



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

Preserving American Jewish History

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

Series E: General Alphabetical Files. 1960-1992

Box 86, Folder 10, NBC "Holocaust" - Denmark, 1970.



DENMARK

In Denmark Holocaust was aired in early March, 1970, and it was met with widespread coverage in the news and the popular media, well as as/ with record viewing audiences. A Gallup poll commissioned by the Berlinske Tidende, a leading Danish newspaper, produced the following data: 83% of those questioned considered it a good idea to show Holocaust; only 10% of all Danes under 25 years old did not see the series; and of those over 50 years old only 30 to 40% did not see Holocaust.

These figures indicated not only that a majority of the population viewed the series, but also that Holocaust reached nearly all those Danes without first-hand knowledge of World War II and the Nazi occupation. Recognizing this, the Danish press concentrated much of its attention on the effect Holocaust had on children and young people.

Politiken, a major Danish daily, contended that the film may have opened some eyes and created a better understanding of the Jewish people; but it also noted that children do not perceive film as well as they do reality. But the Ikive Folkeblad reminded its readers that "children know more about evil than adults believe." The Berlinske Tidende emphasized the importance of seeing the film for young people because it is they who are responsible, it pointed out, for resisting war.

One newspaper article, headlined "Holocaust Should Not Stand Alone," stressed the need for background material, especially in the form of a follow-up documentary. And teachers at one junior high school, it was reported, felt the film did not give sufficient consideration to the political background of pre-War Germany. But the series clearly reached the great majority of young Danes, and strong student identification with the characters in the film prompted a great interest

in the historical holocaust. This was evidenced, according to , by the increased demand for literature about World War II. Both school and community libraries reported they had been emptied of material on the subject after the airing.

Various other comments, often widely divergent, also emerged in the discussion about the series. One article raised the issue of over-sentimentalization, while another worried that people can become cold and apathetic upon seeing too much horror. A third contradicted both by arguing that the reality went much further than the film.

Of the numerous responses elicited by Holocaust, the most frequently articulated one was Why-- "Why didn't the Jews resist?," "Why didn't we protest?," "Why didn't other foreign countries react when they had knowledge of Nazi atrocities?," "Why did it happen?"

The Hosveras Folkeblad, a regional journal, claimed that the weakness of the film was its unconcern with just such questions.

It speculated on the lack of opposition by the German population during the war and criticized the film because it did not include facts on how and why Nazism grew.

Other articles spawned by Holocaust discussed Danish awareness of Nazi actions during the war. Most of these were critical of the Danish actions during that era, as was one found in which insinuated that the Danish press did not reveal all of the Nazi atrocities it was aware of until the Nazis were defeated. An article in a major Copenhagen daily, Extrabladet, contended that the European nations which were Nazi-occupied were competitive in their ignorance of what was happening while it happened.

This sharply self-critical stance was particularly unusual because the Danes were, in fact, a very integral part of the underground network during the war which aided Jews and other potential Nazi victims to escape to neutral lands.

Few articles appeared expressing the right-wing reaction. One, in the regional newspaper Aarhus Schrift, stated that "...one should not be seduced by a film such as Holocaust," and claimed the series was "...speculation in feeling." It intimated that Holocaust was a propagandistic tool designed to arouse support for Israel. The reaction from the right in Denmark was generally, however, far less visible and more subtly stated than it had been in most nations where Holocaust was shown.

Extrabladet acknowledged that there are "crazy people" who contend it never happened. "The TV series," it continued, "because of its fictive nature didn't change their minds--but they are an insignificant, marginal group."

This newspaper also considered Holocaust in light of its television vehicle. The significance of the film, it thought, was that it "mobilizes an opinion." The strength of its ability to do so, Extra-bladet wrote, "surprised Danes in that it forced them to take a position on the blackest point in the modern history of our civilization." In this context, the artistic merit of the series is irrelevant, it felt--but the courage required to make it was not. Despite the overriding approbation, the article concluded, "there was nothing new in Holocaust. We all knew about it before and we will continue to know about it when we have forgotten the film."

The Jytlands Post, while it agreed with many of the points made by Extrabladet, explicitly stated that "as truth it did happen," and concluded that the film "made reality real to us. If it can't open our eyes--not only to Nazism but to misuse of power in general--nothing can."

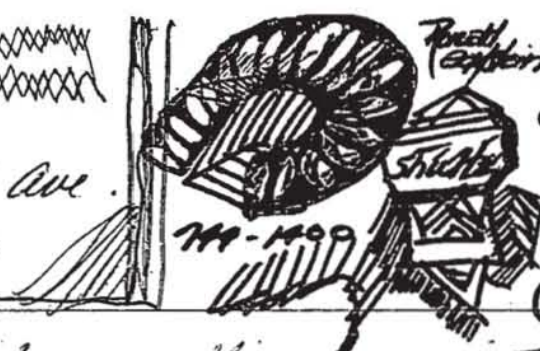
Thus the articles represented a divergence on a key issue, the

lasting effect of Holocaust. Extrabladet pointed out that the film acted as a litmus test for public opinion, but that nothing was essentially changed by it. But the Jytlands Post spoke of its "opening our eyes" and the long term effect it would have on human rights. And there was ample evidence that, to such extent as a nation's youth, when it reaches adulthood, creates a nation's future, the future understanding in Denmark of the Nazi era was markedly affected and enhanced by the series.

Indeed, many of the reactions stimulated by the film included a new perspective on the importance of guarding human rights. Politiken claimed that "the whole population is incredibly interested in how to avoid a new holocaust in Europe."

"The message of Holocaust," thought _____, "is that we should be ready to say no to all violations of human rights."

9:30 - Gunda
Ms. Haac
4th Floor 299 Park Ave.
Bartolomea 486-8300



Best system
A. Intro
QR. Question Resistance
O. Objective
C. Children
F. future
P. Politically

Page 1
① shock, appalling, resistance, reduces
② Dream a reality. Lord of People

QR
Why didn't we protest, why
protest for Viet Nam.
Should protest against all
atrocities

③ Did it open eyes about atrocities
film's weakness - didn't answer
why - (regional journal) Hovserås
Folkeblad

Page 2
④ Children + Holocaust. Politiker
positive sides - better understanding
for 9-11 tragedy - history in a
new light. Now so many children
running around w/ invisible guns
& move before school arts + crafts -
3rd grader - tried to shoot teacher w/
Legs block toys.
Film - children don't perceive
it as well as reality - Opened
eyes - but didn't bring image to
everyone. The advertising
interests. No many hours
to get totally use on brain
amaze away from their pen.

QR (2) "I'm ashamed -
Criticism of the Pope -

Page 3 (3) "Holocaust will take revenge"
Why didn't foreign countries react
when they had the knowledge.

QR (4) Perhaps in 40 yrs we will be
a horrified about starving
children.
How do people close their
eyes & noses in the world.

Page 4 (5) Comments from F. Horn
Politiker

- Whole pop. incredibly interested.
How can we avoid a new H. in

(F) Europe. What could be the role
of the Euro community help?

(6) H. made people think, but ~~the~~
the real Holocaust was

(7) a stimulus for creation
of Euro. common market.

Page 5 (8) Letters - not close to reality.

TALK TO JOEL about this
from W. German gov't. "Not a
way to describe hell" Klaus
Bolling. Press spokesman for
W.G. Gov.

② After "H"

Page 60 Morgenpost newspaper -

① "Have you forgotten
Gdansk kids - agreement in Munich

② Jews Betrayed. Tid-

①

Page 70 How Nazism grew in G.

② Wonder about lack of reaction
by G people.

② After "H"

personal account of former inmates.
Amnesty

② Austria

Page 8. ① "Eternal Damnation Ehstrabladet
of Jews -

That Nazism is ~~general~~ ^{an invasion} not a
politically neutral word.

Slightly
off

② Danish Press - did not

reveal all about it. They were
aware of. Moderate parties did not

(P)

Reveal atrocities - what kind of
Gyllards Porter supporters
of Hitler during war.
Not a dangerous subject in
Denmark as long as one
does not say anything about
Danish complicity.
Doesn't want to speak about
other capitalist injured
atrocities.

Page 90

TV has not influenced attitude
toward (not sure) K.D. newspaper
acc. to a poll 83% thought
a gd idea to show it.

(A)

stats

Also reaction
to Denmark

Most interesting only 10% of
young people under 25
did not see it. While 50+
yrs as much as 30% - 40%
did not see it.
Germany has same ~~rights~~ right
to speak of human
rights - 16% no opinion
8% no they don't
7 -

279-0100

Handwritten scribbles and signatures at the bottom left corner.

② the film this man of an attempt
various nations to wash their
hands. everyone guilty.

QR
Y
③ message of H - we should be
ready to say no to violating
human.

Page 10 ① Vest Jylland - (local paper - W Denmark)
H a true picture of Nazi times
- father of 19 + 21 yr old children.

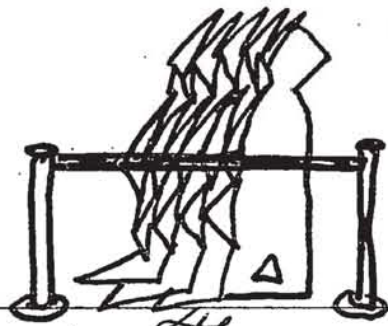
Very brutal

too much violence in the movie.
Horrible to see Nazis still free.
Shaken after seeing film - let
the past be forgotten. To late
deal w/ those who are guilty.

Page 11 Extrabladet "We knew about it
before hand"

Good to show docu. TV - getting
for some things. Mobilize an
opinion. Proof of the force of the
TV medium

TV can do something that no
other medium could (or can today)
it can dilemma what people
will become interested in or



(P.M.)
(A.S.)
speaking about. This proof of the strength of the TV medium was misinterpreted because people were surprised that the medium forced them to take a position to the blackest jet in mod. hist. of our civilization.

People were surprised that 6,000,000 ~~were~~ ^{were} ~~annihilated~~ before Hitler could be stopped.

(P) Competition about who knew the least of what happened when it happened.

(C) children - People began being interested in asking if children knew about it. Acknowledged

(R) Crazy people who control it were surprised. TV since because of its fictive nature didn't change mind - but they are insig. marginal groups. Drawn away because they are so close geographically. But still we should be reminded. It's really shocking that just because it was TV we reacted so strongly. Artistic quality - irrelevant - attribute courage to producers. Success also came from success of Haley's 'Roots'. Once it was mass media.

They knew that ^{most} many of the world would see it.

Shock in a few older gen. knew about. Why not surprised.

Interruption due to commercials.

There was nothing new in

it. We all knew about it

before & we will continue

to know about when we have

forgotten the film.

Page 13

"In the wake of ... Jylland Thorpe

the "Z" series -
High School Teacher - author of
article

Summary - incredible inhuman scenes
from U.S. TV-series notwithstanding

could happen again. Danger is
around the corner & we should prepare

ourselves - since Dems. is a
form of life in constant fight

for its own existence.

Page 15

War can start again unless
the young resist it.

BT Berlinske Tidende - major
Copenhagen paper

C } important for young people
to see the film & to be
aware that atrocities are still
going on. Cannot forget this history
because one wants to forget. Some
say series too exaggerated - but
no way to portray true horror
of Nazi Bcr.

Page 15 (D) "Empty Libraries"

Future Increased demand for lit about
War. Explosion in interest.

(D)

Page 16 (C) "The Children know more about
evil yrs than adults believe."
Debate - film didn't give enough background
Teacher believe. Children very
interested in this. Diff to explain
to children about Bcr. program
in Germany. Teacher told that
in Junior High. The students
were very interested & identified
w/ the characters. Very moved by
the series.

~~Final paper~~

Page 17 ① Execution - Arthur Script
History of Jews is history of Persecution.
One shouldn't be seduced by
a film such as H. C. C. at a time when Israel is being
more of its ground because of
its governmental policies. One
shouldn't put Zionism & Semites
into the same basket. It is
a speculation in feeling. It
wants us to believe we have a
moral obligation to support Israel
only bec. it is inhabited by
people who were once persecuted.

Right wing view more subtle

② Twice Reaction
Correct - "H" well received by
viewers. 83% of those questioned
gd to show series.

shots

Page 18 ① "Reminder" - Was "H" art. No naturally
^{almost} prevented the film from being
shown on TV. Unsatisfactory things
in film - main impression
was correct. "H" can be seen
as a reminder of how Dictator-
ships can pervert minds.

A

7

& lead people astray.

Page 190 "G" "should not stand alone"
st. ins. i. we all have
Fut. } beyond info about piece
of Jews. Reality goes further
than this. Nds follow-up
circumstances.

② "G" Status

Some people complained about too
much sentimentality. Certain
scenes more powerful than others
& said that people wondered if
one doesn't become cold &
apathetic if one sees too much
horror. It is subject of
debate all over Europe but
home, work, school - nbs docu.
Fut } follow-up.

Page 200 Jyllands Post

July 1st part
not art -

But as truth it happened.
We knew before hand that it
was true - but cause we lived
it. Made reality real to us.

⑥

If this can't open our eyes - not
only to Nazism but misuse
of power in general - nothing
for Art Criticism irrelevant.

Page 210 "End of the World on TV"
Tried to prevent its being shown
in West Germany.

