



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE  
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

*Preserving American Jewish History*

MS-603: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum Collection, 1945-1992.

Series D. International Relations Activities. 1961-1992.

Box 58, Folder 11, France, 1970-1980.



FROM THE DESK OF

C. HUCHET-BISHOP

Maic - Here is the  
report promised.  
I did not include  
a copy of STENS,  
just because I do  
not have one (I see  
report) and record  
because your office  
should have received  
2.

Cl.

AMITIÉ JUDÉO-CHRÉTIENNE  
DE FRANCE

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Permanence : Mardi et Jeudi de 14 h. à 18 h.



REPORT  
on the

Amitié Judéo-Chrétienne de France Publication  
L'ENSEIGNEMENT DE L'HOLOCAUSTE

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① Joel Gallab -  
IAD Newsletter  
② For Holocaust

This was a project of the Amitié antedating the Holocaust film by more than two years. We wanted to alert French Secondary School teachers to @ the necessity of teaching the Holocaust b) the inadequacy of the textbooks in use.

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

We could not bring our project to completion for lack of funds. We deplored this all the more that we had secured the collaboration of outstanding historians: Poliakov, Blumenkranz, Sherr, Delpech.

From the onset, Zach. Shuster had thoroughly approved of our project. He was aware of our difficulties and his understanding meant a great deal to us during those frustrating months.

Moreover he did much more than to boost us up with words: he took up the matter repeatedly with the American Jewish Committee New York office. Through Rabbi Tanenbaum's invaluable help a grant of eight hundred dollars was given us.

L'ENSEIGNEMENT DE L'HOLOCAUSTE came out as a double issue of our periodical Sens, April 1979.

Previous experience had taught us that to send a copy of a magazine was a waste of time and money unless a) directed to the responsible person and not to the institution, b) that a special effort had to be made to draw the recipient's attention. Answer to the first requirement was to mail the study to the Dean of the school instead of directly to the History teacher. This would spare the Dean's hierarchical susceptibility and avoid the teacher's possible embarrassment. The second point was met



when we decided that the periodical should be accompanied with a personal letter to the Deans, emphasizing their responsibility as to the use of the study in their particular school. Furthermore, and against all thrifty consideration, but to ensure maximum attention, we would mail the letter and the magazine together, in a single envelop, first class.

We were able to print 4000 copies. Together with the letter they were sent, first class mail, to 1700 Deans of Secondary Schools having top grade classes, called Terminales. The Terminales are the last school year before entrance to the University through the examen, Baccalaureat. (Students with French baccalaureat enter American University 3rd year). Usually they are 17 or 18 years old).

It is in Terminales that the history covering the period 1914-1945 is taught.

We also sent 50 copies to Europe Council, 50 to the <sup>April</sup>Orléans Holocaust Colloquium, 2000 to our regular subscribers, and following Rabbi Tanenbaum's suggestion, 50 copies to Franco-phone Africa. (List included).

The response was overwhelming; to date we have but 30 copies left, and are unable to keep up with the requests for more still coming in.

The possibility of a reprint is ruled out. 1. Our printer does not keep used plates. 2. It would be beyond our financial possibilities.

The original cost was as follows:

Printing	6000 ff.
Mailing	2000 ff.
Total	8000 ff. (roughly \$2,000) out of which the 3500 ff (\$800), the American Jewish Committee grant, is to be deducted.

Of course there were no fees provided for the writers and no salaries for the office work; we are all volunteers at the Amitié Judéo-Chrétienne de France .



That our project met a need is obvious through the response. We are thankful for having been able to contribute, in a small but concrete way, to the dissemination of a responsible approach to the teaching of the Holocaust. And we are deeply grateful to the American Jewish Committee for making this possible.

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES



Claire Huchet-Bishop  
President

Amitié Judéo-Chrétienne de France



FRANCE

The airing of Holocaust in France was met with a broad spectrum of positive opinions including approbation, constructive criticism, and ~~an~~ undoubtedly painful introspection. But prior to Holocaust's airing, the climate of opinion had been quite different, ~~and~~ included a large amount of antagonism to the series. Some of the French media expressed resentment, believing the film to be a history lesson delivered by the United States to the French, while other opinion organs attacked the series on the basis of a preconceived belief <sup>that</sup> it was of low quality. But a turnabout in the general opinion of the series proved, in fact, essential to the airing of the series, and the antagonism dissipated as Holocaust progressed. "The question of the quality of the series, raised continually before the screening, was dropped once it had been viewed," observed Variety. Opposition to the series after it had been seen in its entirety was quite sparse. One French journal, in fact, was moved to proclaim it "perhaps one of the greatest moments in television, if not the greatest."

Holocaust was shown in four parts, two on the popular weekly show "Dossiers de l'écran" ("Documents of the Screen"), the format of which traditionally involves a film followed by a discussion. The other two segments were shown on Sundays. The first segment, which ~~was~~ aired on Feb. 13, 1979, received 72% of the French viewing audience, according to a poll published by France Soir. This percentage remained essentially stable throughout Holocaust's airing, and it represented an audience of approximately 20 million viewers for each of the episodes. Yet the series received only 15 points out of a possible 20, which is considered to indicate a "reserved" public reaction on the French

rating system.

But this rating was less indicative of the emotions which Holocaust called up than was the controversy which led to the show's being aired, a controversy which generated emotions greater than those caused by the actual viewing of the series.

\* \* \*

Initially, Holocaust had been rejected by France's two major networks, and the third claimed that it could not afford to purchase the air rights to the series. This reluctance to show Holocaust, an article by David Singer in The Nation proposed, may have stemmed from the fact that "...television in France is state-owned and is very much its master's voice."

Variety magazine noted one government official's comment that "We should be grateful to have Holocaust, which is about Poland, and doesn't touch on the extermination of French Jews." But, thought Singer, the government may have wished to maintain the illusion "that France, with a few exceptions, was on the side of the angels," and was concerned that Holocaust, through its potential for arousing a national historical curiosity, could threaten that image.

The networks' refusal to air the series was publicly challenged by Madame Simone Veil, the Minister of Health; by the League Against Anti-Semitism and Racism; and by Beate and Serge Klarsfeld—who have been active in bringing Nazi war criminals to justice.

Additional pressure to get Holocaust aired came from publisher Robert Laffont, who was at the time introducing to the public the French translation of the book adapted from the screenplay. He arranged to have the series shown to French critics as a step in the publicity campaign for the book.



With all these pressures, public opinion, although still not wholly favorable to the film, became a significant factor in favor of the showing of Holocaust when L'Express, the weekly news magazine, interviewed Darquier de Pellepoix. De Pellepoix had served as the Vichy government's Commissioner for Jewish Affairs, and had been directly responsible for the deportation of several thousand French Jewish nationals, as well as refugees, to the death camps. He expressed no regret for his actions. This provoked public indignation and aroused a new interest in World War II, the Holocaust, and the role of France in both.

The Nouvel Observateur, for example, ran four articles in its following issue that dealt with elements of the growing controversy and the history it recalled. One, by Maurice Clavel, criticized de Pellepoix sympathizers and denied the claim that Holocaust was designed to promote support for Israel; the other three articles dealt with the Nazi "Final Solution."

Public opinion in favor of screening Holocaust grew even stronger when L'Express wryly offered to launch a campaign to help the poverty-stricken third network purchase the rights to the series, and then began such a collection.

Eventually, one of the main networks, Antenna 2, capitulated, and Holocaust was scheduled to air as soon as the French-dubbed version was prepared for the screen.

\* \* \*

A strike by network technicians coincided with the showing of Holocaust, thus largely precluding any live television programming to complement Holocaust. But Antenna 2 did provide one such program, on the final night of the series. It included not only several young

people, but also Minister Veil who, as one observer noted, has "tragically valid" credentials for such a debate; she is the only survivor of her family, which was deported to Eastern Europe. She told the audience that the film "...fails to show the real horror of what we had endured... The worst actually was what happened within ourselves."

Mr Singer, writing in The Nation, thought that Veil "...dominated the debate with dignity, understanding and tact," and French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing extended his official congratulations to her for "having said what all Frenchmen felt on this subject."

In addition, Radio Luxembourg, which can be heard in much of France, organized a call-in symposium after the broadcasting of one segment of Holocaust. It featured Serge Klarsfeld, among others. The predominant questions that came in were "Why didn't the German Jews revolt rather than be deported?" and "Were six million people really killed?" Other callers were curious about why the film dealt almost exclusively with the fate of the Nazi's Jewish victims.

Antenna 2 also organized a group of experts to examine Holocaust and the era it depicted; the discussion included Dr. Riegner of the World Jewish Conference, and was attended by some 40 journalists who were invited to question the panel and to report on the proceedings.

France Soir, a Paris daily, invited historical witnesses to a roundtable discussion; included were philosopher-sociologist Raymond Aron, writer Jean Douard, Gaullist politician Alexander Sanguinetti, State Secretary Lionel Stoleri, artist and ghetto survivor Mark Halter, and August van Kageneck, Paris Bureau Chief for the German



magazine Die Welt.

More than thirty prominent historians issued and signed a report on the reality of genocide. The scholarly French journal on Christian-Jewish relations, Sens, devoted an entire issue to "The Lesson of Holocaust," and many other newspapers and periodicals published educational and background material on the rise of Nazism and the evils of anti-Semitism and all forms of racism.

\* \* \*

France's Minister of Education, Christian Beullac, in an unprecedented message, addressed parents and teachers on Holocaust. The Minister discussed the positive and negative aspects of the media in general and the relevance of those aspects to an understanding of Holocaust. He noted that, in television, one finds that "Events, true and imaginary or supposed, mixed with reality will be affirmed or dangerously mixed with the reality." He urged his countrymen to "know how to distinguish and choose in this world of semblance as you have learned to do with the real one or about memory."

"The filming of Holocaust and its horrors should not allow us to forget that in the history of mankind there was not only the Nazi genocide, in only one region of Europe. Analysis, perspective, critical references and comparison are necessary... parents, teachers, prepare yourselves, choose, explain, put each thing in its proper place, and above all, reason," stated Minister Beullac.

\* \* \*

The young people of France, reported the Christian Science Monitor, reacted to the film in a "balanced" way. One girl commented, it reported, that "War criminals should be punished, but the Germans are not all Nazis," and a second youngster told the newspaper that "It could happen here tomorrow. People are so easy to condition."



An article in the newspaper L'Arch, "Young People Facing the Holocaust," was comprised of interviews with students from the Jewish high schools. A student at the Yabne school told the interviewer that "Holocaust is a catalyst. It is the pretext for the birth of a debate, especially in the high schools." Another Jewish student noted the commonality of experience between the family of a gypsy friend and her own family. A third Yabne student observed, "We could not help watching the movie as 'cops,' as victims willing to make sure that their tortures and their ills have all been well represented."

Several students underscored the point that Vichy collaboration with the Nazis had only been alluded to in the series, and one student of the Universal Israelite Alliance implied that even Simone Veil had censored questions regarding French collaboration during the television debate.

The young appeared conscious of the ambiguity of the media; one commented, "TV is a double edged sword... How does one distinguish Monday's western (genocide of Indians) from the genocide of the Jews?" Another summarized the film's import by noting, "Whatever it was, Holocaust was not a film for the Jews, as the previous Chomsky movie 'Roots' was not for Black Americans. They know it already!"

Other students in the city of Orleans expressed indifference to one reporter. This reporter noted that the students did acknowledge that Holocaust was difficult to watch and that it could happen again, but that the film failed to provoke indignation and revulsion.

Most of the young Frenchmen, media reports indicated, became curious about their elders' behavior during the division of France and the Nazi occupation. One commentary noted that, for the young, the most significant lesson derived from the series appeared to be rooted in the opposition to "commemoration for its own sake," and that

7,  
they "want memory to be used as a weapon. In their passion, they may occasionally forget the specificity of the genocide of the Jews. But fundamentally, they are right in their emphasis on the universality and permanence of the disease."

\* \* \*

The widespread reticence to confront the questions raised by the history of the Vichy regime, and its deportation of thousands of Nazi victims, remains the most difficult problem for the French, according to the Christian Science Monitor. Alfred Grosser, a respected French historian and expert on contemporary German studies, contended that Holocaust presented the French viewer with two dangers: people, he thought, might conclude from the series that "It was only the Germans," and--the other side of the same coin--that Vichy France was never implicated in the persecution of the Jews and others.

French reluctance to confront this period is also evidenced by the refusal of all three networks to air "The Sorrow and the Pity," the documentary film on French collaboration produced by Marcel Ophuls in 1969. "The Government," wrote Singer in The Nation, "has no wish to show a mass audience such an iconoclastic performance." Yet the reaction to Holocaust, particularly among the young, has spurred curiosity about the era and will hopefully promote historical self-examination, Singer suggested.

\* \* \*

Political relations between France and Germany have been sensitive since the birth of the two nations, and some of the critics of Holocaust feared the series might have divisive effects on Franco-German ties, in particular on the first European Parliament, of which both nations are important members. Agence France Presse reported that some



interpreted the film as "the start of a political campaign against West European unification," and a spokesman for one of the centrist parties, speaking for a number of those parties, thought Holocaust "a new spectacular recitation of the extermination of Jews by the Nazis" that was "the kind of film which feeds the anti-German campaign of some anti-Europeans."

Gaullists and Communists, according to several sources, did use the public stir aroused by Holocaust to decry the idea of a European Parliament, warning of a Germany grown economically and politically dominant in the region, and urged Frenchmen to think nationally. And Humanité, a Communist publication, issued a direct statement on Holocaust which articulated a united front theme: "Holocaust has the merit of reminding us of the terrible years when refusal of barbarism united all those worthy of being called men, without political cleavages..."

A somewhat different approach to the possible political impact of the series was taken by Oliver Cherillon, publisher of Le Point, who wrote, "In this climate, polluted by slogans, I hope that the French people who see Holocaust will not begin thinking that the devil is German, exclusively German, eternally German." And Alexander Sanguinette, the Gaullist politician, declared that "I think it is good for the young generation that this film is being shown. But I wish the accent was on the fact that Nazism wasn't only German; it was European, even international."

But the hostile reaction to Holocaust was, overall, minimal, even though there was one newspaper in Toulouse which claimed that "...the German occupation has left the Jewish occupation in its place...Frenchmen, free us from this dictatorship."



Variety reported that near Nancy, some Jewish schoolchildren were struck with snowballs as adolescents insulted them with anti-Semitic phrases from the film. Perhaps more importantly, the officer sent to investigate the incident did not see any 'real' problem, and compared Holocaust to any western that kids might act out.

Although anti-Jewish sentiments still exist, they are not very prevalent. The film may have ameliorated some of this problem, but the most fundamental benefit gained by the airing of Holocaust may not have been the illumination of anti-Semitism and its consequences, but the more general bringing to consciousness of the tyranny that racism breeds. Thus, a New York Times story quoted Armand Jammot, producer of the French version of Holocaust, who believed that the film's purpose was "...to incite the French and Germans to prevent similar events from happening again..." Holocaust, a French correspondent for the London Jewish Chronicle noted, "served its main purpose, to bring the past into the present and remind the nation of one of history's most tragic chapters."

An article in Le Monde effectively summarized the response of nearly all the French to Holocaust: "Despite differences in ideologies and politics, the unanimous reaction was 'Never again,'" it wrote. The response to Holocaust--and the willingness to confront, to a large degree, its message--had progressed a long way from the initial reluctance to present Holocaust to French audiences.

Monsignor Etheagaray, Archbishop of Marseille and president of the French and European Episcopal Conference, write in an article entitled "Down to the Roots of Anti-Semitism" which was published by the diocese religious bullitin:

"Without doubt, Anti-Semitism arose before Christianity but it must be acknowledged that it is reinforced in a Christian climate by psuedo-religious arguments, that the anti-Semites will wield until their end.

The Jews merit our attention, our esteem, on occasion, our brotherly criticism, but always our love. It is, perhaps, what has been missed most and why the Christian attitude has been the most culpable. "Holocaust" gives us help, not only to take hold of our consciensass of our responsibilities for past accounts, but to face what is coming. The monstrosities of yesterday can, alas, repeat themselves tomorrow, especially in an age where violence and fear are becoming world-wide.

So long as Judaism remains outside of our theology and our history, we will be, in the bud, of anti-Semites. "



44% - yes - The next European assembly  
could protect us from a New Holocaust.

This first impression, or ~~revising~~ the result  
of the probe, it is that the category of  
television viewers most interested in the  
broadcasting of "Holocaust", belonged to the  
group between 18 and 24 yrs. old. Therefore,  
the people who were not born at the time  
of the related events and for who, for a  
(strong) part, found, in the serial story,  
revelations about deeds ~~of~~ which they  
have more or less heard of. According  
to the detailed analysis, 81% of the  
young approved of the broadcast of  
"Holocaust", whereas, only 75% of the middle  
aged group, 70% of those above 65 years was  
split in their opinion. <sup>It</sup> has been  
said that the superior <sup>high class or grade,</sup> ~~framework~~,  
the liberal professions, the wealthy  
merchants, the middle class and the  
employees share 82% approval. But this  
medal was reversed in the <sup>age group</sup> ~~portion~~ where  
it is found that the proportion of people  
who found that the series is not  
completely good, is equally for those between  
18 and 24. In spite of a countryside  
of sensibility without precedent, beside the parents,  
68% between them, in the older than 35 years



An exclusive probe

The Lessons of Holocaust

After "H" a large majority of the French  
decide the document of our country about  
this time period

① To the repercussions, the polemic which preceded  
the presentation, the resonance in the  
consciences  
~~consciences~~ of the television viewers and  
their exceptional tuning in rate, "Holocaust"  
is considered perhaps as one of the greatest  
moments in television, if not the greatest.

How was this series perceived? What  
traces are permitted. For knowing  
"Télé 7 jours et la Soirée", they are  
associated with the realization of the probe  
for the theme of the lessons of "Holocaust".

The probe was done the 9 & 10 of <sup>last</sup> March,  
the day after the debate on "Film Files",  
upon a sample of a thousand persons,

representative of the eighteen years and older

population. The French had loved "Holocaust".

Sometimes they have <sup>drawn out</sup> deduced a lesson.

Their reactions <sup>are</sup> have not always been those  
that one expects. But the impact translates

to a record for a series; close to 20  
million television viewers <sup>to</sup> for each

of the four episodes, the final debate  
had been followed massively.



category) - this represents the 2 poles of the father and <sup>the</sup> mothers having children old enough to watch the show - have refused to incite them to watch "Holocaust". The principal purpose of "Holocaust", which was to sensitize the television viewer to the problem of racism and its consequences for the world, was this <sup>achieved</sup> attempted?

One can advance that yes, since only 23% of the people questioned admitted that they <sup>felt</sup> were very concerned, either a little more after the broadcast of the series. One might consider that this is a success, because the question supposed that it has <sup>uniquely elicited</sup> generated a mass public fringe to find out about the problem. This impression is reinforced by the numbers which show 27% of the women as opposed to 18% of the men and 34% of those between 18 and 24 years <sup>old</sup> ~~total~~ <sup>totally</sup> of all the age ~~of~~ groups. For those who questioned (doubted) that it was a good thing to transpose in fiction the <sup>dramatic</sup> events of the death camps, the probes brought up a contradiction. 78% of all consulted approved, whereas 81% of the women and 65% of those between 18 and 24 years. A very revealing element, the question posed

Bruno Bettelheim - expiation of  
guilt - poilliers - fress - lack of  
guilt - negation

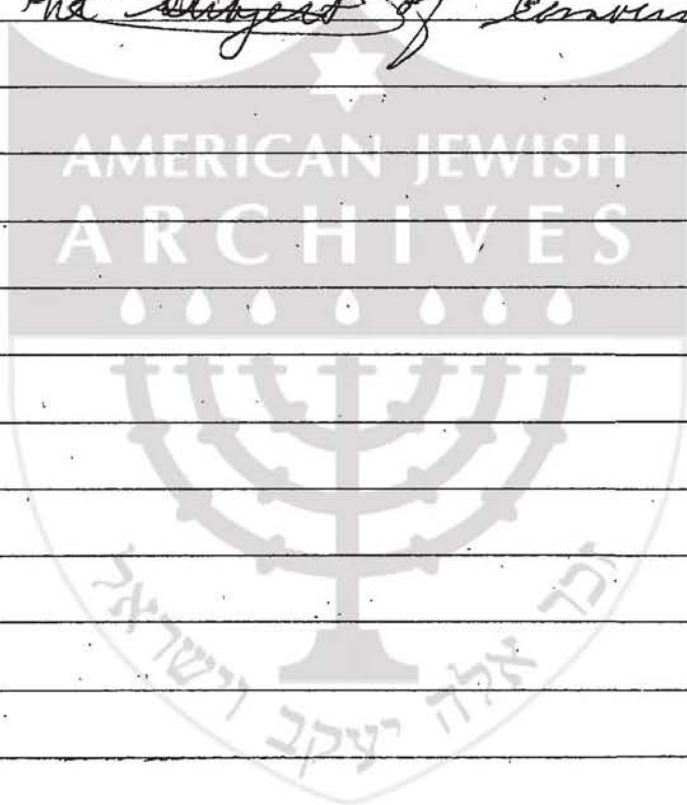
Whatever <sup>one</sup> might <sup>say</sup> be said of the  
reaction to Holocaust in France  
it cannot be denied that the decision  
to show Holocaust as well as its  
actual broadcast piqued controversy



about giving a poison, eventually to the  
nazi war criminals at large, 29% responded  
yes, whereas the precedent of the poison,  
effective for the account of Network 2  
before the broadcast of "Holocaust" was  
only 24%. When we analyze the results  
that - very surprisingly the political  
bond, we perceive that the communists  
were 79% against, but the U. D. F.  
that they didn't claim any part very  
favorable (32%). The rest of Europe 79%  
of the French, a <sup>significant</sup> percentage, hoped that  
the first european assembly, will  
~~elect~~ <sup>elude</sup> to the universal suffering,  
that it will constitute a bulwark  
against a new Holocaust (unwinn  
concentration<sup>n</sup>aire, it is notable, among  
the militant RPR which one knows  
the reserve by the way of the election  
of June, 56% divided these opinion.

~~The <sup>decision to</sup> broadcast of Abba Kovner in  
Prague as well as the~~

The broadcast of H. in France as well  
as the decision to broadcast it  
was the ~~subject~~<sup>object</sup> of conversation.





France. 72% of Fr. Telev. 1st  
episode. over 1/2 pop. of Fr.

Prof. Alfred Grosser - scholar in contemp.  
E. Studies "The merit of H. was that  
it denounced complicity & cowardice,  
without which, such crimes could not  
have been carried out."

Controversy in France about airing  
H was major - Simone Weil -  
Fr. Minister of Health told &  
instrumental.

L'Arch April 1979 article #1

(1)

## THE YOUNG PEOPLE FACING HOLOCAUST

The students of the Jewish schools, they too, they above all, have seen dancing on the little screen the flames of death. To cry afterwards their horror for the images of a past that they will never forget. C+E

In the aftermath of the last episode of the American series 'Holocaust' we went on a tour of some Jewish schools, the Yabne school in the suburbs and the school of the Universal Israelite Alliance in Pavillons-sous-Bois.

At first the student's reactions were passionate: "No, the Jewish did not awaken suddenly with the broadcasting of the series 'Holocaust'!" And this was reaffirmed by the words of Emmanuel, 16 years old, and Nadia, 12.

According to Sophie 'H' is a catalyst. It is a pretext for the birth of a debate, in particular in the high schools. 'As a matter of fact, if all the newspapers unanimously said 'It has taken us 35 years to remember', 'Oshe maintains: "The Jewish masses have not waited all this time. As I grew up every manifestation of antisemitism, no matter how small has always served as a spark for my parents-yesterday an explanation, today a discussion."

We could conclude from these reactions that the Jewish sensibility concerning the holocaust is quite different from that observed in the vast majority of the 'victimized people'. But remarks Patrice: "I know from having spoken with Gypsies that the genocide is understood among them in the same way as with the Jewish families." According to Benjamin: "We could not help watching the movie as 'cops'. As victims willing to make sure that their tortures and their ills have all been well represented. But, of course the magnitude of the catastrophe was not first recognized in this film. We read all of it in the guts. The film has only been an illustration. In a sense we will be a little more Jewish than before."

If the family medium is an important source of education for the kids, the school, and more particularly the Jewish schools have not failed in their role. The statements of Mr Picard, the director, and of Shlomo Balsam, the person responsible for cultural relations at the Yabne school are in agreement with this. "In 1978 we had a whole week dedicated to the Choho (the genocide). Emmanuelle, a 6th grader confirms: "All the courses had the same theme: the genocide. From our natural sciences courses, where we studied the pseudo-biological bases of the myth of the superior race, then to our language courses



where we were presented with texts related to the genocide." The pupils of Yabne added: "Weren't we the ones who helped Serge Klarsfeld writing his work on the deportation in France?"

At the Alliance school the approach is different. Mr. Sarfati, the director of the school declares: "These subjects are presented to our pupils according to the judgment of our teachers." Ruth, an eighth grader, explains her views about the movie: "One of the positive effects of Holocaust is that it has given a face to the anonymous six-million victims." <sup>INSERT (A)</sup>↑ Claudine points out one more thing: "Moreover, with my girlfriend, we never talk about it (the genocide). Each time we avoid the question." When one asks Claudine the reason for this silence she blushes and <sup>stutters</sup> solutters a little. Classified by the students as negative aspects of the film they say the following:

Pierre - "It did not mention the police raid of Vel'd'Hiv in France or that of Drancy... The Frenchmen, when it was known that they were important collaborators with the Nazis, were not mentioned in the film."

Claudine - "It seems that the film has been cut somewhat in France. My German pen-pal had written that it had lasted eight hours in Germany, while here it lasted only six hours." Dani - "In the countries of Petain, Darquier and Faurisson the problem of the Vichy collaborators has merely been eluded to."

But who was there who had interest in covering certain facts? Pierre answers, "The same persons that in the past were the accomplices of the Nazi killers, either actively collaborating with them or simply being indifferent..." Stella - "As for the debate on T.V. - Why was France absent? Hasn't Simone Veil, a member of the government, censored the questions regarding French collaboration by refusing to explain the connection between the government and an editor, who is a former collaborator. And what about Joseph Pasteur, hasn't he evaded the important question of the indifference of the Vatican and Pius XII?"

(R)

When asked about the attitude of the Jews in the 30's the students answered: "It is a slow progression going from the yellow star to Auschwitz." According to Serge and Katia contrary to what has been said in the debate <sup>on</sup> 'Antenne2' there has been no Jewish resignation to facing death and the notion of resignation is a myth that denies the evidence of the riots in the Polish ghetto and in the concentration camps."

At the Yabne school and at the Alliance the voices of the students are raised as they shout, "Its too much!" Deborah, an eighth grader quiets them and says,

"Whatever it was, Holocaust was not a film for the Jews, as the previous Chomsky movie Roots was not for Black Americans. They knew it already! This film is an approach to the problem of the holocaust for all the people who thirty-five years later have tried to forget the collaborators, as they are called in the books."

But yet, the young people are ready to recognize the ambiguity of the images on T.V. For Cendrine "T.V. is a double-edged blade. How can one distinguish between Monday's western movie on FR3 with

John Wayne and the genocide of the Indians and the day after Holocaust,

on Antenne 2, with the genocide of the Jews. If you take the western as entertainment, why not take Holocaust in the same way? Don't they both remove one from reality? Won't a new form of genocide, seen as a moral issue be condoned because of such access to the media? Isn't this a vulgarization of violence and crime?" Important questions ~~are~~ remain unanswered but Sophie has a final thought:

"The Holocaust is far more than four episodes on T.V.; it is a debate with no end."



INSERT

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According to Claudine, who keeps a regular correspondence with a German girl her age: "The film has given the young Germans a conscience for the facts of the past which has often been concealed from them. The young Germans questioned their parents, a thing that so far they had never dared do."



'An Inhuman Too Human'

Definitely the reasons for the campaign against 'Holocaust' are quite obscure. What can one make of 'Holocaust'?... I had thought of taking advantage of the lack of programs to make up for an unfair silence and of welcoming the triumph of a literary vein on T.V. with 'Les Insulaires', by J.P.<sup>1</sup> and 'PMA'<sup>2</sup> by Queneau. Between the two, Jacques Duflho sticks out as a rare wonder; the same for 'Rolande', the story of passion, where many other people besides the hero are obsessed with E.T.<sup>3</sup> I also thought of welcoming a work by B<sup>4</sup> on the peasants by Dumayet on the resurrected, resurrecting archives of a small town in Lozère. But above all, I thought of Desgraupes, whose 'PTST'<sup>5</sup>, 'Le JOTM'<sup>6</sup> are a real enjoyment. I hope these talented people will forgive these hasty praises. I am sure they will understand...

"When you yourself have killed ten men you can go on indefinitely". It is with these words that an S.S. colonel compels our hero, an inspector just back from Heydrich on the Russian front to kill his first man, so that he can see what killing is and be liberated for more of it. But later on we will learn that this repulsive saying is not true at all. There is another threshold, much beyond. The number is not indifferent to infinity. It is a prodigious moment when all these S.S. officers, each with thousands on their records -- if not on their conscience -- learn from the Fuhrer that they must increase this number to eleven million; confusion, breathlessness, speechlessness, overwhelming surprise, - we cannot say we get to the "human," but it is not only a question of technique. All of a sudden these men can no longer perform a multiplication, or at least get the deed accomplished. Quantity has a qualitative jump, contrary to Leibnitz. In the end, if they did not get to eleven, if they stopped at six, it was not only because of the Allies. Maybe at the beginning, before taking any action, they needed time to make up their minds. Besides, the S.S. colonel complains, almost as a Frenchman: Three thousand killers on a front of fifteen hundred kilometers; two per kilometer, it is not serious. And, squaring the circle, here is the secret: let them

1. Jacques Perret
2. 'Perret Mon Ami'
3. Elizabeth Tessier
4. Brinquier

5. ...
6. ...



pass through a route to the slaughter-house, but at the same time, block the way to Ponts and Chaussees. No, it is not a job.

I told you that this movie was full of 'nuances'. A 'nuance': a Jewish artist at Buchenwald. A guard, who is a former acquaintance and a witness at the artist's marriage lets his wife in to take a letter which he promises to deliver provided that he be allowed to sleep with her and he reveals the adultress to the prisoner. Why? Pure gratuitousness? 'Schadenfreunde' (gloating)? Not at all. He provides the key: "My parents, they did not pay for my art school" The inhuman is human... one more nuance: Rudy and mate while fleeing to Russia, lying down on a hay car they look at the clouds. It was a break and there were breaks. Among the horrors some happiness, short perhaps, but not perpetual pain: it is human too... The kids in the Ghetto learn music and we get mad for their little illnesses. And us, we are still sensible to individual suffering. I am not saying that these glances at the clouds are those of Prince Andre, wounded at Austerlitz. No, it is not War and Peace, but it has a Hollywood flavor, the same War and Peace already had a bit; prototype-archetype. Maybe there is nothing such as a 'great historical novel' and that the Gulag Archipelago subtitle 'Essay of Literary Investigation', which once stunned us is a good example of what, along the line of masterpieces, takes the place of this genre. But I am pleased that here in France we had somebody to do away with the theory that 'Holocaust' is an unmeaningful play -- a theory that looks very much like a campaign, the reasons for which, as perhaps for everything concerning the Jewish mystery, still remain obscure. Why should we not watch this film, or why should we watch it biased or ill-disposed? Why blame its methods without which it would never have existed? Why ~~hide~~ hide the fact that people get mad only for its very idea?

I am not satisfied with any explanation, and I do not have one of my own. Jankélévitch is right when he writes that the anti-Semite racism is qualitatively different from all others because it is against the neighbor; the similar and it is also in vain to feel assimilated to the Jews and the film shows it. But then Jankélévitch bids us to lean toward a different metaphysics, not religious but involving the very being. As if the Jewish people were not elected by God, but by Himself created, and at Him we are angry for having given it to us. This is too much, because it would mean that there is actually something more to it.

The gods would get to all the ones who get angry (Hitler, Stalin) when their moment comes. Anti-Semitism would be a spiritual perversion. The religions not recognizing the Jewish supremacy would be considered criminal. Christianity has, unfortunately, forgotten that the Apostle Paul recognized this supremacy ("God does not regret for his gifts, nor for his promises"). And here humanity really would count.







# THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

EUROPEAN OFFICE • 4, Rue de Valenciennes • Paris, France • Tel. 501-0156, 520 0660 • Cable: AJC - Paris

Nives Fox, European Representative

1979

February 22, 1979

American Jewish

## Committee MEMORANDUM

To: Foreign Affairs Department  
From: Nives Fox  
Subj: Holocaust Film in France

The right film at the right time in the right place was one of the many comments about the extraordinary receptivity and impact made by Holocaust in Germany. No such happy combination obtained in France, where reactions are more nuanced and the combination of events quite different.

For the more positive aspects: As of the first two installments, it is estimated that 72% of television viewers were tuned in on Chain 2, the sponsors of Holocaust. According to the electricity consumption figures for the nights it was shown, however, there was no special upsurge ~~in electricity consumption~~ but for two areas, notably Strasbourg, near the border with Germany.

French Jewish documentation centers have had many calls and many persons visiting and requesting material. Children report to parents that the film is being discussed in their classes, with the teachers. These discussions are sometimes spontaneous the day after the picture is shown, sometimes planned for a few days later (perhaps to give the teacher a chance for documentation?); and this is taking place particularly among younger students, the 12-15 group, who also bring to class discussions taking place in their homes, often, when the children are Jewish, additional knowledge and family experiences.

Two very touching calls were made to the Documentation Center attached to the Monument of Jewish Martyrs in Paris, by non-Jewish families who said they intended to make a pilgrimage to the extermination camps on their vacation.

There are, also, menacing calls. A sample: "Have you seen the Holocaust?" And to the affirmative reply, "Expect the same thing to happen to you soon."

What indubitably has jeopardized the success of the film is the current television strike. Fate had it that the firing of some 450 television employees, causing this, coincided with the projection dates. Reduced to the legal 'minimum program' clause, which permits showing films, this meant the cancellation of the

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**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date** November 26, 1980  
**to** Foreign Affairs Department  
**from** A Telephone Report From Nives E. Fox, AJC Representative in Europe  
**subject** TWO JEWS SHOT TO DEATH IN PARIS

The shooting in Paris of a Jewish couple by an unidentified Arab terrorist has sent a new wave of anxiety and alarm through the French Jewish community just as it was calming down in the aftermath of the Rue Copernic bombing, reports AJC European Representative Nives Fox.

Mrs. Michelle Douek was shot and killed immediately, her husband Edwin died a few hours afterward, and one of the agency employees, Gisele Mammouh was injured after the terrorist burst into the second floor travel agency office, started splaying shots at those nearest the door until his gun was empty, dropped it and ran away.

Much of the speculation around the Rue Copernic bombing credited that to ultra-right extremists. This terrorist operation appears to be different in character. The other employees in the agency identified the man as Arabic in appearance. The motive appears could have been more anti-Israel than, as with Copernic, directed against a Jewish target. The advertisement panels of the travel agency on the street level emphasize travel to Israel. Those familiar with the tactics of persons sent on individual terrorist missions assert that these are allowed to choose their own targets when there is no specific assignment given to them.

On the other hand, the terrorist's choice of an Israel-oriented target may simply reflect the fact that Jewish institutions are prominently guarded at the present time, a policeman with sub-machine gun at the ready before every synagogue and Jewish school and often, with special street barriers in place; so that this kind of attack would have little or no chance of success.

Jewish communal authorities were immediately in contact with the police and are convinced they are doing all they can to capture the murderer, but no one thinks that this will be an easy task.

.../continued



A son-in-law of Edwin Douek by his first wife told newspaper people that Mr. Douek had been a militant Communist and that his family had been fearful for his safety on that account - one leading Communist of Egyptian Jewish origin, Henri Curiel, was assassinated in France some years ago - but police say that it simply is not true that Mr. Douek was a Communist.

Different though the circumstances between this and the Copernic bombing, Jews in France nonetheless are asking themselves today whether there may not be a definite attempt being made to create panic among them.

Despite the deep emotions and anxieties brought about by Copernic, the Jews of France kept their calm. Indeed, communal leaders who have just concluded a widespread tour through the French provinces came back impressed with the sense of Jewish resolution and determination they found there.

But one or two more events like this, and this self-control can well give way to hysteria, there is some feeling today.

ASK:sg

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THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

"FRENCH POLITICS AND THE MIDDLE EAST"

PART I

January 30, 1970

(70-560-4)

OFFICIAL POLICIES

French policy in the Middle East and especially the agreement to deliver Mirages to Libya, continues to be the center of intensive public discussion. Government leaders try to justify the deal by a set of arguments which sometimes seem to be contradictory, and are reminiscent of Sholem Alechem's woman who, when asked by a neighbor to return a pot she borrowed, replied: "First, I never borrowed it; second, I already returned it to you; and third, the pot was broken anyway."

The French reasoning runs along parallel lines: First, the deal was very important for France in order to open up a source of oil supply and get a place in the Mediterranean basin; second, the agreement is of no great importance, because the planes will not be delivered for another three or four years; third, we remain great friends of Israel and our only desire is to keep the balance in the Middle East. How the balance is to be kept by not delivering the 50 Mirages bought by Israel, and supplying Libya with more than 100 of them, is not clear.

In reply to earlier charges that by this deal France abandoned its ostensibly neutral position and shifted to the Arab side, the government made it clear in a number of statements by its major leaders -- Prime Minister Chaban Delmas, Minister of Defense Michel Debré, and others -- that this was done on behalf of the economic and political interests of France, without taking into consideration any other factors. Oil, balance of trade, and good relations with North African countries -- (Libya was designated as a North African country not directly involved in the conflict with Israel) -- were given as reasons. A feeble attempt was made to continue the old argument that the Mirages will not be delivered until 1971 because they cannot be produced before that time, or that peace will be established in the Middle East before the actual supply of the military planes.

Although a few Gaullist deputies have publicly expressed their indignation about the action of the government, most deputies of the Gaullist majority in parliament, which includes more than 60 members of the France-Israel parliamentary group, have tacitly given their support to the government.



The fact that the Communist Party, which has become more militant in recent times against the Pompidou regime, approves the government's policy with regard to the Israel-Arab conflict, shows that the two major political forces in France -- Gaullists and Communists -- are behind the government. The opposition comes mostly from the independent newspapers and political leaders of the center, who have little influence on the course of events. Though it is known that some ministers of the center in the present cabinet, like Mr. Jacques Duhamel and Valery Giscard d'Estaing, are opposed to present policy toward Israel, they do not dare say so in public.

Most of the major newspapers have been very critical; Le Figaro, Le Monde, Aurore, Combat and other Parisian dailies, have forthrightly accused the government of deceiving public opinion, the U.S. government, and treating the French people as small children. On the other hand, La Nation, the official Gaullist newspaper, used this opportunity to raise the issue of double loyalty and to blame Jews in the US for a possible deterioration in the relations between France and the US before Pompidou's visit. This paper said:

"...No one is ignorant of the influence exercised on the American press by the Jewish communities in the United States. It looks very much as if it was intended, at any price and regardless of the federal government, to threaten France with a deterioration of its relations with the United States in order to bring it to revise a policy that displeases Israel."

The Communist daily L'Humanité, while admitting that the motivations of the French government are impure, and that the purpose of this policy is to promote the armament industry to serve the interests of oil monopolies, said that:

"this policy may be the one of industrial and financial groups for whom the supreme law is maximum profit, it is easy to understand. It so happens that this policy occasionally coincides with the real interests of the country, which is for peace and the right of peoples..."

#### JEWISH RESPONSE

As far as Jewish reaction is concerned, there is no question that the masses of the Jewish population are determinedly and publicly taking a stand against government policy. This was demonstrated at the mass meeting, which took place in Paris on January 21. The meeting was presided by General Koenig and was addressed by Lecanuet, a Socialist representative, several other minor French personalities, and some



leaders of Jewish organizations. Chief Rabbi Kaplan gave expression to the Jewish attitude in a courageous address on the occasion of the ceremonies held at the Great Synagogue, in memory of the Auschwitz liberation.

However, the leadership of the community has not shown the unity of purpose and determination in action it displayed in June, 1967. Some have become fearful that Pompidou's visit might be a failure because of Jewish demonstrations in the U.S.; others have fallen in a state of apathy and inactivity; and some felt that French Jewry and Jews in other countries must forthrightly state their opposition to a policy which might tip the scales in the Middle East conflict.

The reasons for the present difference in attitude, as compared with June 1967, is that then the French people and government were in full sympathy with Israel, and it did not require any special courage to express this sympathy in a demonstrative fashion. Now, the question is whether to come out forcefully and directly against one's own government. There is also a feeling among some that the general attitude of the majority of the French population with regard to Israel is one of indifference, and only a minority takes a definite stand in favor of Israel. The popular illustrated weekly Match, published a public opinion poll this week to the effect that 33% of Frenchmen are in sympathy with Israel, 6% side with the Arabs; and the rest are uncommitted.

#### PUBLIC OPINION

It should be noted that French public opinion is far from being in accord with the government on the Libyan deal. This was revealed by two public opinion surveys which were published this week. One was done on behalf of four large newspapers which have a combined circulation of 5 million, and was carried out in a region where the Communist Party, which has taken a pro-Arab position, has always obtained a large vote. (It is also where most of the French aviation industry is situated.) The newspapers are: La Depeche de Midi, Toulouse; Sud-Ouest, Bordeaux; Le Midi Libre, Montpellier; Le Provençal, Marseille.

To the question "Do you approve or disapprove the French government action in delivering arms to Libya?" 60% answered that they disapproved; 13% approved; and 27% had no opinion. This, however, should not be interpreted as a definite pro-Israel stand on the part of those who expressed disapproval, as shown by the response to another question: "In the present situation, are you favorable or opposed to resume delivery of arms to Israel?" The answer was: favorable, 36%; opposed, 44%; no opinion, 20%. The survey also revealed that a large segment of



the French population does not accept the official interpretation of the present French policy, as can be seen from the replies to the following question: "Does the present policy of France in the Middle East seem to you to respect strict neutrality, or to favor Israel, or to favor the Arab countries?" The answers were: favoring Arab countries, 41%; respecting neutrality, 18%; no opinion, 30%. The fourth question was: "In your opinion, what has more chances to bring about peace in the Middle East?" 30% replied that this will come about by agreement among the four Great Powers; 46% said that this will occur by direct agreement between Israel and the Arab countries; 11% by the intervention of the UN; and 8% by a military victory of one of the two camps.

The other survey, carried out on behalf of the Paris daily Le Figaro, revealed that in reply to the question "To whom France should sell arms in the Middle East?" 55% said to no country; 29% to all countries without distinction; 3% to Israel only; 1% to Arab countries only; 3% to Arab countries on the condition that they not be used in a war against Israel.

Both surveys thus demonstrated that the recent actions of the French government are not approved by a majority of the French people. Major newspapers continue their acrimonious criticism, both for the actions and the manner in which the French government made known the deal with Libya. The entire affair created a strong "credibility gap" between French public opinion and the government.

Another sign of uneasiness on the part of the central parties which are outside of the government majority, is the fact that the Foreign Relations Committee of the French Senate, after listening to the explanations of Foreign Minister Maurice Schumann, expressed its disapproval of the Libyan deal and asked for a parliamentary debate on French policy in the Middle East.

On the other hand, in a government-inspired campaign to justify its actions, it is emphasized that protestations in the US are primarily those of Jewish organizations, limited to the East Coast, and particularly to New York and Chicago, where there are large Jewish populations. The implications are that American public opinion at large is not involved in it.

It is obvious that there is apprehension with regard to the reception that President Pompidou will get in the United States, and French newspapers have been reporting extensively the statement made by the Conference of Jewish leaders in Washington, and other critical comments by major American papers.



Arthur Goldberg's statement to the French television that public opinion generally in the United States is concerned about recent French actions in the Middle East, was quoted on French television and in some of the major newspapers. Mr. Goldberg said:

"I am certain that President Pompidou, on his visit to the United States, will be received with all the courtesy, dignity and cordiality reserved to the chief of a friendly and allied State. At the same time, I should be less than frank, in this country of free expression, if I did not say that our people, and by this I mean not only the Jewish community but our entire people, is very much concerned by recent developments, particularly the sale of arms to Libya. It is the conviction of the U.S. that nothing good can come out of an escalation in the race for armaments in the Middle East."

It should be observed, however, that the extreme right, which previously took, for its own reasons, a pro-Israel attitude, and which was vacillating in recent years with regard to the Middle East conflict, has now come out definitely against Israel and in favor of the government's policies, in spite of their intransigent opposition to everything else the present regime stands for.

The Royalist "Aspects de la France", which is the successor of Action Francaise, in its last issue, published a full-page article justifying the present policies of the regime; and referred to the protests in the United States as follows:

"It is the American Jewish organizations which have come out the most against France, and they are giving the tone to most of the American newspapers. In order to try to appease them-- 1970 is an election year in the U.S. and the Jews number several million -- President Nixon had to promise to increase aid to Israel. The American Jews are not afraid to claim double allegiance. They are citizens of Israel and citizens of the U.S. They consider that on the American political scene they have to defend unconditionally the interests of Israel. Such a situation would be inadmissible in France. French Jews cannot be Zionists without appearing to be a strange element in the nation. Vis-a-vis the conflict in the Middle East, a certain number of them behave as French citizens... With Frenchmen of the Jewish faith, who are conscious of their belonging to a historic nation, distinct from Israel, we, other French nationalists, can inaugurate a dialogue. Has not Maurras himself always set apart the 'well-born Jews'?"



February 6, 1970

POLITICAL DEBATES

Public debate on French policy toward Israel continues to be in the center of French political life. The controversy concerning the supply of Mirages to Libya even threatened to split the Pompidou regime which, though dominated by the UDR -- the Gaullist Party -- also has two junior partners, the Independent Republicans and the Democratic Center. The Independent Republicans are the second largest parliamentary group, with 61 deputies in the National Assembly; the Gaullists have 272; and the Centrists, the third partner of the coalition, have 33.

The spark was ignited by Deputy Michel Poniatowski, General Secretary of the Independent Republicans and the right-hand man of one of the most important members of the Cabinet, Finance Minister Giscard d'Estaing. In a public address, Poniatowski attacked French foreign policy as "full of paradoxes" and accused National Defense Minister Michel Debré of being an "international arms merchant", comparing him to Sir Basil Zaharoff, the notorious arms chief supplier of weapons to all and sundry armies.

Poniatowski was counter-attacked by the two major officials of the regime, Prime Minister Chaban Delmas and President Georges Pompidou himself. The Prime Minister said that it is intolerable to be in coalition with a party, one of whose leaders so flagrantly disavow the government's policies. Pompidou also issued a statement urging that all parties supporting his regime must hold together on major issues. Mr. Giscard d'Estaing, in embarrassment, issued a statement that he "is going along with government policy," although one might doubt how deeply convinced he is on the subject of the Libyan deal.

An indication of the tenor of the arguments within the political parties are the public statements made by two deputies. Alexander Sanguinetti, former minister and president of the Commission of National Defense, who has always been a friend of Israel, tried to defend the present policy by claiming that France is manufacturing and exporting arms in the same way other countries are doing: "The United States would not be able to support its military effort if it did not export arms and, proportionately, by population, France is the fourth in the ranks of countries that exports arms. Great Britain supplied Libya with 300 fifty-ton tanks, and Jordan has received from it 180 centurion tanks...Israel has, to my knowledge, 300 planes, which is unreasonable. The US 6th fleet does not have so many planes." When he was asked whether the French deal with Libya was a commercial or political affair, he replied "Both. The situation of the Mediterranean is part of the sequence of Yalta. The states which are not situated on the Mediterranean shores have no business being there."



On the other hand, Jean Montalat, Vice-President of the National Assembly, who recently withdrew from the Socialist party, publicly stated: "Certainly, we are not the only ones. But we are adding to the moral problems with the partisan character of our supply of weapons. The fact is that we have taken a position on the side of the Arabs."

#### PUBLIC CONTROVERSY

The major newspapers in France have been keeping the issue alive and criticizing the government, both for the substance of its policy in the Middle East and for the manner in which it handled this matter. Seldom was a government condemned so directly for "lying" (this was the word used) as the present regime. The newspapers have published recently a number of articles, obviously inspired, trying to explain the reasons for the attitude of the government in the Middle East conflict.

Michel Debré, who is considered generally as the most fanatical follower of de Gaulle's principles and the watchdog for the general in the present regime, is the principal target of those who attack French policy. He is held responsible for having carried out the deal with the present Libyan regime, and is even suspected of not having informed the Foreign Ministry about it until the deal was concluded.

It is reliably reported that President Pompidou recently called together the foreign editors of the French press, and tried to explain French policy to them, specifically with regard to the Middle East. He is said to have been in a very aggressive mood, attacking the editors for not giving sufficient consideration to French interest. The result was counter-productive. While some of the newsmen reported indirectly Pompidou's interpretation of French policy, others were irritated by his manner and became even more critical of the French position.

#### LEFT-WING RESPONSE

The Communist Party, which, since the disruption of the United Leftist Federation under Mitterand's leadership, became more and more militant against the present regime, agrees with the attitude of the government on the Middle East issue. At the 19th Congress of the Communist Party, which opened on February 4, the official report submitted by Georges Marchais, one of the major party leaders, stated the following on the subject:

"Another evidence of imperialist aggression is furnished by the situation in the Middle East. In this region of the world, grave dangers are accumulating because of the expansionist and provocative policies of the reactionary leaders of the state of Israel, supported primarily by American imperialism. We shall continue to manifest our solidarity with the Arab peoples who offer legitimate resistance to the annexion-



ist measures of Tel Aviv and which demand rightly the restitution of the territories occupied after the Israeli aggression.

We declare ourselves in favor of a political settlement in the Middle East, on the basis of the resolution of the Security Council, of the right to existence of Israel and of the national rights of the Arab peoples of Palestine."

Representatives of El Fatah were present at the Communist Congress, and were listed among the foreign "fraternal" delegations.

It should be emphasized that there is quite a difference between the position taken by the Communist Party and the groups to its left. While the Communists expressed recognition of the right of existence of Israel, the "new leftist" groups side with El Fatah and the other Palestinian Liberation groups in asking for the liquidation of Israel and the establishment of a so-called "Judeo-Arab" state. The latter position was expressed with great force in an article by Gilbert Mury, a dissident leader of the Communist Party and head of the Marxist-Leninist (Maoist) group in France, published in Le Monde of February 5. This article reported on the first International Congress of the Palestine Committee, which took place in Algiers in December, 1969. The Congress spoke out against any four-power discussions and for continuation of the guerilla war for the objective of "liberating Israel." It is worth quoting a few sentences from this article, which indicate its trend:

"The Palestinian combatants have placed themselves in the first ranks of the war, which is taking place on a world-scale, between oppressors and oppressed...The political resolution clearly condemns the four great powers and their various techniques with a view of imposing a so-called peaceful settlement, which means a hypocritical form of imperialism.

Eldridge Cleaver, 'Minister of Information of the Black Panthers', unmasked the presence of Zionists in all racist plots directed against Blacks, Puertoricans, and Mexico-Americans. All the delegates put the accent on the immense advantage of the militants coming from families attached to the Jewish religion. They are numerous, active, and courageous in the Palestine Committee."

#### THE JEWISH COMPONENT

The French press has steadily reported reactions in the U.S. to the forthcoming visit of President Pompidou. The information that Mayor John Lindsay has refused to arrange a formal reception, and the request of some Congressmen to their colleagues asking them to abstain from



attending the Congressional session to be addressed by Pompidou, have prominently featured. At the same time, there is a noticeable and probably government-inspired attempt on the part of the French press to appease the French public by claiming that protestations are coming primarily from cities with large Jewish populations. In these comments, one comes across the old cliches of "Jewish power, influence," etc.

The attitude of the Jewish population continues to be of united opposition to the government's policy, while the leadership is relatively divided among those who advise moderation and others who are in favor of militant action not only by the French, but by Jews abroad. However, the leading bodies have not taken any public actions since the recent statement published by the Coordinating Committee of Jewish Organizations, which embraces the major Jewish organizations.

It is reliably reported that three leading Jewish personalities in France, Baron Guy de Rothschild, Mr. Jean Rosenthal -- a prominent resistance leader and bearer of the order of Compagnons de la Libération (an order awarded to the first followers of General de Gaulle in 1940) -- and Professor Steg, met with Prime Minister Chaban Delmas. They spoke in the name of French Jewry and as representatives of the Coordinating Committee, and expressed the indignation of the Jewish community in France about French policies vis-a-vis Israel. There is a movement to revitalize the Coordinating Committee which was established after the six-day war, and which was the leading body of French Jewry in organizing public opinion with regard to Israel. It is reasonable to expect that when it is strengthened, it will take a firmer stand against the present policies of the French government.

When Minister Debré visited the city of Colmar, last Sunday, the local Jewish community turned out in hundreds, to protest against the government's policy.

At the annual conference of the Fonds Social Juif Unifié, Mr. Rosenthal, who is also President of the Executive, spoke of the need for a united community, able and willing to receive the pressures of hostile forces and to protest against government policies.

The Chief Rabbi of France, Jacob Kaplan, at a commemoration meeting to mark the 25th anniversary of Auschwitz, said: "What Israel cannot and should not accept, what is unacceptable to Jews as French citizens and also to a number of our fellow countrymen of other denominations, is the implementation of a selective embargo against Israel."



Dear Editor: This report from our Paris office should interest you and your readers.

Morton Yarmon  
Director of Public Relations

From Paris: THE BOMBING OF THE RUE COPERNIC SYNAGOGUE AND ITS AFTERMATH

Based on First-hand Reports  
from The American Jewish Committee  
European Representative, Nives E. Fox

"French people, halt these murderers...."

The angry and anguished appeal of Rabbi Michael Williams, standing in his white prayer robes and holding a Torah in blood-stained rue Copernic in Paris only minutes after the explosion of a 25-pound bomb meant for the synagogue that killed four, wounded thirty and left the street a shambles of twisted cars and shattered glass epitomizes the demand of Jews of France today.

It is a demand that gained immediate national resonance in the wave of shock that followed the blast, bringing dozens of planned and impromptu demonstrations including a march in Paris of over 100,000 Jews and non-Jews, an outpouring of indignation and comment in the French media, widespread soul-searching and debate as to whether France is anti-Semitic, angry discussion in the French parliament and intervention on television by French President Valerie Giscard d'Estaing.

It is a demand that arises out of the feeling of the Jews of France that their government and police have, thus far, failed miserably in affording elemental protection, much less in rooting out the perpetrators of anti-Semitic action.

Only three days before the rue Copernic explosion -- a blast which, had it occurred only a few minutes later, would have wreaked havoc among the Jews leaving the packed Simha Torah service -- Alain de Rothschild, head of the Representative Council of the Jewish Institutions of France, CRIF, had met with French Minister of the Interior Christian Bonnet to urge far more vigorous police action in the face of anti-Semitic incidents. That very week, five Jewish institutions (a school and a child-care center, two synagogues and the Memorial to the Unknown Jewish Martyrs) had been machine-gunned in the night. Minister Bonnet had promised increased protection -- but also suggested that one should not exaggerate!

"What happened this evening is the last step in a mounting series," Baron de Rothschild declared immediately after the Copernic bombing. "The public authorities must face up to their responsibilities." Affirmed French Grand Rabbi Jacob Kaplan: "We can't let this act go by without getting the greatest possible government guarantees so that this can never happen again...."

Both were well too aware, as French Jews generally, that each of the three years preceding the Copernic blast had seen steady increase in the number of anti-Semitic incidents, in scrawls on subway walls and storefronts, desecration of tombstones, wide distribution of anti-Semitic leaflets, the mysterious outbreak of fires in synagogues and blasts at headquarters of human rights groups like LICRA, the League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism, fortunately without loss of life.

But dozens of young Jews had been injured and some maimed permanently when in March 1979, Paris's only kosher student restaurant had been bombed at high noon. An attack on a Jewish home in rue de Medicis some days later had wounded 32, three persons seriously. When, in September that year, quondam leftist and author Pierre Goldman was assassinated, belief was widespread that the victim's Jewishness was a major factor.

Since June 1980 alone, some 40 different attacks generally attributed to neo-Nazi grouplets have taken place in France, including those against Jewish institutions. Yet in no instance over these past years, or more recently, have the French police ever managed to bring anyone to book for any of these crimes.

This record alone is enough to make the police role and efficiency a subject of bitter discussion in the aftermath of the rue Copernic explosion. Over and above this, however, there is the charge and fear that the underlying reason for police failure to find neo-Nazis may be police ties to neo-Nazi groups.

The head of one of France's leading police unions declared immediately after the Copernic bombing that twenty percent of the 150 activist members of the FANE, the European National Action Federation, one of France's most notorious neo-Nazi grouplets, were policemen. Their names, he charged, were known to the Minister of the Interior, but nothing had been done about them. This could account, he strongly implied, for intelligence about neo-Nazi groups reaching the police willfully being used in helter-skelter fashion.



FANE, actually, had been dissolved by the French authorities this past September 3, on the grounds of its racism and that it sought to overthrow the French Republic. And, at that time, a police inspector named Paul-Louis Durand was fired because of his membership in FANE. Asserted the (never distributed) FANE publication Notre Europe at the time "The Durand affair makes the police ridiculous on showing that, for the first time, it is no longer the police who infiltrate the Nazis, but the contrary. How many Paul Durands, Mr. Minister," the paper sneeringly inquired, "do you think we have placed in the police, among the gendarmes, and in the army?" Durands' role in FANE, it should be noted, originally was not discovered by the French police itself, but came as a result of a tip from Italian colleagues investigating the Bologna railroad station explosion.

The FANE, headed by 46 year-old Marc Frederiksen and anticipating dissolution, had already set up a new organization, FNE, National European Fasces, just before the authorities acted, and is back in business at its old address, with only its name changed.

As for the police, polemic rages. Some police unions support the charges made of neo-Nazi infiltration, others denounce it. There have been calls for full investigation. When asked, however, why action was not taken "against policemen of the extreme right," French Minister of Justice Alain Peyrfitte declared: "...There are perhaps police of the extreme right as there are those of the extreme left. We are not going to take action against them because of their ideas. The crime of opinion does not exist here." Should any of them participate directly or indirectly in terrorist acts, he continued, action would be implacable.

In the meantime, the government has moved the entire investigation of the rue Copernic bombing out of the hands of the regular police and courts and into those of the State Security Court, a jurisdiction of exception with extremely wide and special powers.

Given the miserable police record in the face of mounting anti-Jewish incidents, pressure has grown among French Jews to form defense groups on their own, and, among some, to engage in open physical confrontation with neo-Nazi groups like the FNE. There was, indeed, fighting between Jewish activists and FANE supporters outside the court when that group was dissolved. Since Copernic Jewish communal leaders, while implying that such defense groups could not be ruled out, have put the emphasis on governmental responsibility and, like Grand Rabbi Kaplan, "appeal/ed/ to my co-religionists not to fall into the trap of violence...." Thus far, by and large, the appeal has been heeded.



Reactions poured in from the moment word of the blast spread. President Giscard d'Estaing, declared the Elysée Palace, immediately expressed "his deep emotion and his indignation, and indicated to the Minister of Interior the prime importance he attached to exemplary policy action to find the authors of this crime...." The President, the next day, wrote in similar vein to Grand Rabbi Kaplan, declaring that "in such circumstances the feeling that unites Frenchmen of all origins and faiths is that of their close solidarity." Prime Minister Raymond Barre echoed the call for severe punishment of those responsible for "this odious attack." Communist leader Georges Marchais, the head of the Socialists, Francois Mitterand, Paris Mayor Jacques Chirac and virtually every other political figure of note joined in the chorus of condemnation and indignation, as did leading churchmen such as Paris Archbishop Marty.

And so, too, did some surprising voices indeed, such as Jean-Marie Le Pen, president of the extreme right group the National Front and his competitor for the right wing vote, Francois Gauchon, head of New Forces. Not to mention Ibrahim Souss, the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization in France, who "expressed the indignation which is always that of the PLO in the face of this kind of attack, and, notably those that take places of worship as their target, be they Moslem, Jewish or Christian." And Marc Frederiksen at once publicly denied "that the National European Fasces are at the origin of the attack. I condemn this kind of activity...."

In all too many cases, alas, however, one got the impression that no matter how sincere the expression of indignation, it was couched in such fashion as to try to gain advantage for a particular viewpoint. Government representatives charged that leftist groups were trying to make political hay, as they called for all kinds of investigation and demanded the resignation of Interior Minister Bonnet. We are but trying to make the government face up to its responsibilities, came the virtuous reply. In fact, in Paris at least, it was the left of center groups that seized the initiative in organizing demonstrations and protests, including the mass march of over one hundred thousand first called by the Movement Against Racism and for Peace, MRAP. Hence it was with some reluctance that representatives of the majority parties and others on the right of the political spectrum joined in, as they eventually did. Finally, almost every group was represented in the march from the Nation to the Republic-- no mean feat when even leftist elements like the Communists and Socialists no longer parade down French avenues together. "Perhaps its because no one marches side by side any more," one wag commented, "but separately, one after another."

Nor was the Jewish community unified in terms of approach. CRIF leadership, true to its concept that only an "action of national solidity"



could "upset the calculations of those seeking to fragment French society," was dismayed at the idea that the Copernic tragedy was becoming an internal political football and a basis for division; and so too was hesitant about joining wholeheartedly in a demonstration initiated by the left. Henri Hajdenberg, head of the Jewish activist movement, Renouveau Juif -- whose call for a Jewish lobby in France some months before had provoked acrimonious communal dispute -- again spoke "a vote of sanction" by Jews against Giscard d'Estaing because of France's pro-Arab, pro-PLO policy. While firm in its insistence on government responsibility, communal leadership did not want to operate on the terrain of political opposition to government. And leftist-leaning MRAP expressed its disapproval of "all forms of transfer of the Middle East conflict in France." So Jews also marched as much separately as together.

In all of these demonstrations, strangely enough, one element was missing: no representative of the French national government was present, not even at the services at rue Copernic the day after the blast. Whether it be because the administration did not wish to appear to sanction opposition charges or simply out of sheer insensitivity, this was deeply felt by Jews in France and widely commented on generally. "The Absent One," read the title in France's most prestigious newspaper, Le Monde, in a front-page editorial which declared that "the government, by its own deeds, is completely isolated."

It was this kind of criticism that led President d'Estaing to appear on national television shortly after.

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It was, though a more subtle kind of gaffe, a phrase all the more telling because it was spoken in a well-intentioned frame, that goes to the heart of the discussion of the place of the Jew in French national society.

Mr. Barre, expressing his indignation before French television the night of the Copernic blast, condemned "this odious attack that sought to strike at Jews going to the synagogue and which hit French innocents who were crossing rue Copernic."

For many, Jews and non-Jews, the question immediately was raised: Had Premier Barre's subconscious spoken for the subconscious of France in making a distinction between Jews and other Frenchmen; and, indeed, in seeing Jews as logical victims while others were but innocent passersby?

Barre quickly denounced the "scandalous exploitation" of his remarks by critics, pointing out that he had, at the same time, declared that "The Jewish community is a French community respected by all Frenchmen." But again, the very fact that this point must be made so often shows that the issue is a sore one indeed.

Actually, only a year before a veritable avalanche of media attention had been paid to the role of the Jew in French society when the upsurge in anti-Semitic incidents was noted and anti-Jewish stereotypes resurfaced in 1979.

By making his distinction between the four persons who perished in the street -- three non-Jews and an Israeli woman, Aliza Shagar, who just happened to be passing by -- Barre opened fresh wounds indeed.

And President Giscard d'Estaing's television remarks, meant to reassure, rubbed the issue in with his insistence that "French Jews are Frenchmen along with other Frenchmen," and his stating as his "preoccupation" that French Jews should feel themselves recognized and treated as all other French.

All of this has been part, really, of a wider debate: Is France anti-Semitic or becoming anti-Semitic?

Even as there were great mass demonstrations of sympathy not only in Paris but Marseille, Strasburg, Nancy, Belfort and several other cities, there occurred, at the same time, a small host of new, anti-Semitic incidents: fires started and small (happily ineffective) bombs placed in Jewish-owned business establishments in Paris, Nice, Marseille and Troyes. A Jewish lad wearing a yamulka was beaten up and knifed in the Paris metro. A young girl in Marseille was briefly forced to kneel in the gutter by some toughs because she was wearing a Jewish star.

There is still great reluctance in France truly to come to terms with the part played by the French themselves in the persecution of Jews during the Nazi period. There was no echo of this in President d'Estaing's television reference to the "deportations and massacres systematically practiced by the Hitler regime," as there was, for instance, in a statement by sixteen leading Companions of the Resistance of "the monstrous truth" that there were Frenchmen who had "tranquilly consented" to anti-Jewish



action and others had participated.

There has been the steady gain of influence of an intellectual "New Right" whose leading spokesman, Alain de Benoist, has a ready forum in the magazine of the prominent French journal Le Figaro. Benoist, Figaro magazine editor Louis Pauwels and the European Civilization and Study Group, GRECE, stoutly deny charges of anti-Semitism and racism too; but Jews find it hard to believe that a group like GRECE which claims, for example, that Abraham and monotheism are the source of totalitarianism is as pure as it says. Even more strikingly, the openly neo-Nazi FANE and Fredriksen assert that they find their intellectual justification and parallel in the ideas of Benoist and GRECE.

There has, in fact, been a gradual but clearly perceptible deterioration in the public atmosphere concerning Jews ever since, over a decade ago, General de Gaulle made his statement about the Jews as elitist, domineering and sure of themselves. Before that, making anti-Jewish remarks simply was not done, in the post-war atmosphere and with war-time tragedy still fresh. Afterwards, those holding anti-Jewish sentiments felt far freer to express them, and did.

Politically, too, the Jewish community of France has felt more and more isolated. The French Communist party always was anti-Israel, the French government always has been at least a step ahead of others in fostering pro-Arab and pro-Palestinian positions; quondam Israel political supporters such as the Socialists now are split and often critical of its policies; and pro-PLO sentiment powerful among leftist and intellectual groups even before it became avowed government policy. More than almost any other Jewish community, then, Jews in France feel the pressure of anti-Zionism and see it as a variant of anti-Semitism.

Withal, there are those, including many Jewish leaders, who object strenuously to drawing the conclusion from this that France is basically anti-Semitic today or that there is a new wave of anti-Semitism in France. The small neo-Nazi grouplets are outside the mainstream of French society, it is insisted. One can point to the paucity of votes gotten by ultra-right groups in any election. French popular sentiment, polls continue to show, is far more pro-Israel than pro-Arab, or than official government and political party stances would lead one to believe. Polls since the end of the war on French sentiment toward Jews have demonstrated constant diminution in basic anti-Jewish attitudes. There is little, if any, meaningful discrimination in terms of employment or social integration; and more positive Catholic teaching about Jews in the past few decades.

Whatever the difference in appreciation, this much is evident today: The shock of the Copernic blast has made tragically clear to the nation as a whole that the problem is not a Jewish one but one for all France.

To the extent that it brings, finally, real investigation of the ultra right, discredits pseudo-intellectual racist philosophies, induces the French authorities to comprehend even a little better how their pro PLO policies foster terrorism and gets the French people to understand how anti-Zionism can indeed transmute dangerously, it shall not have been in vain.

Who is responsible for the rue Copernic blast? Nobody really knows as yet. Every kind of conjecture is advanced: the PLO, the KGB, Khaddafi. But by far the most likely answer is that this is a homegrown French product of France's own ultra-right. The terrorist blast credited to the ultra-right at Munich that murdered 13 was directed against all Germans; the explosion at the Bologna railroad station murdering 83 against all Italians. In France, the ultra-right chose Jews as their target and shook the nation.

Whether France will be drawing the appropriate lessons of the Copernic tragedy or these be lost in a welter of petty political in-fighting, however, remains to be seen.