-finance sector.”

Another poster on VNN commented, “Look at how they are portraying these people who are staying up late in the capitol to pass this 700 billion dollar bailout. They’re makin it look like they’re ‘workin hard’, ‘takin action’, ‘reaching a solution’...Yeah, they are probably sittin around eating crumpets while the Jews are driving away with truck loads of hundred dollar bills.”

Blaming Jewish companies

On Stormfront, the largest white supremacist Internet forum, Seattle-based “zoomcopter” alleged in an October 2008 post that “Jews are the undisputed masters of money manipulation, they’ve been doing it for thousands of years.”

In another October post to Stormfront, “Knight Ranger” asked, “Can you see why the jews need to be routed out and sent packing...**they are a cancer on our society!!!!**...these scoundrels have the **biggest** hand in ruining our economy!!!!” [emphasis in original]

That same month, “blueearth” on Stormfront wrote, “Yes, the ZIONIST economy of America is failing!! Ben Bernanke is a jew. The federal reserve is a separate zio entity.”

Also on Stormfront, California-based “racedefender” gleefully wrote in September 2008, “Good. Let all the previous Jewish empires topple and fall, maybe some Gentile Americans will have the sense to set more honest banks up when the rubble clears.”

That same month, other posters claimed the government is bailing out failing companies because they are owned by Jews. An individual from Central Europe wrote “No doubt many of the Board of directors, which



Worldpeace-phaedrus blog

This altered anti-Semitic image of stereotypical “plotting” Jews appeared in a blog article that asked if Americans’ taxes would “replenish the coffers of Lehman Brothers.” The original image is from a white supremacist Web site.



is usually composed of the major shareholders that wield power, are still largely Jewish...I would imagine the likelihood of the Fed etc. bailing the company out depends largely to what degree it is Jewish owned.”