



Reporting the Holocaust  
in the British, Swedish and  
Finnish Press, 1945–50

Antero Holmila



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# Reporting the Holocaust in the British, Swedish and Finnish Press, 1945–50

Antero Holmila

*Lecturer, Department of History and Ethnology, University of Jyväskylä*

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Antero Holmila

# List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACC	Allied Control Commission (in Finland)
AL	<i>Aamulehti</i>
DP	Displaced Person
DN	<i>Dagens Nyheter</i>
Gestapo	Geheime Staatspolizei, the secret police of Nazi Germany
GHT	<i>Göteborgs handels- och sjöfartstidning</i>
HS	<i>Helsingin Sanomat</i>
IMT	International Military Tribunal
IS	<i>Ilta-Sanomat</i>
KA	Kansallisarkisto, the National Archives of Finland, Helsinki
MO	Mass-Observation Archive, University of Sussex, Brighton
POW	Prisoner of War
RA	Riksarkivet, the National Archive of Sweden, Stockholm
SD	Sicherheitsdienst (Security Service of the SS)
SS	Schutzstaffel
SSd	<i>Suomen Sosialidemokraatti</i>
StT	<i>Stockholms-Tidningen</i>
SvD	<i>Svenska Dagbladet</i>
Uno/UNO	United Nations Organisation
UNRRA	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
UNSCOP	United Nations Special Committee on Palestine
UNWCC	United Nations War Crimes Commission
US	<i>Uusi Suomi</i>
Valpo	Valtiollinen Poliisi, the Finnish State Police
Waffen-SS	Armed SS, the military wing of the organisation
WJC	World Jewish Congress

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# 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Responding to the Holocaust: Historiography

An estimated 5.7 million Jews were killed between 1939 and 1945 by the Nazi regime and its collaborators. The greatest mass murder in history – the Holocaust – was also a media event.<sup>1</sup> From 1933, when Hitler seized power in Germany and swiftly introduced anti-Jewish measures, the European media followed the ‘cumulative radicalisation’ of Germany’s racial malevolence – from the exclusion of the Jews from Germany’s social, political and economic life to the campaign of extermination. In late 1942 *The Daily Telegraph*, like many other papers, wrote that over one million Jews had already been killed in Europe, adding that Germany’s goal was a total extermination of the race in Europe.<sup>2</sup> In September 1942, *Dagens Nyheter*, Sweden’s leading newspaper, wrote in its editorial that Germany’s aim was ‘physical annihilation of the Jews’.<sup>3</sup> In Finland, news of the Jewish genocide was censored although foreign papers, especially Swedish ones, were obtainable, so there were some chances to encounter the Holocaust. Also when Danish Jewry was threatened by deportations to concentration camps in 1943, the Finnish press broke the silence, infuriating the Germans.<sup>4</sup>

However, a number of questions about the Final Solution remained unanswered during the war years and, at best, a considerable amount of disbelief about the news existed.<sup>5</sup> Only when the Allied forces liberated the concentration camps, could the European (and American) press see for themselves the grim result of the Nazi genocide. Later in that year, the victorious Allies, the USSR, the USA, Great Britain and France, opened a criminal case against 22 of the leading Nazis. Among a vast number of Nazi crimes that the trial discussed, and the press reported, the Holocaust featured on many occasions.



Over the last decade the study of Holocaust representation and its effect on collective memories has been growing exponentially. Frequently, studies are published about cultural representations of the Holocaust; on the Holocaust and collective memory; on Holocaust memorials, museums and other forms of commemoration; on the meaning and representation of the Holocaust in film or literature. While the purview of such studies has opened up new vistas concerning how the Holocaust can be studied and interpreted (indeed, these studies affirm the Holocaust's status as one of the defining features of the twentieth century), the perspective usually remains on the Holocaust's contemporary meaning. In contrast, there is relatively little knowledge of Holocaust culture in its historical setting. Often, the early memory of the mass murder of the European Jews and other victims has been relegated to a state of near non-existence. Tony Kushner's comment is a neat summary of the long-held view: '[B]efore the 1960s at the earliest, the Holocaust as a self-enclosed entity had not yet entered into the general consciousness or memory of the Western world.'<sup>6</sup> Consequently, the immediate postwar representation of the Holocaust has become marginalised to such an extent that it seems to have little bearing on the development of the subject. By examining the relationship between the postwar newspaper discourses on the key events in which the Holocaust was represented, and the public attitudes towards these discourses, this book seeks to contribute to an understanding of the ways in which European people first attempted to come to terms with the event. In highlighting the layered press discourse of the Holocaust in the immediate postwar era this study will add another dimension, and nuance, to the dominant interpretations of the genesis of understanding the genocide of European Jewry during the early postwar years.

The re-evaluation of representations of the Holocaust immediately after the war will be offered by widening the context in which the Holocaust was considered. To this end, my approach is comparative: I will examine the awareness of the real situation as depicted in the British, Swedish and Finnish press. I also aim to explain how, why and to what extent the process of writing-out the Holocaust from the mainstream liberal democratic narratives that grappled with the Holocaust took place in the postwar years. Essentially, I will highlight how the Holocaust was fed into different narratives and conceptual frameworks. Unless we consider the Holocaust as a part of different contexts (for example, the downfall of the Third Reich, seeking a more humane postwar world through a legal forum of the International Military Tribunal or Jewish immigration to Palestine), the danger is that we end up having

anachronistic assumptions as to how contemporaries came to terms with the cataclysm. As Michael Marrus has soberly pointed out, historians should take care in order 'to give contemporaries a fair hearing'.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the fact that 'after Nuremberg', as Marrus has noted, 'the murder of European Jewry could be authoritatively pointed to as an established fact of great historical importance',<sup>8</sup> the dominant historical interpretation long maintained that the response of Western democratic nations to the Holocaust was virtually muted. There are two major trends that must be highlighted.

First, the scholarship between the 1960s and the 1990s dealing with the bystanders'<sup>9</sup> responses to the Holocaust blamed Western governments for failing to rescue Europe's Jews before and during the war.<sup>10</sup> As a corollary to that, the typical argument held that after the war the same governments minimised the extreme suffering of the Jews or treated it as 'undifferentiated atrocity', failing to take into account the fact that, unlike other groups of victims, Jews were targeted for total extermination. Frequently, Cold War politics was seen as the main villain in minimising the Holocaust since Western democratic governments needed to mobilise anti-communist forces (especially in Germany) that were complicit with the Nazi genocide.<sup>11</sup>

Second, the early bystander scholarship was characterised by a top-down approach with a focus on governmental sources, such as memos, minutes of meetings, policy documents and refugee records. On the whole, the bystanders' role in the Holocaust, as it was constructed in the mode of traditional Western historiography, was overwhelmingly seen as 'the history of inaction, indifference, and insensitivity', as Marrus has commented.<sup>12</sup>

Reaction to the top-down approach in exploring bystander nations' responses to the Holocaust was first brought forward by Tony Kushner in his influential book, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination*. In particular, his work represents a deliberate move away from the fraught debates in the 1980s and 1990s, which frequently contested how many Jews different governments could have saved from the Holocaust had they wanted to. Instead, Kushner concentrated on 'the impact of the Holocaust on ordinary people' by examining 'the actions of the nation-states in the light of popular responses'.<sup>13</sup> His work added much-needed nuance and scholarly rigour to the burgeoning literature on the bystanders' manifested indifference when they tried to grapple with the Holocaust and its implications to their liberal democratic cultures.

The attempts to change the register from the West's unwillingness to deal with the Holocaust to the West's uncertainty of how to respond to it

first came from Germany, as well as from France and the Benelux countries. Scholars increasingly interested in collective memory studies started to look at grass-roots level social discourses of the immediate postwar period and the ways in which the Holocaust was weaved into the national narratives of different nations. For example, Robert G. Moeller's *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* (2001) examines the competing narratives of German victimhood on the Eastern front versus German guilt with regard to the Third Reich's extermination of the Jews. Elsewhere, he argues that 'the apparent failure of West Germans to pay the high psychic costs ... did not mean that they fled headlong from the past or suffered from collective amnesia'.<sup>14</sup> In other words, West Germany in the late 1940s and 1950s, although dominated by the plight of expellees and prisoners of war at the hands of the Soviets, never repressed the memory of suffering they had inflicted on European Jews. Jeffrey Herf's *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (1997) also shares this outlook, although this line of argument is limited to West Germany.<sup>15</sup>

In a similar way, Pieter Lagrou's comparative study on national memories in postwar Belgium, France and the Netherlands accounts for the competing social memories of those who survived the camps, usually non-Jews, and the historical memory of the dead, usually Jews.<sup>16</sup> The latter type of memory gained prominence only after the social memory of survivors had been incorporated into states' collective memories. Lagrou writes that 'the awareness, *prise de conscience* of the specificity of the Jewish experience, had not permeated contemporary public opinion'.<sup>17</sup> The existing everyday life constraints were at work: '[T]he fact remains that the victims and survivors of the genocide [the Holocaust] were physically intermingled with victims and survivors of other forms of persecution [for example, the resistance movements], and that it is this mixture that conditioned contemporary perceptions.'<sup>18</sup>

The picture that has emerged holds that Jewish suffering 'was there' but not in the sense in which we now view it, the fate of the Jews was not totally absent, nor was it, it seems, wilfully obscured.<sup>19</sup> The point is summarised by Lawrence Baron, commenting on the American confrontation with the Holocaust: 'If the Americans did not understand the Holocaust in the ways they do today, it does not mean they lacked awareness of the event or repressed the memory of it.'<sup>20</sup> Tom Lawson has arrived at a similar conclusion in his examination of the Church of England's response to the tragedy: '[T]he Anglican Church proposed a genuinely thought-out and empirically based understanding of Nazism as an anti-Christian force, a form of totalitarianism whose racism and anti-Semitism were of secondary importance.'<sup>21</sup> Most up-to-date

synthetic history (or histories) of the Holocaust is also beginning to realise that there was more discussion about the genocide than previously believed. As Dan Stone has recently pointed out, 'It is no longer possible to claim that there was silence in the postwar period – just as there had not been in the pre-war and wartime years – but only varieties of selective speech.'<sup>22</sup> Thus, it must be recognised from the start that while the Holocaust and anti-Semitism was recognised as part of Nazi culture, it lacked the same kind of centrality it now enjoys.

On the whole, the changes in Holocaust scholarship over the last fifteen and more years and the issues that have become central concerns in the field must also be located in the larger context of the development of history as a discipline in which the memory wave in the humanities has largely contributed to the new revival of cultural history. This, in turn, has meant that 'experience' and 'meaning' have become key categories in historical analysis (as opposed to structure and agency), opening up a new way of 'doing history'. As a result, the focus on memories and culture has also forced historians to look beyond traditional evidence and source material.<sup>23</sup>

Research into the Holocaust and its implications for the Allied and other bystander nations has, on the one hand, been slower in adapting into the new modes of analysis such as memory studies, and on the other hand, in shedding light into the postwar years. Peter Novick's remark still stands as a good summary of the prevailing view in the field of Allied responses: '[B]y the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s, talk of the Holocaust was something of an embarrassment in American public life.'<sup>24</sup> It may have been so, but it did not mean that there was no discussion on the tragedy – in the USA or in Europe – as we will see in this book. Indeed, Novick has been too quick to dismiss the importance of these years.<sup>25</sup> Most remarkably, he barely mentions the Nuremberg trial, which, despite its limited reference to the extermination of the Jews, still managed to establish the importance of the Holocaust in the Third Reich's racial and militaristic policies.<sup>26</sup>

If the social and cultural contexts have become more important categories of analysis of the Holocaust so has the legal context – especially the one that was conjured up by the International Military Tribunal (IMT) in Nuremberg 1945–6. Even though academics and public intellectuals have been debating the Nuremberg trial since the 1940s, in recent years an increasing number of scholars have examined the representations of the Holocaust in the legal framework of the trial.<sup>27</sup> Here, too, the dominant view has prevailed: the Holocaust, so the argument goes, was deliberately marginalised in the trial.<sup>28</sup> Again, it is noteworthy

that the line of argument that is often advanced in the German or continental context is different: the Holocaust as represented at Nuremberg had, even if briefly, an important impact on the German public's understanding of the Final Solution and therefore on the acknowledgment of their criminal past.<sup>29</sup> Since the current consensus on bystanders' awareness of the Holocaust and the ways in which they approached it clearly deviates from those of German and German-occupied territories, it seems necessary to re-evaluate the ways in which bystander nations conceptualised the event in their social and cultural arenas – including the public representation of the Nuremberg trial.

Finally, the field of liberal democratic responses to the Holocaust is dominated by an Anglo-American perspective. At the same time, other liberal democratic responses, such as those in Sweden or Finland, have often been ignored in the wider scholarship of the topic.<sup>30</sup> This is a problematic tendency for the reason that the Anglo-American perspective has frequently been universalised, meaning that it consequently assumes that the arguments that are applicable to Britain and the USA are also applicable to other democratic nations, such as Sweden or Finland. As a result, the explanatory core of the liberal democracies' response to the Holocaust seems too simplistic, preventing the recognition of other causal factors, rising from the particular geo-political situations and experiences of the Second World War. Yet, in fairness, it must be realised that the historiography on the Holocaust and its memory in Scandinavia is only starting to be developed. As things currently stand out, Harald Runblom's comment that '[w]e do not know ... what the reporting looked like, how high the level of knowledge was after the war or when the information about the Holocaust was broadened and could be given some perspective' unequivocally encapsulates the state of research into the Holocaust's aftermath in Sweden as well as Finland.<sup>31</sup> Thus, if we are to understand how the disaster began to take shape in the postwar representations, and memories of the war, we need more in-depth investigations into the ways in which collective memories of the Jewish tragedy were forged in the public sphere – not only in those countries where the extermination had been committed but also in liberal democratic nations that now have found it in their hearts to carry on the memory of the Holocaust and to pledge 'never again'. To this end, newspapers will be of tremendous help.

## 1.2 Framing the Holocaust: Methodologies

Allan Bell has written that '[j]ournalists do not write articles. They write stories. A story has structure, direction, point, viewpoint. ... Much of

humanity's most important experience has been embodied in stories.<sup>32</sup> For this work, the implications are clear: the Holocaust texts are more than just news articles; they are part of humanity's experience of grappling with extreme violence. If the press writes the first draft of history, as the journalist's adage claims, it makes sense to try to identify why the first draft of the Holocaust was such an ambiguous one, or indeed a failure, as so many critics have claimed.<sup>33</sup>

Recently, concerns have been raised that there exists a tendency in memory studies that leans towards isolating memories instead of locating them in relation to multiple (and competing) memories in society as a whole.<sup>34</sup> Newspaper history provides an antidote to these 'monolithic collective memories' by highlighting multiple and contested collective memories at work at any given time. This is because newspapers offer helpful insights into what was included and excluded, seen as significant, impossible and controversial in the discourses of the period. Adrian Bingham's remark that even 'if ... newspapers cannot offer an unproblematic guide to the attitudes of individuals, they remain of immense historical value for the contribution they made to the public and political discourses of the period' is to the point.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, the examination of press coverage of the Holocaust will help us better to understand the multi-faceted – often conflicting and contradictory – ways in which the first draft of the Holocaust's history was constructed. In addition, since the scholarship about the Holocaust and postwar memory is growing rapidly, it seems desirable to chart the history of our beliefs and images of the tragedy – by examining the contexts in which these discourses were formed and framed.<sup>36</sup> To this end, I also utilise some of the contemporaneous books – usually written by journalists – as they do not only illustrate but often elaborate many of the same trends as newspaper articles.

The first major step in examining how the postwar perception(s) of the Holocaust was diffused to the masses is to investigate the content of mass media dealing with the event – in this case the press. This is because, essentially, the content is a powerful source of meaning about the social world.<sup>37</sup>

In terms of understanding the role of newspapers as the way of uncovering Holocaust discourses in the press and the attitudes of ordinary people – the readers of newspapers – this study is influenced by critical discourse analysis. This is a method that enables us to understand the dialectical relationship between a discursive event (the Holocaust) and the socio-political structures that give shape to the event. The potential of critical discourse analysis lies, clearly, in the issue of examination

of forms of representation that are embedded in the use of language in everyday settings, and how such use of language contributes to the legitimisation of authority and control.<sup>38</sup>

Given our task at hand, the representation of the Holocaust as primarily an 'undifferentiated atrocity', it seems that critical discourse analysis is particularly well-suited to uncovering the ideological nature of media texts. As a consequence it can help to answer why the Holocaust seemed to be represented as an 'undifferentiated atrocity' where Jewish suffering was collapsed into a wider context of suffering. In practice, (critical) discourse analysis entails a systematic analysis of text and talk: '[I]f we want to know what ideologies actually look like, how they work, and how they are created, changed and reproduced, we need to look closely at their *discursive manifestations*.'<sup>39</sup> In this case, these 'discursive manifestations' will be examined in editorials and columns, in the actual news, opinions, letters to the editor and in the texts that accompany photographs. In terms of an overall approach, what is being said and written about Nazi Germany's extermination policy in general is analysed first. This analysis produces an account of the content of the discourse, in which the Jewish experience will be located.<sup>40</sup>

However, the ways in which the Holocaust was discussed in different countries were dependent on a number of different factors – some had to do with different countries' experiences during the war, while others might have had to do with the influx of survivors to different countries or reporters' personal worldviews. In any case, as has been demonstrated above, the existing historiography on the responses of Western nations to the Holocaust has been dominated not only by a top-down approach, but also by an Anglo-American perspective.

In order to assess the role played by issues like the liberation of concentration camps, the Nuremberg trials and the emergence of the Cold War in constructing representations (and collective memories) of the Holocaust in different democracies, the process must be examined comparatively. As the point of departure, it should be stressed that the purpose of comparative history is not merely to describe similarities and differences between two or more cases but to offer explanations for them.<sup>41</sup> Secondly, explaining similarities and differences in the framing of the Holocaust in a comparative setting requires us to keep a keen eye to the notion of culture, which shapes the meanings of representations. As Susan R. Grayzel has written: '[c]omparing cultures requires attention, above all, to representations and meanings, subjects that may be obscured by a preoccupation with causal explanation'.<sup>42</sup> From the perspective of this study the same idea could be formulated thus: 'comparing

representations and meanings requires attention to culture'. This is where the notion of 'comparative cultural history' takes its significance.

In practice, comparative cultural history is a preferable method from the perspective of historical explanation of the Holocaust's representation; national contexts allow us to make both vertical as well as horizontal comparisons. Vertical comparison focuses on the examination of the Holocaust vis-à-vis other competing national narratives while horizontal comparison seeks to address the issues that transcended national narratives, therefore having a wider European dimension. Essentially, by looking across national boundaries, I believe that we can learn more about the meaning(s) of the Holocaust and about the importance of context and culture for understanding the ways in which the press chose to depict the tragedy. Further, as Mary Hilson has noted: '[o]ne of the advantages of a cross-national comparative study is that it requires the historian to develop a familiarity with two [or more] separate historiographical traditions, *thus exposing sometimes long-held assumptions to new questions and approaches*'.<sup>43</sup> As I will show, the phenomenon of *liberal imagination* has for long been taken for granted in the Anglo-American context, but seems much less inevitable when examined in the light of other (non Anglo-American) cases.

### 1.3 Why Great Britain, Finland and Sweden?

David Wyman's *The World Reacts to the Holocaust* is a collection of 21 essays on how various countries reacted to the Holocaust. No Nordic countries are included in the survey.<sup>44</sup> This reminds us of the continuing marginal role of Scandinavian countries in the ever-increasing study of the Holocaust – even within the context of aftermath, which does not always have its locus in the sites of extermination. Apart from the contribution to expanding literature on 'the Holocaust and representation' – and widening a geographical foundation in which it can be examined – there are many other tangible reasons why comparing Great Britain, Finland and Sweden will increase our understanding of the Holocaust's meaning in postwar Europe.

All three countries (before, during and after the war) were democracies. As part of democratic principles these countries had the 'traditions of either providing shelter for political refugees and/or giving timely humanitarian aid to those exposed to danger and privation'.<sup>45</sup> While, on the one hand, it is true that the response to the plight of Jews fleeing from under Hitler's rule stemmed from democratic values, on the other hand, it must be recognised that a number of other factors



(such as economics, geographic location, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, Jewish life in the new host countries and immigration policies) had effects on how democratic principles were played out in practice.<sup>46</sup>

By comparing immigration policies in 1930s Britain, Sweden and Finland, we can see the underlying similarities faced by many European democracies. If we were only to consider the quantitative aspects of these immigration policies, it would seem that the comparison between these nations is rather asymmetrical: it has been estimated that by 1939 there were around 90,000 refugee Jews in Britain while Britain's Jewish population was about 330,000 strong.<sup>47</sup> Sweden's Jewish community was about 8,000 strong on the eve of the war but it grew quickly as around 3,500 refugee Jews were admitted by the end of 1939.<sup>48</sup> From 1942 onwards these figures rose sharply as Sweden took a further 8,000 Jews – mainly from the neighbouring Denmark and Norway. Finally, Finland's share is barely a trickle. By 1939 an estimated 300 Jews had found refuge in Finland, mainly from Austria and Czechoslovakia, while at the same time the Finnish Jewish community had about 2,000 Jews registered in its books. Altogether, the latest research on Jewish refugees in Finland has shown that there were around 370 Jews.<sup>49</sup> Despite the disparity in numbers, all these nations – with a particular emphasis on Britain and Finland – had established themselves as countries of non-immigration.<sup>50</sup> Another similarity in their treatment of Jewish refugees was that they both shared a view that they were primarily countries of temporary refuge, not settlement. If the British (and Swedish) authorities looked upon the Americans to take their Jewish refugees, the Finns thought the same of Swedish authorities.

*Anschluss*, the German annexation of Austria, was followed by a new wave of Jewish refugees trying to escape from the influence of the Nazis. Finland, notwithstanding its strict immigration policy, was nevertheless one of the last European countries to introduce a visa requirement to stem the influx of Jewish refugees. Therefore, at least in principle, Finland was still open for Jewish refugees when Sweden and Britain had closed their doors.<sup>51</sup> Finally, when the number of refugee Jews in Britain, Sweden and Finland is considered vis-à-vis the existing Jewish population in these countries, the statistics begin to look different. Consider Finland: in 1938, there were around 1,800 Jews living in the country. The 300 refugees were largely maintained by the Helsinki Jewish congregation, which consisted of around 1,200 adults. Overall the refugees increased the Jewish population in the country by almost 20 per cent. The corresponding figure for Britain would be around 30 per cent and for Sweden over 40 per cent.<sup>52</sup>

If the treatment of Jews before the war showed the mixed bag of democratic values and political as well as economic considerations faced by European democracies, the treatment of refugees during the war was largely shaped by these countries' positions in the conflict: one fought on the Allied side, one remained neutral while one fought on the Axis side.<sup>53</sup> Still, none of the Jews enjoying the citizenship of these countries perished in the Holocaust. Finland, after a crisis in government, threatening its downfall, sent eight Jewish refugees to the hands of the Gestapo. Their questionable 'extradition' was, supposedly, based on contemporaneous juridical reasoning that they had committed crimes in Finland and therefore forfeited their right of asylum.<sup>54</sup> Whatever the motives of the Finnish authorities in question, it cannot be denied that the authorities in the Finnish security police signed, to all intents and purposes, the death warrants of these Jews by handing them over to the Gestapo. Similarly, British officers in the German-occupied Guernsey, especially the island's bailiff Victor G. Carey and Chief of Police, William Schulpher, consented to anti-Jewish legislation and collaboration, which after numerous twists and turns led to the deaths of three refugee Jews in Auschwitz.<sup>55</sup> Much controversy has existed about the German occupation of Guernsey, the collaboration of the islanders as well as the fates of these Jews.<sup>56</sup>

Whatever happened in Guernsey or in Finland to refugee Jews, I believe that the fact that Britain, Sweden and Finland had very different experiences in the war offers us a pluralist approach to the representation of the Holocaust in its aftermath. Indeed, it needs to be stressed that the varying experiences of the war, which naturally shaped postwar responses, provide in themselves a good reason for the comparison: to what extent did wartime knowledge of the tragedy forge the postwar understanding of it? Were there perhaps more attempts in Britain and Sweden morally to exculpate themselves from the tragedy since they knew well what was happening? Or did Finland feel somehow partially responsible for the event and thereby tried to repress it? Problems of this kind can be examined only in a comparative framework where different wartime experiences existed, but with an underlying context of liberal democracy. Thus, rather than reinforcing a sense of national exceptionalism, attention to cultural comparison 'can help to reveal the complex, open and hybrid nature of different societies, deny exceptionalism and disrupt national teleologies'.<sup>57</sup>

Clearly, however, there is a need to probe Finland's wartime record further if it can fruitfully be aligned with 'bystanders' in this study since it fought the war on the Axis side. As in 'bystander nations', the

overwhelming majority of individuals in Finland had no personal memories or experiences of the Holocaust. Most importantly, Finland was never occupied by the Germans, and the immediate postwar legitimisation of state power was not embedded into memories (and myths) about 'resistance' or the denial of collaboration, which often included anti-Jewish actions. As in other liberal democratic nations, concerned people in Finland also felt the emotional need to respond to the events of the Holocaust. For example, Finnish Jews collected millions of Finnish marks worth of aid to support the victims of Nazism, about 100 Polish Jewish orphans and refugees came to Finland and Finnish Jews were active in advocating the opening of Palestine for unrestricted Jewish immigration.<sup>58</sup>

The wartime experience of Finnish Jews illustrates more closely why Finland can be considered together with bystander nations. First, it is worth remembering that Finland was the only co-belligerent nation to Nazi Germany that did not enact any anti-Jewish legislation. Second, Finnish Jews enjoyed full citizenship; the men served in the army fighting against the USSR just like other Finnish males, and numerous Jewish women served in the women's voluntary auxiliary organisation, *Lotta Svärd*. Finnish Jewry, in fact, was proud to have been able to contribute to the war effort – further demonstrating their willingness to hold fast to the (liberal) concept of the emancipation contract, an idea that Jews did not constitute a separate national entity, but were nationals of their home nations, enjoying the protection of the state and therefore became 'emancipated'.<sup>59</sup> The paradox, of course, was that the military service of Finland's Jews was on the side of the Germans from 1941 to 1944. After Finland had sued for peace with the USSR in September 1944 and broke off its ties with Germany, *Front Karolina*, the Turku Jewish Congregation's wartime publication, wrote, after having relayed how millions of Jews had been sadistically slaughtered in Europe: '... let us not forget that we Finnish Jews ... were spared from the bitter destiny met by Jews all over Europe. For we were, and still are, free citizens in a free nation.'<sup>60</sup> Thus, as Finland was almost totally spared the horrors of the Holocaust, in Finnish Jewish identity politics the collaboration with the Nazis was not seen as a troubling or the most urgent issue during the war – it only started to change in postwar years when the true extent of Nazi racial policy began to unfold.<sup>61</sup>

The main difference between Finland and liberal democratic bystander nations was the level of knowledge of what was happening to the Jews in Europe.<sup>62</sup> The Finnish press was under censorship, which made dissemination of information about Europe's Jews almost impossible, although people did listen to BBC radio broadcasts, which was perfectly

legal, and some read Swedish newspapers since their circulation was not restricted. From 1943 onwards, columns by Walter Lippman and Sumner Welles appeared in Finland's biggest newspaper, *Helsingin Sanomat*, much to the irritation of the Germans.<sup>63</sup> The American Ambassador to Finland, Robert McClintock, remarked in 1944 that Finland was an anomaly in a sense that citizens were allowed to listen to any radio channel they wished – despite the presence of German troops. Yet he surely exaggerated when he noted that one could get as equally balanced a picture of world events through the Finnish media as the Swedish.<sup>64</sup> For example, it is likely that the Finns as Germany's co-belligerent were even more disposed to consider the news about persecution of the Jews as allied 'atrocities' propaganda than the people in Britain and Sweden.<sup>65</sup>

The comparison also benefits from a certain distance from the dominant Anglo-American perspective within which bystander history (and responses to the Holocaust) is mainly contextualised and debated. Yet, by gauging British responses to the Holocaust vis-à-vis other countries in a European context, we will not steer too far from the Anglo-American perspective either, but by comparing British responses to the Holocaust with the Nordic ones it is possible to connect Finnish and Swedish experiences to that of Anglo-American responses. In a sense, one explanatory schema is able to check the biases of the other. This is useful because possible general (macrosocial) explanations will, then, have sufficient explanatory power to rise above national explanations.

The comparison between Great Britain, Finland and Sweden will also highlight another important issue, namely that liberal democratic tendencies are not synonymous only with Allied/Neutral typology, in which they are often used in rather a teleological manner. But, as historian Mark Mazower has argued, National Socialism fits into the mainstream of European history (not only of German history) far more comfortably than most people like to admit.<sup>66</sup> For good, and for ill, the Holocaust and its representation was a European-wide event, and for a more nuanced understanding of these representations, stemming from national and transnational motifs, we must be able to look at nations whose wartime and postwar experiences diverged from the typical Anglo-American ones, yet shared the cornerstones of liberal democratic principles.

## 1.4 Sources: Selected newspapers

As noted above, newspapers are an invaluable source for a historian interested in capturing the mood of the period s/he is interested in.

However, the mood that comes through newspaper reportage also depends on what type of newspapers one studies. Put together, papers in this book represent mainstream political orientations and forces at work in Europe at the time – from the left to the right. In addition, the papers in each country enjoyed wide circulation and influence. Finally, I considered it vital to include ‘tabloid’ (or ‘evening paper’ as they are called in the Nordic countries) papers as well as ‘quality’ papers simply because of their popularity – and populist type of reporting.

Adhering to these criteria, the following papers were chosen for Britain: *The Times* and *The Manchester Guardian* as liberal papers, *The Daily Express* and *The Daily Telegraph* as conservative representatives and *The Daily Herald* and *The Daily Mirror* as Labour/left-wing papers. The selection covers 66 per cent of the circulation of the top ten national papers (see Appendix A).<sup>67</sup> Further, it is questionable whether adding other widely circulated papers as *The Daily Mail*, the *News Chronicle* and *The Daily Sketch* would have changed many features of this study. As will be shown, it is especially the ‘quality’ papers (*The Daily Telegraph*, *The Times* and *The Manchester Guardian*) that covered Holocaust-related topics most prominently. Further it must be added that the leading papers in the three categories of the British press (‘quality’, ‘middle-market’ and ‘mass market tabloids’) have all been studied.

Swedish papers included in the study are liberal *Dagens Nyheter*, conservative papers *Svenska Dagbladet* and *Stockholms-Tidningen* and left-wing papers *Göteborgs handels- och Sjöfartstidning* (GHT) and *Expressen*. The Swedish press is harder to categorise than its British counterpart. However, all leading papers in the political spectrum have been examined. Out of the big papers only *Göteborgs-Posten* has been left out. Between 1945 and 1948, the paper had a strong conservative leaning, thus competing with *Stockholms-Tidningen* and *Svenska Dagbladet*. Although GHT enjoyed far more modest regional circulation, almost all studies on the Swedish press during and after the war place considerable importance on the paper for its widely respected national status and consistent advocacy on left-liberal policies and anti-Nazism. Given the paper’s importance in Swedish newspaper history it would have been incongruous to leave it outside the study. It is also for GHT’s importance in Swedish newspaper history that it was included rather than *Social Demokraten*, the main voice for the Social Democratic Party (*Socialdemokratiska arbetarpartiet*). Additionally, it should be noted that newspaper readership in Sweden – or in most Western countries – did not directly reflect party allegiances.<sup>68</sup> In other words, the Social Democratic Party may have been the dominant postwar party in

Sweden, but its voters were more likely to read big national papers, such as *Dagens Nyheter*, than their own party paper.

For Finland, the papers included were *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Ilta-Sanomat* as liberal papers, *Uusi Suomi* and *Aamulehti* as conservative papers and *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* as the left-wing representative.<sup>69</sup> The selection covers 64 per cent of the circulation of the top ten national papers, thus giving a fairly similar figure as in the case of the British press. In the Finnish case it must be pointed out that the liberal *Maaseudun Tulevaisuus* had the third biggest circulation of all Finnish papers, but it was printed three times per week, thus not qualifying for this study, which examines 'dailies.' Another paper of major influence not included is the main organ for the Finnish-Swedish segment of society, *Hufvudstadsbladet*. However, the paper can be categorised as liberal-conservative, fairly similar in orientation to *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Dagens Nyheter*. Further, many of the Finnish-Swedish-speaking population also subscribed to the leading Swedish papers, especially *Dagens Nyheter*, *Svenska Dagbladet* and *Stockholms-Tidningen*.

Throughout the book I seek to illustrate where in the paper articles appeared. Mostly they were in the foreign news section, which in all papers varied slightly from day to day. When I write that article was on page 6, it means that it was among tens of other foreign news items. Thus, it is possible to say that such article was considered significant enough to be picked out from the flow of news. However, in many cases articles appeared on the front page, meaning they were considered as one of the more important news topics of the day. If an article was editorialised, I have mentioned it because only the most important and pressing topics were dealt with in leader articles. In the same way, editorials show more clearly than regular news articles the paper's own place in its society's political landscape.

## 1.5 Reporting the Holocaust: An overview

Part I of the study examines the role of the British, Swedish and Finnish press in depicting the liberation of the concentration camps, and the place of the Jews within these depictions. The overall aim of Chapter 2, which examines the British press's coverage, is to add another dimension to Tony Kushner's important theory on liberal imagination, and how it obfuscated the particular and extreme suffering of the Jews. Chapter 3, which considers the record of the Swedish press, discusses how the British and the Swedish press both utilised nationalistic discourse, but in very different ways. While in both cases the overall purpose was to

make atrocity news believable, entirely different focuses (the British focusing on the perpetrators through pictorial representation, and the Swedes on the victims by letting them tell the story) contributed to widely diverging ways of framing genocide.

Chapter 4, in contrast, points out that the Finnish press followed a very different course. Finland, having recently been co-belligerent with Germany, was evidently more reluctant to raise the same level of indignation towards the German crimes as were Britain and Sweden – despite the fact that the German army destroyed the majority of Lapland's infrastructure in late 1944 while withdrawing from Finland. It will be argued that through a different sort of nationalistic discourse, the Finns managed to avoid direct confrontation with the Holocaust. However, the chapter also makes the important point that the Finnish aloofness from the tragedy resulted partly from the structures of newspaper reporting. Unlike the press in Britain and Sweden, the Finnish press had no chance to send correspondents to Germany, but instead had to rely on international sources, which left it one step removed from the horrific scenes in places like Belsen and Buchenwald.

Part II (Chapters 5, 6 and 7) charts how the press in these countries covered the most important postwar trial, 'the Nuremberg trial', and how they recorded Jewish suffering. As current historical consensus has it, these trials did not extensively highlight Nazi Jewish policy.<sup>70</sup> The examination of the press's role in accounting for and constructing early images of Nazi criminality tells us much about the wider aspect of its sociological role. How did the press respond to the didactic call of the trial, and how did it help in making a 'rough draft' of the paradigmatic interpretation of Nazi crimes as undifferentiated atrocities that hindered the understanding of the Holocaust as a Jewish tragedy?

Chapter 5 discusses how the firmly established British nationalistic discourse was further emphasised in the press reports from Nuremberg. The nationalistic narrative, which hindered the realisation of the extreme fate of the Jews, continued to concentrate on the perpetrators and thereby on the moral right of Britain to render judgment on the Nazis in the dock. The press discourse legitimised the *ex post facto* legislation in the public sphere for the criminality of the Nazis was not in doubt, only the ways in which they should be tried. The chapter will then focus on how the unprecedented tragedy of Europe's Jews was seen (or hidden) through British nationalism.

Chapter 6 examines the record of Nazism and its race-specific crimes that the Swedish press created. The initial broadminded approach to the fate of the Jews, although still recognised, was not given such weight.

It seemed the trial could not serve as a forum for furthering the world's understanding of the Jewish tragedy. Instead, it now seemed that by analysing the 'sickness' of the Germans further understanding of the Final Solution could be gained. The chapter explores whether the traditional Swedish neutrality, strong liberal legal principles and ultimately its national self-understanding shaped the way in which the trial was framed in Sweden. As always, this analysis focuses on the question of how the Holocaust was fitted into other stories of the trial.

Chapter 7, which examines the Finnish press discourse on the trial, reminds us of the importance of national context in the reporting of foreign events: in the armistice agreement (ratified 19 September 1944) between Finland and the Soviet Union, the former had agreed to undertake the prosecution of persons accused of war crimes against the latter (Article 13 of the armistice agreement). Thus, Finland was gripped in its own trial, which dealt with Finland's guilt in having waged aggressive war. The majority of Finns found the trial unconvincing; the new retroactive law, which was designed to try the 'war guilty', profoundly violated (liberal) Finnish legal principles and established traditions of justice.<sup>71</sup> Perhaps surprisingly, the Finnish press was suffused with talk about the Jews and their particular fate. The problem this chapter examines is why that happened. The chapter presents the case that the Nuremberg trial worked as a 'screen memory' for the Finnish war-guilt trial. In other words, continuous reporting from Nuremberg showed, albeit implicitly, what the Finnish trial was not about.

Part III of the book adopts a slightly different approach to the investigation of the press, the Holocaust and the perceptions of Jewish suffering. This approach, more fragmentary in nature, is justified by the course of historical events themselves: the liberation of the camps and the Nuremberg trial were focal points in the immediate postwar representations of Nazi criminality. But soon after the end of the IMT (in October 1946), there were no other events of similar magnitude where Nazi extermination policy would have been considered. Instead, there were numerous occasions of lesser scale where the Holocaust manifested itself. By looking at these issues, and their depictions through comparative analysis of press discourse, we will establish an understanding of how, when and why, the Holocaust was discussed in public between the late 1940s and the early 1950s. This approach is also a desirable one in the light of recent developments on Holocaust historiography; while historical consensus still has it that the Holocaust was not discussed (in its own terms) until the 1960s (at the earliest), there has been increasing challenge to this line of argument. This part of the study will then



contribute to the escalating interest in understanding how the Holocaust was discussed publicly, and importantly, in *what terms* it was discussed.

Chapter 8 will account for how the discourse on Jewish displaced persons (DPs) who were still languishing in makeshift camps across Germany and Europe contributed to Holocaust discourse. A number of individual, yet related issues will be examined here, such as the Harrison report in the autumn of 1945, the Morgan debate in January 1946 and the tragic 'Exodus Affair' in 1947. Overall, Chapter 8 will show how the Holocaust was discussed in a number of – often contradictory – ways where motives ranging from nationalistic (and imperialistic) thinking to heart-felt sympathy contributed to a complex understanding of the Holocaust.

Chapter 9 will look at the process of the birth of Israel in 1947 and 1948, the 1948 Arab–Israeli War and the coverage of these issues in the British, Swedish and Finnish press. How did the suffering of the Jews during the Second World War shape the discourses on the new Jewish state? Historiographically, and in popular belief/myth the two events are intimately linked, but whether such ideas can withstand close historical scrutiny is a different matter. Finally, the murder of Count Folke Bernadotte, the rescuer of thousands of Jews from Nazi concentration camps, in September 1948 and the press coverage of that event will provide a useful window through which the contemporary view of the Holocaust can be gauged.

Finally, Chapter 10 will take issue with the emerging Cold War and examine how early Cold War rhetoric contributed to the reversal in the understanding of Germany's and the Soviet Union's roles in the Second World War. The Cold War's effect on Holocaust discourses will be tackled head on. The notion of Western orientation towards future years and the survival of the Western way of life underpin the chapter. It will argue that a mixture of Cold War logic and other factors shaped discussions about the UN Convention on Genocide in 1948, on growing nationalistic feeling and anti-Semitism in Germany, but in a more contextually distinct sense than the term 'Cold War metanarrative' would have us believe.

## **Part I**

# **The First Responses to the Holocaust: The Liberation of the Concentration Camps**

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# 2

## The British Press Responds to the Liberation of the Concentration Camps

### 2.1 Introduction

Following the liberation of Western concentration camps, especially Buchenwald (11 April) and Bergen-Belsen (15 April), newspapers in Europe reported a story of cruelty that seemed to surpass every other atrocity story they had told before. This chapter will examine how the liberation news was published in the mainstream British papers. It is now well known that the liberation of the camps hardly helped the British public to comprehend the true nature of the Nazi genocide.<sup>1</sup> However, what concerns us here is to go beyond the argument according to which the dominant liberal discourse in Britain was principally responsible for influencing British understanding of the Holocaust. Instead, this chapter will show why it is important to consider not only liberalism, but also nationalism as the key tenet in shaping the press's attitude to the liberation discourse. Essentially, to what extent the responses to the tragedy were shaped by national experiences of the war in general and different countries' relationship to Germany in particular will be probed here, as well as in the following two chapters.<sup>2</sup> The posing of this question may sound obvious, but because of the strength of the liberal imagination as the dominant explanatory frame, other pressing issues have received less attention.

Tony Kushner has suggested that there were three factors that hindered the contemporary realisation that the Jews were being systematically annihilated and therefore the main focus of Nazi extermination policy. First, according to him, the scale and immediacy of the catastrophe meant that it was nearly impossible to make any real sense out of the situation, and consequently to construct coherent narratives.<sup>3</sup> Second, the awfulness of the western camps made it virtually impossible

to believe that even worse camps existed somewhere else. British newspaper material from spring 1945 lends a full support for these arguments, but this is only true when viewed from the Anglo-American perspective. Third, he argues that the nature and strength of liberal ideology obfuscated the real contemporary encounter with the Holocaust.<sup>4</sup>

I offer a slightly different approach to the problem of understanding the seeming ignorance of Jewish suffering when Britain first grappled with the Holocaust. Rather than focusing on liberal ideology, which Kushner calls 'the liberal imagination', I propose that nationalism must be considered more fully if we are to understand how the popular historical encounter with the Holocaust was constructed in its immediate aftermath.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, different forms of nationalism and national self-understanding – moulded by the war years – shaped the narration of the liberation of the camps.

At the heart of liberalism, as Kushner notes, is the concept of tolerance. In the British and American 'liberal imagination', the best way to combat intolerance was through 'exclusive national framework', 'assimilationism' and 'universalism'.<sup>6</sup> In other words, by imposing a monocultural society where different groups' distinct identities were absorbed into the dominant culture. By doing so, tolerance would be easier to achieve. As Kushner has argued, this kind of 'liberal imagination' and strong cultural homogenisation was, in fact, so successful in Britain and America that the barriers of difference were eradicated to such an extent that in the context of Nazi crimes all groups of victims were seen as one. Thus, Britain's (and America's) self-image as a bastion of liberal values worked counter to its goals when it came to understand Nazi crimes and the fact that the whole Nazi system was built on intolerance and inequality. In other words, by adhering to the ideas of tolerance and equality, the British could not grasp that Jewish suffering was different from the suffering of other victims of Germany. This, in turn, resulted in 'fundamental ambivalence' as to how the Nazi onslaught on Jews ought to be understood. Despite Kushner's thesis being widely accepted, it is not only confusing at times but puts perhaps unnecessary emphasis on British liberalism as opposed to British nationalism. As Pieter Lagrou has written, '[i]n a rather perplexing combination, both universalism and anti-Semitism, and assimilationism and exclusivism stand accused of "de-Judaization" [of the Holocaust]'.<sup>7</sup>

However, like the idea of liberal imagination, nationalism is not immune from interpretative problems. To begin with, it has frequently been noted that the whole concept of nationalism is ambiguous.<sup>8</sup> One of the basic problems of nationalism, as Umut Özkirimli has suggested,

is that it is too often equated with its extreme manifestations, and as a consequence less radical notions of 'popular social nationalism' are also stigmatised.<sup>9</sup> Thus, the term nationalism, which is frequently used in this book, will essentially mean popular mass nationalism, which manifested itself in simple discursive forms. For example, 'Britishness' often meant that a fair-minded morally righteous British character was contrasted to the innately barbaric German character. Swedish nationalism meant that victims of Nazism who came from the region were usually given much more emphasis in the Swedish press than other victims of the Nazis (regardless of race). Another problem with nationalism is that when the whole idea of nationalism is either considered as too ambiguous for scholarly investigation or taken for granted, as somehow existing invisibly behind more popular notions, such as race, ethnicity and gender, it does not constitute a problem worth investigating.<sup>10</sup> The tendency to downplay nationalism (especially its popular notions) is displayed in Barbie Zelizer's account of the gender aspect to early postwar Holocaust representations in the American and British press. According to her, gender was not 'an a priori representational category', but 'a post-phenomenon category of analysis'.<sup>11</sup> This tendency is problematic because it moves the analysis of Holocaust representation in the press outside its original historical context. However, it will be illustrated below that there is abundant empirical material to draw attention to the importance of 'a priori' representational categories for ultimately they will help us to further our understanding of why the emerging picture of Jewish genocide was overlooked. At this point, it is necessary to consider a concept of enemy images.

The creation of an enemy image is a sociopsychological process common in all human relations, eventually extended to the level of nation states.<sup>12</sup> Fundamentally, enemy images are dependent on the categories of 'us' and 'them', for they can only work if they are contrasted to civilised norms and standards as represented by 'us'. Unlike the enemy, 'we' are the defenders of law and order, of everything that is morally right and just. Furthermore, 'we' are not only defending ourselves but also the whole of civilisation. According to Harold Lasswell's *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, a pioneering study of how enemy images are filtered through propaganda, the enemy is portrayed as aggressive and militaristic by referring to historical examples; the enemy represents injustice and barbarism, moral decay and 'godlessness'. Yet, at the same time the enemy is weak and internally incoherent and irrational. Thus, the function of an enemy image is to deny the enemy's humanity – or conversely, to depict him as the devil incarnate.<sup>13</sup>

In the age of total war, it was vital for a nation like Britain to stand united against the enemy. The enemy image was based on the creators' own needs rather than on the real qualities of the enemy, although in the process enemy images also utilise historical examples and existing hostility between the warring nations. Therefore, there is a close link between popular nationalism and enemy images. As Tom Lawson has observed, the news from the liberated camps gave a new dimension to Vansittartism,<sup>14</sup> which was a straightforward expression of British popular social nationalism. Unlike liberalism and its promotion of tolerance, Vansittartism and popular mass nationalism can be characterised as intolerant, for they not only condemned Nazis but all Germans as Nazis. According to Lord Vansittart, Nazism was merely a continuation (in an extreme form) of Prussian militarism, which in turn was an expression of the typically hateful German national character. In the context of spring 1945, the revelations from the concentration camps exposed the in-built and traditional blackness of the German soul.<sup>15</sup>

Significantly, as will be shown below, the liberation discourse was depicted through 'enemy images', which rarely was a manifestation of anything else but popular mass nationalism. In addition, whatever was told about the chaos that surrounded the liberation, it had to be linked to conceptually familiar narratives.<sup>16</sup> The most readily available narratives were those that identified the Germans as the enemy. For example, a Mass-Observation diarist mused how 'a lethal chamber is the only few [sic] place for Germans under 25 years of age' and how it would not matter 'if some folk say that it is cruelty to skin alive a Nazi boy ... [b]ut that, I think would give me joy.'<sup>17</sup>

## **2.2 The context of the liberation of the camps in the British press**

According to current historical consensus, the early responses to the Holocaust in Britain were characterised by a euphemistic approach, exemplified by a haphazard and unsystematic rhetoric about the suffering of the Jews.<sup>18</sup> With regard to British and American newspapers, it has been lamented that the press had minimised and ignored the unique fate of the Jews, and even immediately after the war when correspondents were witnessing the implacable outcome of the Nazi racial policy, they could not grasp what they were seeing.<sup>19</sup> There are cases where Jewish suffering was deliberately minimised, but if we aim to understand the way in which the print media responded to the revelations from the camps, and the causes behind such responses, it is

not helpful to explain the phenomena away as deliberate ignorance.<sup>20</sup> Rather, by examining the wider context of liberation news we can hope to arrive at more rounded conclusions.

Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that the press had accounted for the fate of European Jewry since 1933, so people could actually relate the Jews to Nazi violence, even if Jews were not always explicitly mentioned or the centrality of Nazi extermination policy was not grasped. In 1945 there were people who linked the depictions from the liberated concentration camps to the continuing persecution (if not deliberate extermination) of the Jews. For example, a reader of *The Daily Telegraph* argued in late April 1945 that when the Nazis had started their campaign of violence in January 1933, the Jews were targeted from the early days onwards.<sup>21</sup> On the whole, disturbing and unexpectedly vile revelations from the camps meant that there were no conceptual frameworks radical enough to make sense out of what had happened. A response was conducted according to existing mental categories and concepts and thus, rightly or wrongly, the Holocaust was fed into the existing conceptual frameworks.<sup>22</sup> Thus, it is necessary to consider the responses to the tragedy through the existing concepts and historical contexts in which they were configured.

In terms of the context, all the examined British newspapers followed a similar pattern. The overriding theme, in the face of the atrocities, was utter disgust for what they witnessed. Every newspaper tried to bring this home in textual as well as in pictorial representation. The BBC followed the same logic too. The editorial in *The Daily Mirror* on 17 April, for example, analysed Edwin Murrow's radio broadcast from Buchenwald, noting that his detached, yet explicit, reporting made many listeners feel nauseous.<sup>23</sup> *The Daily Express* argued in its editorial that it was necessary for the British public to view the photographs in order to grasp the wickedness of the Germans – the wickedness against which the war had been waged.<sup>24</sup> It seems that the majority of newspaper readers felt the same way: '[t]he News Chronicle puts plenty [of atrocity material] into its pages and will I hope [sic] go on doing so'.<sup>25</sup> Yet, this overriding theme of disgust and necessity to bear witness was not a Holocaust story in the sense that we now understand the liberation of the camps. Rather, it served as a general illustration of the depravity to which the enemy had sunk. Conversely, the grim depictions, even on the surface, served to legitimise the moral righteousness of the Allied war effort, and it reinforced the view of Germans as the enemy.<sup>26</sup>

Another overriding theme in the press was a feeling of urgency to gather all the facts and to fully disclose the evidence of the atrocities.



According to an editorial in *The Daily Mirror*, 'our sacred duty is to learn the facts, if we have not already done so. *Those facts must go into peace-making. They must never be forgotten*'.<sup>27</sup> One reader of *The Times* reminded about the importance of impartial fact-collecting, for 'the Allies will for ever [sic] stand at the bar of history for their treatment of conquered Germany. To justify their actions in the eyes of posterity, no trouble can be too great to establish the facts beyond all shadow of a doubt.'<sup>28</sup>

If this contemporary argument, the naïve belief that during a few days' visit enough 'facts' could be amassed, now sounds ironic (especially from the perspective of Jewish experience), the reading public was, nevertheless, eager to know the real 'facts', if not to understand the specificities of such disclosures. So, how can the failure of the press to establish and convince the public of the extent of the tragedy and the special nature of Jewish suffering be explained?

The main reason, perhaps, was the priority given to the perpetrators, who were simply not 'perpetrators' but also public enemy number one. More detailed issues that flowed from the general disgust and the urgency of knowing the facts were the questions of German guilt, complacency and the extent to which ordinary Germans knew about the atrocities.<sup>29</sup>

In Britain, the tragedy of the Jews was not automatically swept aside in the public arena (although there were some who decidedly resisted the idea of particular Jewish suffering), but the interest in and focus on the enemy's crimes and German people was the dominant narrative, and also a natural one.<sup>30</sup> After all, Britain had been at war with Germany since 1939, and the 'full extent' of the crimes exposed in spring 1945 was all about Germany, the Hun, the enemy. Dovetailing these main topics which, significantly, had years of continuity and familiarity, was the much harder issue (and less important) to contextualise: who were the victims and why they were victimised? Indeed, Mass-Observation diaries testify to that trend: while there was a lot written about the atrocities and the Germans, there was very little written about the victims – not just Jews, but all victims.

Before turning to these topics in detail, it is worth observing two other aspects that shaped the responses to the liberation news. Peter Novick has argued that there was a general competition between different war news under which the liberation news was buried, such as the deaths of Roosevelt, Mussolini and Hitler.<sup>31</sup> Yet, even if 'traditional' war news dominated the quantity of material and thus made 'Holocaust news' shrink by comparison, 'Holocaust news' benefited from pictorial representation. The shocking images captured the readers' eyes in a totally different way from other news. Therefore, notwithstanding the limited

quantity of liberation news vis-à-vis traditional war news, it had a considerable impact in spring 1945. Many readers of newspapers considered it a public duty to look at the photographs and to remember. Similarly, many were grateful to newspapers for printing such unpleasant material. In the letters to the editor section, a reader of *The Times* thanked the paper for publishing the grim atrocity images, as it helped people in Britain really comprehend the wickedness of the Nazi camps.<sup>32</sup> Nowhere was it thought necessary to print photographs of destroyed bridges across the Elbe or Rhein.

Second, part of the reason why the liberation of the camps did not connect with the Jewish dimension was not a result of Holocaust news being buried under the mass of other (war) news. It was primarily because of the complex and multiple meanings within the liberation discourse itself that hindered the understanding of the tragedy. Apart from the obsession with the Germans, the press frequently argued how new revelations from different camps and sub-camps proved to be more shocking than previous revelations. In a relatively short period of time the names of Buchenwald, Belsen, Dachau, Nordhausen, Ohrdruf and others competed for the title of the 'worst camp'. Typically, Buchenwald and Belsen were portrayed as such. For example, according to *The Daily Mirror*, Belsen was the worst reflection of Nazism in Germany.<sup>33</sup> A few days later, the same paper wrote in its editorial how Buchenwald illustrated the darkest depth to which humans could sink.<sup>34</sup> When Dachau was liberated on 29 April 1945, it also entered 'the competition'. Since Dachau was the first of all Nazi concentration camps, established in 1933, it was immediately seen as being the most notorious. *The Daily Telegraph* argued that horrors in Dachau were worse than those of Buchenwald and Belsen, and that the Nazis locked up their most dangerous political opponents there, thus revealing, again, the contemporary understanding of the nature of the Nazi regime in political, not racial, terms.<sup>35</sup>

In addition, the press was unable to construct more coherent narratives of the camp system as a whole since through nationalistic depictions it only paid attention to British and American aspects of the liberation process. Hence, it was not surprising that the link and distinction between the newly liberated camps in the West and the extermination camps in the East also remained blurred. With hindsight, *The Daily Express's* columnist's argument on the editorial page that the stories about Nazi foulness only scratched the surface of their inhumanity proved accurate – especially when we think about the extermination camps in the East and the Holocaust as a Jewish catastrophe.<sup>36</sup>

### 2.3 The questions of German guilt and the knowledge of the camps

In order to understand fully the historical context that contributed to conceptualising Nazi crimes it is essential to examine how the media depicted the tragedy for it tells much about the cultural environment and everyday life of the period.

As the press in Britain tried to come to terms with what photographs, news stories and some survivor interviews meant, the inevitable question to ask was: who were guilty? From early on, the press debated the extent to which all Germans were to be held responsible and, initially, the Vansittartist argument that the whole nation was guilty won the day.<sup>37</sup> For example, newspapers published articles about Germans having forced tours in concentration camps. This was for the reason that there would be no opportunity for German civilians to exculpate themselves from what had happened.<sup>38</sup> *The Daily Express* wondered whether the world could ever consider Germans as part of humanity after what had happened.<sup>39</sup> A Mass-Observation diarist thought it 'ridiculous for the German civilians to say that they didn't know what was going on'.<sup>40</sup> *The Daily Mirror's* leader writer, pen-name BBB (Bernard Buckham), manifested the strength of enemy image:

There are still too many people who fail to appreciate what has been going on all these years; people who find the truth 'difficult to believe'. Perhaps they are less sceptical now ... when the stupid soft-hearts attempt to draw a distinction between the Nazi warmakers and torturers and the German people as a whole, we must remember that the hundreds of thousands, nay millions of fanatics and sadists who have committed or ordered these crimes are all Teutons. Germany bred them. *A race which can produce so much foulness itself must be foul.*<sup>41</sup>

*The Daily Telegraph's* special correspondent, Christopher Buckley, reporting from Belsen, shared Buckham's view, with a more sophisticated tone:

You may decide that the German people, collectively, are guilty of nothing more than ignorance and negligence. ... But you are still faced by the fact that the German people, collectively, produced the men and women in requisite numbers to maintain this system. ... Belsen is the nearest thing I know to a spectacle of absolute evil ... Russians, Poles and Jews were preponderant sufferers.<sup>42</sup>

While the British press and public alike tended to reject the view that the Germans did not know about the camps or could not do anything about them, there was a sizeable minority who defended ordinary Germans, and distinguished them from the Nazis. A reader of *The Times* argued that the newspaper hype about the camps had neglected the fact that the majority of camp inmates were actually Germans, which also explained why the majority of ordinary people did not oppose the system.<sup>43</sup> *The Daily Express* cited the Bishop of Derby, who had argued that not all Germans were Nazis. According to the Bishop, indicting the whole nation would amount to unnecessary discrimination.<sup>44</sup>

There was also another side to the discourse of German guilt and the knowledge of the camps, namely that the total depravity of Nazi power served to illuminate the moral right and strength of the Allied war effort, as, for example, *The Daily Express* demonstrated.<sup>45</sup> On 19 April, the headline of the paper, with two photos (Germans carrying dead bodies and Germans digging graves), made it clear by stating that the pictures showed the awfulness the British had been fighting against.<sup>46</sup> Thus, the whole discussion of the 'German' was conducted in the atmosphere of British superiority – intensified by the hour of long-awaited victory.<sup>47</sup> Anthony D. Smith's argument that 'appearances to the contrary, the holocausts of the world wars did nothing to abate the power and ubiquity of popular social nationalism. ... On the contrary, if anything, they received a new impetus and power from the involvement of civilians in total warfare' is compellingly fitting in the context of British responses to the liberation of the camps.<sup>48</sup>

It must be added, however, that there were also some dissident voices who reminded others that Britain had done nothing to help the victims of Nazism during the years of Hitler's reign – despite what was going on in concentration camps being well known. A Member of Parliament (independent) and the chairman of the Hansard Society, Stephen King-Hall wrote to *The Times* that

many, I hope, will realize [sic] that in 1937 and before, the facts about concentration camps at places like Dachau, where German Jews, Socialist and Communists were being tortured to death were published in Britain. I need not underline the moral beyond observing that those of us who argued that 'it did matter to us', what was happening in Germany have had fearful evidence of the truth of this assertion. It is well that my colleagues should go to the camps, *but the verdict of history will be that democracy sent its representatives seven years too late.*<sup>49</sup>

Still bitter about the wrong kind of Englishness, which was attributable to the idea of appeasement, *The Daily Mirror* wrote under a telling headline 'Atrocities – are these men guilty?' that

Nazi atrocities were being carried out between 1933 and 1939 as much as they were between 1939 and 1945, and British statesmen knew it. ... Are we to say that Lord Halifax is morally responsible? He knew and knowing, he dined and wined with Nazi leaders ... all those six years we maintained them in power and lent them our moral authority.<sup>50</sup>

Of course, we now know that insofar as the Nazi extermination plans were concerned, the years from 1933 to 1939 were totally different from the war years. Retrospectively, *The Daily Mirror* column reveals three important issues. First, the article has as much domestic bearing as foreign, for the revelations from the camps were depicted as an extension of the British debate about appeasement. To this end, the camps were the final and perhaps the most grotesque proof of the futility of that policy. Second, the nature of and differences between the Nazi concentration and extermination camps were not understood in 1945. For example, there was rarely any news about extermination camps. Part of that parcel was the way in which the particular suffering of the Jews was misconceived. Third, even a left-wing paper such as *The Daily Mirror* did not go as far as to suggest that a lot more help could have been offered to the victims during the war years; once the war was prosecuted, it was seen that Britain was doing its share to bring to an end the abhorrent Nazi rule and all foulness it included (salvation through victory).

## 2.4 The victims of Nazism in the British press discourse

Over Sixty years after the tragedy we have a desire to believe that the response to the revelations from the camps was universal empathy for the victims, the dominant way in which the liberation of the camps is now remembered. However, beyond the initial shock and the short-lived wave of empathy, it is perhaps striking that it was not the case as discussed above.

One of the most comprehensive reports about the western concentration camps was the report of ten Members of Parliament on 27 April.<sup>51</sup> The following day it was reprinted either in full or in part in the national press. Some papers featured special articles by members of the delegation.<sup>52</sup> The report disclosed some aspects of contemporary thinking when the narrative about the inmates in the camp was

constructed according to their nationalities. Despite the fact that there were some explicit comments about Jews, the majority of victim discourse accounted for various nationalities of victims, which, in turn, was the most explicit manifestation of the simple nationalist frame of thinking of the time.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, there was not much to suggest that the Jews would have been treated any differently from any other group of victims.<sup>54</sup> Another significant point that must be remembered is the fact that while the delegation met many Jews and non-Jews from all over Europe, communication between them was conducted in English rather than in the mother tongues of the victims. It is possible that this issue also contributed to the way in which the report framed the Jewish experience. In any case, the way in which the Swedish press (which more commonly interviewed the victims in their mother tongue) talked about the Jews was very different, as we will see in the next chapter.

*The Daily Mirror's* disturbing photo on page 5 of a collapsed and charred body, whose head was resting on a pile of bricks, depicted a typical victim of Nazism, who, as the caption made clear, might have been from anywhere in Europe.<sup>55</sup> No further elucidation (for example, saying that a victim may have been a boy or girl, a young man or woman, an old man, tall, small, a student or a farmer, a Jew, a communist or mentally ill) was offered. Similarly, on page 5, *The Daily Telegraph* listed seven different nationalities among the victims in Belsen, including four Britons.<sup>56</sup> Thus, the most simplistic notions of nationalities usually determined the way in which the press responded to the shocking news. As Laurel Leff has pointedly observed, the news coverage was almost totally devoid of individual Jewish (or other) survivors and their stories.<sup>57</sup> As we will see later, the Swedish press took an entirely different tack, with entirely different results.

Another important feature in the victim discourse was that victims were identified as political and criminal prisoners, not racial. This was hardly surprising as it offered most continuity. Since 1933, the British press had published news about concentration camps, and their political inmates. Before liberation stories broke out in the British press, there was some speculation about the camps. Diseases raging in the camps were noted. Reports also framed the victims as political and criminal prisoners.<sup>58</sup>

The narrative of political prisoners survived the act of liberation. For example, the first liberation report in *The Times*, appearing on page 3, told how between 60,000 and 75,000 enemies of Nazi Germany had died in Buchenwald. Typically, they died because of cruelty and stark circumstances.<sup>59</sup> This kind of rhetoric made the camp system sound rather arbitrary while missing out the systematic nature with which

some groups, like the Jews, were targeted. On 20 April the editorial in *The Times* discussed these victims, portraying them in terms of political prisoners incarcerated in a political concentration camp.<sup>60</sup>

Yet, the continuity of the discourse on political victims cannot fully explain why the press missed the Jewish aspect of the story. Another important factor was a simple fact that in order to grasp with the scale of the catastrophe, the reporters needed a modicum of rationale in a situation that went beyond comprehension. 'No time to think. No time to interpret. ... Record it now – think about it later' was how the American photographer Margaret Bourke-White later described the moment.<sup>61</sup> As there was little time to consider the whole situation, the stories were anchored to familiar and conceptually acceptable narratives. The easiest one to comprehend was that the victims must have been opponents of Hitlerism, such as the French, Poles or Russians were.<sup>62</sup> The fate of the Jews was collapsed to this crude nationalistic frame of reference too; it would have been too irrational, in an already vastly irrational situation, if the Jews would have been seen as victims simply because they were Jews.<sup>63</sup>

In very few cases were extermination camps in the East mentioned. Although they did not feature extensively, it is worth examining the content of such news for it illustrates further the incoherent nature of liberation news. Typically, the news mentioning any of the eastern camps sounded untrustworthy. For example, a page 5 story in *The Daily Mirror* cited Radio Luxembourg as reporting that a freed German woman had told a story about a camp that was worse than Belsen, where women and children were burned alive. 'The woman had been transferred from the camp Osiwecim [sic] (Auschwitz) [sic] in Poland to Belsen ... in Ausschwitz [sic] living healthy people were burned alive.'<sup>64</sup> Apart from the tone of hearsay, the lack of any real knowledge with regard to Auschwitz is obvious just by looking at how in one article Auschwitz is misspelled twice and Oświęcim once. Similarly, Auschwitz, it was told, was a place for 'living healthy people'. *The Daily Mirror's* correspondent in Moscow, Marion Sinclair, related a story about a concentration camp that was equally revolting as the shock of Majdanek (in late July 1944, Majdanek became the first major concentration camp to be liberated). Sinclair's camp near Lodz in Poland was only for children.<sup>65</sup> In another story *The Daily Mirror*, citing the Moscow radio, related that the Germans had killed seven million people in Treblinka in three years.<sup>66</sup> In all three cases, the news from the horror camps in the East came through seemingly unreliable sources, based on Soviet disclosures. In addition, the news had a blatant tone of disbelief. In any case, the Jews were not mentioned since the Soviet rhetoric (in tones

of Russian nationalism) concentrated on the undifferentiated victims of Fascism. *The Daily Telegraph* news article about Heinrich Himmler shared these features when it told that, according to *Pravda*, Himmler had organised the mass extermination camp of Auschwitz where over four million people had been slaughtered.<sup>67</sup> No mention of the Jews was provided in the piece.

## 2.5 The British press and the suffering of the Jews

Finally, it must be asked 'what about the Jews'? Despite the fact that we have seen some reference to the Jews in newspaper reporting, the systematic nature of the Jewish tragedy, the uniqueness of the extent to which it was particularly Jews who had suffered, was virtually absent in the British press discourse.<sup>68</sup> Also, as has been mentioned above, Mass-Observation diarists did not write about the Nazi victims, let alone Jews. However, as far as the specific background of the victims, reaching beyond nationalistic depictions, was discussed the focus was frequently on Jews, even if their suffering was not accentuated as such. It is worth noting that the newspapers examined here made no mentions of other racial victims of the genocide, such as the Romanies, or other 'racially inferior groups' or the mentally ill. Thus, it is even questionable to what extent, from the perspective of the 1940s, one ought to try to explain the dearth of reference to Jews in racial terms at all. Again, we find that the vast majority of the victim discourse was conducted along the lines of victims' nationalities, and the Jewish aspect of suffering sometimes co-existed within this type of discussion. In some rare occasions, as Robert Donington's letter to *The Times* indicates, there were people who also had some level of understanding of Hitler's exterminationist *Weltanschauung*: 'to despise and destroy an individual human being irrespective of his own merit or demerit, a Jew because he is a Jew, or a Pole because he is a Pole, is something as basic to the Nazi principle as it is abhorrent to ourselves'.<sup>69</sup> Notwithstanding the acknowledgment that the Jews were destroyed because they were Jews, the piece also contained, unsurprisingly, a nationalistic distinction between 'the Nazis' and 'ourselves'. Likewise, the same paper told a story of 900 children found in Buchenwald who were mostly Polish Jews – and orphans.<sup>70</sup> However, at no point did the paper consider where, how and when the parents of these orphaned Polish Jews might have been killed.

*The Daily Telegraph's* special correspondent in Buchenwald, H. D. Ziman, published an interview with Baldur von Schirach, the leader of the Hitler Youth from the early 1930s to 1940 and later the Gauleiter



of Vienna (who was convicted for crimes against humanity at the Nuremberg Trial and sent to prison for 20 years). According to von Schirach, Jews made a lot of money after the First World War, but he did not wish them to be exterminated. Neither did he remember, the interviewer tells sarcastically, Hitler's comment that should another war break out in Europe, all Jews would be destroyed. Finally, von Schirach could not believe that Hitler would have given orders to wipe out the Jews.<sup>71</sup>

Despite his interview, the interviewer did not expand the topic any further. There was no explicit talk of Jewish suffering in Belsen, Buchenwald, or any other camps, such as Majdanek or Auschwitz. Moreover, von Schirach's comments about Hitler's lack of orders with regard to the Final Solution could also be interpreted as meaning there was no such policy at all – or that it was grossly exaggerated.

Only on few occasions was the fate of the Jews considered explicitly. Heinrich Himmler's suicide and obituaries that followed provided such a pretext. *The Daily Telegraph's* obituary on page 3 mentioned that the Jews were specially targeted by Himmler and told how the SS, the troops that carried out his dirty work, were essentially selected for their anti-Semitism.<sup>72</sup> However, there was no mention of extermination camps, and the genocidal nature of Himmler's policies was not elucidated any further. On the whole, then, apart from rather random news about the Jewish victims it is difficult to avoid the conclusion of Chief Rabbi J. H. Hertz, published on page 5 in *The Times* in late May 1945:

His grace the Archbishop of Canterbury in his stirring letter to his diocese, as well as the writer of the obituary notice on Himmler, both in *The Times* of to-day, refer to the horrors of the concentration camps. But there are Nazi horrors far vaster and more unspeakably foul, and these have not been effectively brought home to the larger British public. It is therefore not generally known that the Nazis have exterminated 5,000,000 Jews – and millions of non-Jews in monster crematory and asphyxiation halls, by machine-gunning, clubbing to death, and mass drownings. On one single day, November 3, 1943, at Maidanek [sic], the central human slaughter-house in Poland, 18,000 Jews were done to death, accompanied by the music of bands playing tango-marches in mockery of the agony of the victims.

All this is unknown to the overwhelming majority of the men and women in Great Britain. Such ignorance does not, among other things, help towards a realization of the difficult task of re-educating the German people that now confronts the allied nations.<sup>73</sup>

## 2.6 Conclusion

It has been argued here that enemy images and nationalistic rhetoric rather than an assortment of liberal universal values often influenced the discussion on the Final Solution – at least in public. The reason why the victims, particularly the Jews, hardly featured in the press's stories was overwhelmingly related to a popular nationalistic response to the liberation news. Since the British public was receptive of dominant, black and white, portrayals of 'us versus them', it was not surprising that the focus was on the perpetrator – or on a nation of perpetrators – rather than those who had suffered. Further, following the military logic meant that those who had suffered were primarily thought of as having been either political or military opponents of Hitlerism.

There were few liberal themes, concentrating on universal liberal values, that can be found on the pages of the British press. Instead, as has been shown above, there are many instances that are easier to link to the nationalistic discourse. Yet this is not to say that the liberal imagination and nationalistic thinking were mutually exclusive.<sup>74</sup> Naturally, in the 'us' versus 'them' constellation, 'us' was conceived as 'liberal' since 'them' was considered as 'illiberal' or totalitarian. However, as this chapter has tried to demonstrate, the press forged its first historical encounter with the Holocaust from a very nationalistic premise, in which the liberal imagination was hardly visible. Indeed, it can be said to be imagined for it was a construction, created because by doing so all the fury that the liberation news aroused was easy to cast on to the German national psyche.

Further, beyond the initial sense of horror and the realisation that the camps were much worse than had been imagined, it is not useful to talk of a universal response to the liberation news, but national ones, since all nations (as will be discussed further below) domesticated the news according to their own needs. Again, in this process it was the ideas of nationalistic thinking that paved 'Holocaust discourses' in 1945. The strength of ubiquitous nationalism as the first frame of reference in forging Holocaust representations in 1945 will become even clearer when British responses are examined vis-à-vis Swedish, and finally Finnish ones.

# 3

## The Swedish Press and the Liberation of the Camps

### 3.1 Introduction

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and Germany's declaration of war on the USA, American correspondents remaining in German-controlled Europe were either forced to leave or incarcerated.<sup>1</sup> For the world's liberal press this turn of events meant that Sweden and Switzerland became 'listening posts for news from Germany and its satellites'.<sup>2</sup> For the Swedish press this meant that it was in a unique position because it could still cover Axis Europe from inside, making Swedish journalists among the very few sources of news from German-occupied areas that were independent from German propaganda.<sup>3</sup>

Officially, the Swedish government had imposed newspaper censorship but in practice the censorship (or the more frequently invoked variant, self-censorship) was not harshly enforced, and consequently did not affect the news with regard to the Holocaust.<sup>4</sup> However, since the 1990s there has been a growing tendency in Sweden to condemn the way in which the wartime government conducted its relations with Nazi Germany.<sup>5</sup> Part of the wider revisionism has been a reassessment of the role of the Swedish press in forming an opinion about and knowledge of the Final Solution. According to Maria-Pia Boëthius, the Swedish press deliberately suppressed information about the Holocaust, so as not to upset Sweden's strategic economic alliance with Nazi Germany.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, the current dominant view holds that the Swedish press kept – under the circumstances – its readers well informed about the plight of the Jews.<sup>7</sup> For example, as Paul Levine has observed, the information about the Final Solution 'was readily available to readers of Sweden's relatively uncensored daily newspapers'.<sup>8</sup> According

to Ingvar Svanberg and Mattias Tydén, 'the coverage of the actual holocaust policy seems to have had a more prominent place in Sweden than in, for example, the American press'.<sup>9</sup> As this book will show, the dominant view can also be extended to postwar discussion about the fate of the Jews.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine how the Swedish press represented the liberation of the camps, and how Jewish suffering featured in the news. A question that will be posed here is the one that questions some tenets of the liberal imagination: how can it be said that the liberal imagination, with its universalist and assimilationist tendencies, obscured the recognition of the particular Jewish tragedy, when in Sweden, a nation that readily fits into the explanatory frame of liberal imagination, as Paul Levine has argued, Jewish suffering was not marginalised nor universalised? As this chapter will show, we must go beyond the liberal imagination and consider the themes of nationalistic thinking in the Swedish context and the nation's relationship to Germany, in comparison to Britain's relationship with Germany.

### **3.2 The liberation of the camps and initial reactions in the Swedish press**

The first week following the liberation of Buchenwald and Bergen-Belsen, when the atrocity news and photographs began to appear among the main news in Britain, the Swedish press did not place heavy emphasis on the subject. Instead, newspaper articles about the concentration camps frequently referred to the British press and Reuters reports and their opinions, leaving aside Swedish views.<sup>10</sup> Left-liberal *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning* (hereafter *GHT*) is a case in point: the paper first noted the importance of photographic evidence in the face of the disclosures, followed by reporting of British reactions to the liberation news, without expressing its own opinion: '[p]hotos from the prisoner camps are a frightful shock for the British ... *The Daily Express* has already ... organised an exhibition for adults and encourages everyone to visit it.'<sup>11</sup> Yet, it took a week before the paper itself published any photographic material from the camps. The articles that the Swedish press carried were not, as yet, mainstream news, but could be found among other relatively short news items on the inside pages. *Svenska Dagbladet's* comment in late April is another good illustration of the Swedish press's initial attitude when it noted how it had been difficult

to believe in the significance of the horror descriptions, which time after time had 'trickled out' from the camps:

Now comes in, however, report after report from well-known British and American war correspondents ... which ... in moderate yet unmistakably upsetting tones describe what they saw and heard in these places ... the British mood against the German people can hardly be called conciliatory.<sup>12</sup>

One of the first news about the liberation of Buchenwald in the leading Swedish paper *Dagens Nyheter* focused on how the British press had publicised the first photos about the victims of Nazi terror. Daniel Viklund's report on the back page told how '[British] newspapers published this terrible proof [of Nazi brutality] with clear information that ... photographic material contains a lot which cannot be shown in print'.<sup>13</sup> Yet, what the photos actually depicted remained a mystery for the readers of the paper. Soon after, the same paper wrote that 'even those [in Britain] who rather divert their eyes from seeing are made to see'. According to the article, the photographs taken at the scenes of the crimes 'speak a language which everyone must understand', yet it also argued that it was unpleasant and unsuitable for the Swedish press to expose this disgusting photographic material as evidence of Nazi cruelty. Neither, in the paper's opinion, was 'the idea to stir up [anti-German] fervour by repeating the same things from camp to camp' favoured.<sup>14</sup>

The newly established afternoon (tabloid in an English context) paper *Expressen* had a different policy, placing more importance on photographic evidence. Consequently, the paper displayed photos from the camps much more prominently than other Swedish papers examined here. In general, *Expressen* was established in 1944 in order to offer a more popular critical platform of the coalition government's policies. Particularly, the paper was established to challenge *Dagens Nyheter*, which according to many had become an uncritical supporter of the coalition government's policy.<sup>15</sup> Judged with hindsight, with regard to publishing atrocity photos from the camps, *Expressen's* record is illuminating, for people's attitudes towards its photo displays certainly conveyed the discomfort and ambivalent attitudes of the Swedish public towards the revelations. However, it must be pointed out that attitudes of the public as revealed by the paper were based on a small number of interviews so only very tentative suggestions can be made. Additionally, the context in which the photos were shown, and whose voices were allowed to be heard, is equally important, as we will see below.

On 26 April, when the first Swedish reports from the camps began to fill the front pages of Swedish newspapers, *Expressen* published a set of six photos on its centrefold. One of the photos exhibited a long row of dead bodies in a mass grave.<sup>16</sup> Some days later the paper published a mini poll survey among well-known people called 'how do you react to this image?' The photograph displayed a mass grave in Belsen, where emaciated bodies were scattered around. Sven Hedin (a well-known geographer/explorer, Nazi supporter and admirer of Hitler) commented that *Expressen* was 'a dreadful paper' and refused to view the photos. But he added: 'One should be very sceptical about these photos ... one does not know what's true and what's trick.' Hjalmar Falk, a Major General in the army, adopted the same line as Hedin. Another military person, Admiral H. V. Simonson, commented that 'my position is such that it is hard to comment on [these photos]'. However, there were other opinions too: politician (liberal) Kerstin Hesselgren thought that 'one searches for words to express what one feels ... it is so much worse than one had expected'. Margit Levinson, the chairwoman of Swedish Save the Children, told how 'the photos speak their own ghastly language. Those who have seen them once will find it hard to forget them.' Finally, the photo was shown to representatives of the general public. One man commented: 'It's simply devilish ... and those who have done all this once called themselves cultured.' A comment from a waitress tells us of the disturbing effect the photo had: 'Why do you need to show the photo here on Sunday morning? Now the whole day is ruined. How can people do something like this here – and for the rest [of them] they cannot be human beings!'<sup>17</sup>

The quick survey thus revealed very ambivalent attitudes towards the photo(s). Even though a surprisingly high proportion of those asked were sceptical, or indeed hostile, towards the photos, it is also worth bearing in mind that *Expressen's* own anti-Nazi stance probably contributed to the selection of these comments. In a sense, giving a voice to the sceptics ridiculed them – for at the time when the photos were shown, the Swedish newspapers had dropped their initial detachment towards the topic and were totally suffused with talk of German atrocities.

Be that as it may, the *Expressen* survey nevertheless indicates that there were those who were not prepared to accept the record of German atrocities outright. Similarly, in some cases the Swedish press showed not only ambivalence towards the liberation news but utter scepticism – especially concerning the extent to which the German people showed acquiescence in the crime. A case in point is Christer Jäderlund, the Berlin correspondent for the conservative and pro-German *Stockholms-Tidningen*. In the final weeks of the war, he wrote a number of articles from

Germany, one of which dealt with the camps. The front-page article was defensively titled 'The truth about Germany – German people against Jewish pogroms, but couldn't do anything'. In Jäderlund's opinion (on page 12), 'Germany was also, according to our standards, an occupied nation, so that in concentration camps there were considerably more Germans than Jews!' He then firmly asserted that the German people had no knowledge of the persecution of the Jews, followed by a discussion on Nazi anti-Semitism. Strikingly, it was dealt with in the context of traditional East European anti-Semitism: '[German] anti-Semitism in its variant, its appearance in national socialism ... was imported from the east.' Although, according to the paper, anti-Semitism was particularly a problem in Eastern Europe, it could '*even* be found in Germany' (emphasis added). The journalist then went on to claim that the German anti-Semitism had to be seen in a continuum of traditional (non-genocidal) anti-Semitism: 'the steps before pure [German] pogroms are long', thereby implying that the German treatment of the Jews was nothing but another pogrom. But how, if Hitler's 'pogrom' never had the acceptance of the German people, could it have happened? Essentially, the real German people were held hostage by Hitler's clique, while at the same time Hitler's clique 'played the people', so that it looked like the anti-Jewish policy had the support of the masses.<sup>18</sup> Jäderlund himself had German ancestry from his mother's side and, as Göran Leth has mentioned, a favoured position among foreign correspondents stationed in Germany. In addition, in 1941 he was one of the contributors to a pamphlet, *The Struggling Germany* (*Det kämpande Tyskland*), which tried to establish the case for why Nazi Germany should win the war. Sven Hedin had written the introduction.<sup>19</sup> Sharing Jäderlund's fundamental attitude, an editorial in *Stockholms-Tidningen* contended that the overly harsh reaction of other papers, just like the British press, to the ghastly liberation news was fuelled by 'Vansittartism ... against which', the paper misleadingly argued, 'Englishmen themselves are reacting.'<sup>20</sup>

The article did not go unchallenged, showing the wide spread of opinions regarding what was and had been happening in Germany. *Expressen* reacted strongly against *Stockholms-Tidningen* and disputed Jäderlund's article, arguing that exactly the opposite of 'Jäderlund's truth' was the case. It told how 'good Germans' never protested, how anti-Semitism was virulent among Germans, including children, and how ordinary Germans too were members of the Nazi party.<sup>21</sup> Thus, in *Expressen's* opinion the German people were not held hostage by Hitler's clique and they fully shared centre stage with the Nazis.

On the whole, however, the initial reactions of the Swedish press to the news from the camps were characterised by an impartial tone, a certain aloofness from the real situation and ambivalence as to what was going on. The liberation discourse often focused on the opinions and attitudes of the British press, rather than what had actually transpired. But such an attitude changed quickly, bringing far more consensus to the attitudes of the mainstream press, which can be characterised as the Swedish press's opinion.

Before moving on to examine the specifically Swedish response to the liberation of the camps, it must be observed that there was also another reason, besides relying on British and American reports, why there seemed to be little initial discussion about the camps in the Swedish media. This was that, since early 1945, the Swedish government, together with the Swedish Red Cross and the World Jewish Congress (WJC), had been negotiating with Heinrich Himmler in order to release Scandinavian internees from the German concentration camps. According to Steven Koblik, the success of these negotiations, as well as the whole mission, depended largely on the silence of the Swedish press. As he has remarked, news of the arrival of the rescued victims was nearly totally blacked out in the Swedish media until late April.<sup>22</sup> At the same time as newspapers in Britain and in the USA started publishing atrocity stories, the Swedish rescue mission, 'the White Busses', was still in action in Germany – behind Hitler's back.<sup>23</sup> However, once the story was allowed to break out, there was plenty of material *inside* Sweden for the press to work with. Around the same time, in late April, Swedish reporters were also visiting a number of liberated camps. The fact that journalists in great numbers came in direct contact with the survivors (both in the camps and in Sweden) played an important part in the way in which the representation of the Holocaust was framed in the Swedish press.<sup>24</sup> It is also worth observing that, contrary to currently held belief, many of the survivors wanted to talk about their experiences in order to share their trauma.<sup>25</sup>

### **3.3 The Swedish response: Hearing is believing**

When Swedish journalists came directly into contact with the former inmates in Buchenwald and Belsen, the mediated and often impersonal tone that had characterised the press's initial reporting of the liberation news changed swiftly. Swedish correspondents felt, like their British counterparts, that their duty was to tell Sweden the whole truth about the camps. Crucially, the Swedish press's chosen strategy of framing the



liberation news was vastly different from that of the British: where the reports in the British press concentrated principally on the inhumanity of their enemy, the Swedes, in contrast, paid most attention to the victims of Nazism, especially their neighbours, the Norwegians and Danes. Additionally, photographic evidence was not seen as the main component of establishing an authentic record. Instead, survivor interviews occupied the prime place in the Swedish reporting, therefore placing the survivor experience at the heart of a wide range of issues that the liberation of the camps had raised. As a consequence, there was also significantly more discussion about the particular suffering of the Jews in Sweden than in Britain. What is more, as we will see, the commentary on the Jews often focused on Auschwitz and the systematic extermination of the Jews – not only what had happened in Belsen and Buchenwald.

On 25 April, *Dagens Nyheter* gave its own first-hand account from the camps. Unlike the earlier descriptions, the article featured in a prominent place in the paper – beginning on the front page. The Swedish strategy of belief, which focused on narrating the fate of their fellow Scandinavians, offered a level meaning, substance and depth to the reports. Anyway, the *Dagens Nyheter* policy was not to resort to sensationalist displays of photographic evidence from the camps as has been noted above. Instead, the paper reported that

5 Norwegians – probably the only survivors of the approximately 1,000 deported Norwegian Jews – found their way here [Buchenwald] in January from the now disbanded ‘death camp’ in Oswiecim. ... Nothing that British and American correspondents have written [over the last week] has been exaggerated. ... The 5 Norwegians here are students Samuel Steinmann from Oslo, and Assar Hirsch from Trondheim, clerks Asriel Hirsch and Julius Paltiel, both from Trondheim, and doctor Leo Eitinger from Molde.<sup>26</sup>

Thus, while confirming the Allied depictions as truthful, the press in Sweden did not automatically subscribe to the British framing of the genocide in which the emaciated bodies only served to highlight typical character traits of the Germans. In contrast, the *Dagens Nyheter* article chose to focus on the victims’ personalities and on restoring their humanity, instead of portraying them as walking skeletons. It is clear, then, that this narrative was in direct contrast to the Anglo-American paradigm of reporting epitomised by Deborah Lipstadt’s comment that journalists’ ‘failure to comprehend the Jewish aspect of this entire tragedy was reflected in their description of the victims and

explanations of why they were in the camps'.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, the fact that the victims had names and homes in Norway – in places that many Swedes had no doubt visited – certainly increased the text's emotional meaning. The *Dagens Nyheter* article also further embellished the extent to which the Norwegians had suffered under Nazi rule by reminding the readers that these survivors, among nearly a thousand other Norwegian Jewish prisoners (who had not survived), were deported from Norway to Germany in December 1942, therefore implying, if not totally explaining, why they were in the camps: because they had the misfortune of being Jews in a German-occupied country.

The Swedish press's framing of the liberation of the camps, it can be observed, meant that not all Nazi malevolence was presented as transcendent and universal evil, as Barbie Zelizer has argued in relation to the pictorial record of the liberation.<sup>28</sup> Instead, in the Swedish press Nazi evil was firmly placed into a regional context, meaning that the objects of Nazi atrocity were fellow humans, with names, home towns and professions. In this sense, Nazi evil was not universal at all. Alf W. Johansson has made a similar point, although in a much more general context than the liberation of the camps: 'The Swedish engagement [with the Holocaust] had ... a regional character. It is the events in Norway which provoked the strongest reactions. The fate of the Polish Jews could not induce similar engagement.'<sup>29</sup>

The other main Swedish papers followed up the same story. Even *Stockholms-Tidningen* took a strong view on the issue after its correspondent, Hugo Björk, had visited Buchenwald and interviewed the Norwegians. His front-page report stated that the 'Concentration camp was a hellish nightmare'. The article also mentioned how only five out of 1,000 Norwegian deportees had survived.<sup>30</sup> The following day the same paper continued the story, whose focus was on the fact that all five Norwegian Jews had relatives in Sweden, reminding the readers that Sweden had offered a sanctuary for the persecuted. However, what the survivors had experienced in Auschwitz was not reported.<sup>31</sup> The confusing agenda of *Stockholms-Tidningen* can be related to the political attitudes of the paper. Domestically, the paper followed a liberal line, while its opinion on international affairs was heavily influenced by a pro-German attitude. Previously, the two separate stances were tolerable, not least because Germany was often seen as a civilised and highly developed nation, but since the depictions from the concentration camps were hardly in line with the notion of 'civilised nation', the paper had to modify its rhetoric. This shift happened after the paper's correspondent had personally visited Buchenwald and after the

reports from southern Sweden where more than 15,000 survivors had landed featured prominently in the press. The coverage from southern Sweden also meant that the focus of Holocaust reporting moved from the international sphere to the domestic one, where the paper adhered to a more liberal perspective. On the whole, the paradoxical situation of *Stockholms-Tidningen* shows the importance of personal contacts with the camps and survivors as shaping the way in which papers chose to portray the tragedy.

In disclosing the liberation news the mainstream Swedish press showed how it was sensitive to Jewish suffering. We have already noted the Jäderlund affair. In early May another heated debate about the sufferings of the Jews flared up. *Dagposten*, a Swedish organ for Nazi propaganda, wrote that too much fuss had been made of Count Bernadotte's expedition, as well as the liberation of the camps, given the fact that the only thing that was wrong with the camps was that they were overcrowded.<sup>32</sup> *Dagens Nyheter* replied to these negationist arguments in its editorial the following day, writing that '*Reports from Buchenwald tell that only five Jews have been recovered from the large contingent that was transported from Norway. The others have been killed in different concentration camps, that [fact] has been established.*' Writing on the fate of Norwegian Jews, the article carried on to note that

The Red Cross expedition did not succeed in encountering Norwegian Jews. ... The Norwegian intelligence service has not obtained any illumination about their destiny during the last year. When the last sign of life of them was received they were in Katowice. Apart from the five named surviving Jews in Buchenwald, two more stateless Jews who lived in Norway have been found. Put together, seven out of 784, barely one per cent!<sup>33</sup>

Since less than one per cent of that contingent of the deported Norwegian Jews had been found, it was hardly necessary for the Swedish press to make 'propaganda' on behalf of the Jews, as *Dagposten* maintained. The reality of the Nazi racial policy was explicitly accounted for in the Swedish press, and the fate of those five named *norrmän* illustrated that very clearly. Consequently, through the survivor interviews, the press in Sweden was able to make a basic distinction between the liberated concentration camps in the West and the extermination camps in the East. It is important to relate here in some length a *Dagens Nyheter* article that told the readers about the Nazi camps. Unlike British conceptualisations

of the camp system, *Dagens Nyheter* wrote that despite the fact that survivors' stories from Buchenwald

of what they have experienced are often incredible ... they [the survivors] are all in agreement that Buchenwald was one of Germany's 'better' concentration camps, mainly because a large percentage of the internees were political prisoners. 'Men could live here, in other camps they had to die', said one Dutch[man]. The most horrific story is that of the five Norwegians' about the life, or better said death, in Oswiecim, Upper-Silesian horror-filled Himmler-hell (*fasansfulla Himmler-helvete*).

When the Norwegian group of Jews arrived there [Auschwitz], they were immediately divided into two groups: women and children in one group and men in another. After a fleeting medical examination most of the women and children were driven directly into the gas chambers and killed. Others were put in slave labour [only] to die after they were too tired to carry on.

All five Norwegians have personally witnessed many times how Jewish prisoners 'were shot while trying to escape', which only means that they got a bullet through their forehead when they could not keep pace when a prisoner group marched back to the barracks. Many gave up and dropped behind voluntarily. When the Norwegians were moved from Oswiecim [to Germany], as for their transportation they had to march 80 kilometres in twelve hours with a two-hour break after which they were put in open railway coaches in the middle of winter. German civilians at the stations refused to give water for even thirsty children among the prisoners ... [the Norwegians] *told their disclosures truly and objectively. But those who only have seen Buchenwald are prepared to believe them without any doubt.*<sup>34</sup>

The final line of the article flies in the face of the typical British view, which regarded Buchenwald and other Western camps as so horrific that no worse camp could possibly exist. For the Swedes, it seems, Buchenwald only signalled that there was a worse atrocity story that had to be revealed. The experience of those five Norwegian Jews became a conduit through which the liberation story was largely told and conceptualised in Sweden. Importantly, the Swedes were willing to give credit to the Norwegian survivors for what they had endured.

### 3.4 Nordic victims of the Holocaust and nationalistic discourse

Between late April and early May 1945 the Swedish Red Cross brought over 15,000 camp survivors to Sweden. The fact that southern Sweden had become a temporary shelter for such a number of survivors formed another conduit for telling the story of the liberation of the camps.<sup>35</sup> However, these stories often paid most attention to Swedish humanitarian aid during (and after) the war, as the *Dagens Nyheter* front-page headline in early May exemplified: 'New clothes for 16,000 prisoners'.<sup>36</sup> Swedish exertions were followed by the tales of Danes' and Norwegians' experiences in the camps (including the Jews). Only after these themes was the fate of other victims of Nazism considered.

On interviewing the survivors, the Swedish press seemed to be, understandably, drawn to stories that highlighted the vital role of the Swedish aid parcels (*Svenska paketen*) for aiding survival in the camps. On 3 May, a *Dagens Nyheter* subheading told how 'a Red-Cross parcel relieved Jews'. The story noted how some 'Danish Jews who the Germans managed to arrest in autumn 1943 and who were later sent to Theresienstadt ... have now landed in Sweden together with a large group of evacuees from the concentration camp ... during the first few months they did not receive any Red Cross packets, but when they later become available living conditions improved.' In terms of the Red Cross's activities the report told that

when a history of Norwegian and Danish women's fight is one day written, three names will be indelible (*outplånlig*) in the script – Ravensbrück, Mauthausen and Auschwitz. These are the three concentration camps where 120 women lived before they won their freedom as a result of the Swedish Red Cross's efforts.<sup>37</sup>

The following day the paper reported an experience of a Norwegian Jew and his aid parcel: because he could bribe SS guards with the money that had come with the parcel 'it made [them change their minds and] remove the Jews from their destination in a gas chamber'.<sup>38</sup> In this story, then, the aid parcel literally saved the Jews' lives.

On the whole, even though newspapers in Sweden discussed the fate of the Jews far more extensively than in Britain, the narrative was predominantly constructed along the lines of 'Nordic victimhood', which was, in a sense, diverted nationalism. As in Britain, the Swedish press sometimes used the simplest nationalistic rhetoric to describe

some of the basic features of the victims of Nazism. For example, when describing a memorial service for the perished at Buchenwald, *Dagens Nyheter* reported that 'the camp inmates had gathered in groups under their national banners. One could see Norwegian, Danish, Austrian, Hungarian, French, Dutch and Belgian flags – almost all Europeans flags were presented.'<sup>39</sup> Beyond the simple nationalistic rhetoric, it is worth noting that the reporter (Daniel Viklund) had chosen to mention Norwegian and Danish victims first. The fact says much about the contemporary thinking – after all Norwegians and Danes were fellow Scandinavians and therefore deserved to be mentioned first. Interestingly, no Eastern European countries were mentioned at all. This attitude also reflects the priorities of the White busses expedition, which favoured Scandinavian prisoners over others – including Jews. In the most critical assessments the mission has been seen as a crude barter over people's fate: in order to facilitate the transfers for the Scandinavian prisoners, others such as Russians, Poles and French were moved away from the transfer areas such as Neuengamme concentration camp, leading to increased suffering and death.<sup>40</sup> What is more, according to Ingrid Lomfors – who cites one of the drivers of the busses – nationalist myth-making over the mission has led to totally asymmetrical vision of the mission: 'depictions of the negative consequences would likely to have received more space if one would have listened to the drivers and others "who did the work"'.<sup>41</sup> Finally, as Lomfors points out, 'The Swedish Red Cross forced displacement of the dying French, Russian and Polish prisoners is an example of the violation of its own humanitarian principles [...] These prisoners were the weakest in the concentration camps and their *need for help the biggest*'.<sup>42</sup>

*Svenska Dagbladet* cited Arnulf Överland, a Norwegian survivor and 'the big name of Norwegian lyrical poetry' on page 3. His words exemplified the feeling of Nordic belonging when he noted that 'as far as the Nordic people's unity is concerned, it should be considered as "natural"'. He then continued, making the case for joint Scandinavian defence: 'We should protect our independence and hold together.'<sup>43</sup> Another paper cited Överland: 'Personally, I have never believed that we speak a different language – we are only branches within the same people, and it is [different] dialects we speak.'<sup>44</sup>

On the whole, during the war, as before it, there had been a great continuity in the representation of the Nordic people as one. The feeling of Nordic comradeship gained strong popular currency during the Winter War (1939–40) between Finland and the Soviet Union. The prominent slogan of the time in Sweden was 'Finland's case is

ours' – despite the fact that there was no direct Swedish intervention on behalf of the Finns.<sup>45</sup> On the other hand, it was taken for granted in Sweden that nearly 70,000 Finnish children could be given a haven in Sweden during the course of the Second World War, while in the early stages of the war (when more than 10,000 Finnish children had already been evacuated to Sweden) the Swedish government was tightening its refugee policies, which were primarily targeted against the Jews fleeing from the German occupied areas. According to Mikael Byström, one has to be very careful when incorporating Jews into the idea of Nordic brotherhood. As he argues, it is better to think about Jews as 'step-brothers', who did not have a clear place within the family.<sup>46</sup> However, the failed rescue of Norwegian Jews caused much dismay,<sup>47</sup> while the successful rescue of the Danish Jews in 1943 remains another remarkable example of 'Nordic step-brotherhood'.<sup>48</sup>

While the suffering of fellow Scandinavians was prominently displayed in the Swedish media, the Jewish victims from other countries like Poland, for example, did not feature so heavily in the press. However, the talk of Norwegian and Danish victims of Nazism must be contextualised within a wider Swedish newspaper discourse of that time. What happened to the Jews, and non-Jews in fellow Scandinavian countries, was not only, or necessarily, a 'Holocaust story' *per se*. Rather, the discussion about the Scandinavian victims took place and was part of a much wider press discourse that minutely accounted for the events in Norway and Denmark. The hour of liberation of these countries was not far off and the Swedish press was anxious to see the restoration of Scandinavian democracy on its western and southern borders. Hence, extensive talk about the Scandinavian victims of Nazism served to illuminate the abnormal period in modern Scandinavian history, a divergence from the traditional egalitarian Scandinavian social democracy, which was soon to be functioning again. Within this type of 'Nordic-Nationalist' discourse the fate of the Scandinavian Jews could be comfortably fitted in. In Britain, by contrast, such an avenue was not available.

Along the lines of 'Nordic victimhood' *Svenska Dagbladet* reported that 15,000 former prisoners in Nazi captivity whom the Swedish Red Cross had liberated had arrived in Sweden, 'approximately 8,000 of them are Danish and Norwegians along with 7,000 women'. After accounting for the Nordic and gender aspects, it was told that the wide range of nationalities included French, Polish, Dutch, Czech, British, American, Argentinian ... and even one Chinese.<sup>49</sup> Proportionally speaking the experiences of fellow Scandinavians out-shone those of other survivors.<sup>50</sup> However, this is not to say that experiences of other

survivors were not related at all. For example, in connection with the Bernadotte expedition *Dagens Nyheter* told how:

Polish Jewesses fill coach after coach, and they all come from Auschwitz (Oswiecim) and proudly show their number tattooed on their forearms. The Jews had, according to a German principle, a special numbering system in these concentration camps. ... Every serial went up to 30,000. But there were many who never had a number tattooed, a young Jewess, a student of technical studies from Lvov said.

For example, [one day] there arrived a big transportation from Hungary and they were divided up according to a system which we could not understand, but which was clear by implication: a half directly into the gas chambers and the other half into the camp life.

German Red-Cross vehicles delivered gas-producing chemicals into the camp city (*lägerstaden*) – against all humane values, adds a small Jewess.<sup>51</sup>

In contrast to the actions of the 'German Red Cross', the actions of the Bernadotte expedition and the Swedish Red Cross seemed, no doubt, distinctively positive.

Later on, the same article related that 'Among the many non-Jewish Poles are 50 children, remnant of the 1,000 children who were said to have been born in Auschwitz.'<sup>52</sup>

### **3.5 The questions of German guilt in the Swedish press**

As has been shown above, the Swedish response to the news from the liberated camps was less passionate than the British discourse. Therefore, it was not surprising that the discussion about the extent of German guilt and knowledge of the atrocities was conducted in far less fervent tones too. Generally speaking, the question of German guilt and Germans' knowledge of the camps dovetailed with other topics within the liberation discourse – not the other way round, as in Britain.

No doubt, one of the main causes of why the question of German guilt was less debated in Sweden than in Britain was the Swedish war experience, which was, of course, vastly different from the British one. In essence, the Swedish press did not use disclosures from the concentration camps to reflect upon Swedish moral superiority. Instead, the role of Swedish aid parcels gave Sweden a sense of a moral upper hand. Similarly, while the Swedish press argued strongly for the point that



'the truth about the Nazi regime is unpleasant'<sup>53</sup> there was no conceptualisation of Germans as the enemy. In some cases the Swedish press criticised the Allied countries' approaches to the problem of how the defeated Germany should be treated. On 22 April, *Dagens Nyheter's* leader article lamented that it was unfortunate that men like Lord Robert Cecil, who had co-worked in creating the stories of atrocity propaganda during the Great War, were now sitting in the House of Lords convening who should be sent to see the liberated concentration camps. The article questioned a vague idea of 're-education' as it was taking shape around the liberated concentration camps, making a point that Germany was not ready for 're-education' and suggesting that the Allied process of 're-education' was, at best, ambiguous without any defined goals.<sup>54</sup> On the whole, the press in Sweden adopted an ambivalent and often conflicting stance toward the question of defeated Germany. *Dagens Nyheter*, whose coverage of the liberation of the camps was most wide-ranging, is a case in point: in one of its initial reports, featuring on page 7, it had told its readers that 'the truth' was that

99 percent of the German population did not know what had happened [in the camps], but it is also surely true that they did not know because they did not have courage to find out. ... I believe now what I never believed before: not only the Germans, but the whole world will need the courage to find out and to understand the truth.<sup>55</sup>

Less than a week later a different version was offered. While the paper acknowledged that there had always existed an insignificant minority in Germany who had identified with the ideas of freedom, the masses in Germany

stood still and covered their eyes. They did not want to see anything, to know anything. ... The information which the Allies have now decided to make available to the Germans cannot thus be limited only to the criminal policies which the Nazi regime had committed in Germany and in the occupied countries. It must comprise the last twelve years of history. It must begin with the 'other' Germany's shared responsibility in the catastrophe: they offered their passive assistance in the establishment of the Nazi dictatorship ... hoping that the terror regime could be satisfied with depriving the Jews, the communists, and other left-wingers of their life and possessions.<sup>56</sup>

However, the article, while arguing that 'the whole debate about the other Germany basically means nothing else than bringing the Germans

to understand what they have done', sharply rebutted a Vansittartist conception of German guilt.<sup>57</sup>

*Stockholms-Tidningen's* editorial on 27 April took up the issue of 'the other Germany'. It told of a Weimar citizen who had been incarcerated in different camps during the twelve years of Hitler's reign. 'His own wish was now', the paper told, 'to be able to show the world that a Germany other than the Nazi one exists.'<sup>58</sup> The following day *Expressen* commented on *Stockholms-Tidningen's* leader that it 'valiantly cultivates facts for "the other Germany", which their German correspondent has clearly been unable to find'. *Expressen* then went on to explain that the 'other' (non-Nazi) Germany barely existed and that its voice was barely audible. However, *Expressen* had also shown an ambivalent attitude towards German guilt, for only some days earlier it had argued that 'Good Germans do exist'.<sup>59</sup> According to *Svenska Dagbladet* Buchenwald was an important factor for the 'new Germany'. Since a well-organised and purposeful anti-Nazi elite was found among the survivors, these ex-Buchenwald inmates were seen as having a leading role in jump-starting the process of rebuilding the new German society.<sup>60</sup>

Whereas the British press used photographic evidence as a proof of German character, the Swedish press invoked a vastly different explanatory category to clarify the German problem: (mental) disease. Germans were considered as having fallen sick; the sickness, unlike Vansittartism perceived it, was not an innate German characteristic, but something that needed to (and could) be healed if Europe was to enjoy peace in the future. Arnulf Överland told *Dagens Nyheter* that

the German national spirit is sick – yes, it is practically possible for a whole nation to become collectively sick like that. It happens when a nation identifies itself with an ideology such as Nazism and year after year lives within this kind of ideological milieu, which is like stealthy poison.

Thus, contrary to many British depictions, the Germans were seen as having swallowed poison almost accidentally – anyone could have done so. The article continued to make a point of the importance of uprooting Nazism – not the importance of punishing those who were seen as responsible for the crimes.<sup>61</sup>

On 27 April, the same paper argued that 'brains have been scrubbed out of the German population ... who ceased to think for themselves'. Therefore, the paper wrote, mitigating the role of the wider German population, 'they cannot be held responsible'. By the way of a further example, the article cited a Dutchman, who 'greatly emphasised that

terror and atrocities were committed by the Nazis, not the German people'.<sup>62</sup> Again, *Dagens Nyheter's* view on guilt stands against Vansittartist notions of German collective guilt.

Later on in 1945, *GHT* analysed the German sickness from a perspective of psychology, arguing essentially that the German sickness was mental in nature. To this end, the columnist, himself a psychiatrist, explained that the crimes were of the sorts that were of great interest to psychiatrists. The concepts used to analyse the nature of the German genocide were, in turn, derived from the Norwegian psychoanalyst Ingjald Nissen's work *Psykopaternas Diktatur* (Psychopaths' Dictatorship). The analysis is instructive for it attempts to explain the Nazi phenomena by referring to psychoanalysis, taking on the concepts of sexual pathology. In the article, sexual pathology (homosexuality) was implied in the violent structures of the Third Reich. In this scheme the concept of a 'covenant of men' [the Nazi party] was crucial, as the violence stemmed from the homosexual core of a nation. Nissen explained the structure of the covenant as

a system of spheres, in which the members are in a rising degree characterised by homosexuality. Four spheres, or so-called circles, can be distinguished which are less dependent on woman the closer to the covenant's centre one goes. The fourth and the innermost circle consists of a leader or leaders. These are in disposition homosexual and utterly independent of woman. A fighting spirit dominates here [in the inner circle], taking an ascetic and life-hostile form and absolute power-worship, which is principally hostile to life.

What followed, then, was that on the basis of its focus on fighting, the covenant was 'a negative, aggressive institution. Principally, it is a fighting organisation, and considered war as an exercise ... this organisation creates all means and methods which leads to domination of other people.' The logical conclusion of this explanatory scheme was the 'harrowing fact' that 'the German people had let the covenant of men grow within itself, and allowed it to overtake its state-structure and to lead the people to commit crimes of unheard-of proportions'.<sup>63</sup>

*Stockholms-Tidningen* focused on the problems of everyday life: 'German women one talks with are most anxious about food.' The article concluded, ambivalently, that

It is not worth dedicating much attention to what the Germans think or feel, for they themselves do not make it clear. It is only

striking that besides everything [that has happened], they feel no responsibility for the defeat, or even less for the unbelievable acts of cruelty which the Nazi regime made itself responsible for inside and outside Germany.<sup>64</sup>

Therefore, whatever indignation the paper – or its correspondent in Germany – might have felt about the German attitude, was mitigated by the fact that the Germans themselves seemed to be indifferent to the crimes and more anxious about getting on with everyday life. It was like posing a question ‘who are we to judge?’

The lack of willingness to judge also fashioned the conceptualisation of German prisoner guards, with a consequence that the Swedish press also considered the role of SS guards differently from the British press. This is an important fact, for it illuminates further the differences between Sweden and Britain in understanding the (baffling) role of Germans in the process of destruction. In essence, the absence of enemy image in shaping the discourse is vital. Secondly, the fact that Germans were often considered as having fallen sick because of the Nazi propaganda also shaped the discourse on Germans. In other words, many Germans were ‘sick’ and had therefore lost their moral compass, while at the same time there was another people who were much more naturally brutal, as we will see.

Whereas Josef Kramer, ‘the beast of Belsen’ and Irma Grese, ‘the bitch of Belsen’ came to symbolise British conceptions of German concentration camp staff,<sup>65</sup> *Dagens Nyheter*, again, told a different story: ‘In Buchenwald the worst guards, according to the unanimous testimony of many inmates, were SS recruits from Belarus and Ukraine, although they always operated under German command.’<sup>66</sup> Similarly, on interviewing survivors from liberated German camps who had arrived at ports in southern Sweden, *Dagens Nyheter* told about life inside a concentration camp. A Jewish survivor told that ‘every barrack ... had a so-called “lagerälteste”. They were often criminal inmates. ... They were often brutal humans. The most brutal of them all were the Croats.’<sup>67</sup> On the other hand, in late April the readers of *Dagens Nyheter* were told, strikingly, that ‘all inmates in Buchenwald said that their German guards did the best they could in order to make their lot better’.<sup>68</sup>

It thus seems that while the British newspapers were concentrating on German guards, the papers in Sweden were implicitly harking back to the age-old and well-established conceptions of the Slavs as brutal and savage people who represented the real antipode to the harmonious Scandinavian way of life. In a sense, this reversal to the Slavic

discourse was an expression of traditional nationalistic thinking; while the Nazi system was undeniably horrible, Slavic cruelty could even be distinguished within such a dreadful environment. In fact, there is contemporary evidence that supports the thesis that it was precisely the Slavs who ought to be mistrusted. On 3 May *Dagens Nyheter* published the Swedish Gallup Institution's opinion poll about people's views of 'Russia's willingness to co-operate'. The opinion poll concluded that 32 per cent of the Swedes believed in peaceful co-operation between the USSR, the USA and Britain. However, 40 per cent had doubts. On people's opinions about the Soviet Union the conclusion was that there was 'fear of the Russian' among many. Typical views were: 'one cannot trust the Russians', 'whatever the Russians are up to, one can only think the worst' and 'the Russians have no interest in peaceful co-operation'.<sup>69</sup>

### 3.6 Conclusion

Sweden in 1945 can be characterised as an equally monocultural and liberal nation as Britain, as Paul Levine has argued. Despite the strength of the liberal imagination in Sweden, the encounter of nation's press with the Holocaust was entirely different from that of the British press, as has been shown above. Strikingly, the victims were given considerably more attention than in Britain, and even more strikingly, especially in the light of current historical wisdom, Jewish suffering stood out. Therefore, it seems clear that there are other important factors, apart from the liberal imagination, which help us to understand the historical context in which the liberation of the camps was represented.

In Sweden, the Jewish plight was never fitted into a liberal argument that held that highlighting Jews' suffering equated to Nazi tactics: that is, to treat the Jews differently from other groups. Instead, Jewish suffering was highlighted, but for the very reason that it could be fitted into a dominant nationalistic narrative in Sweden. This narrative accounted for the suffering of fellow Scandinavians, especially those of Norwegian Jews, for it was the most radical proof of suffering in wartime Scandinavia. Part of the same parcel was the stories that chronicled the rescue efforts of the Swedes, which culminated in the operation that brought over 15,000 camp survivors to Sweden. Through widely published interviews it emerged that Swedish aid parcels had played a crucial role in relieving the misery of fellow Scandinavians. In some cases they directly helped to save the lives of Jews.

This type of empathetic narrative was only possible because the Jews were seen as assimilated fellow Scandinavians and therefore their

suffering was worthy of consideration within the dominant nationalist discourse. Finally, it is significant that in the absence of enemy images, Germany was considered in a highly different light. It was a nation whose soul had been manipulated for years rather than a nation that inherently possessed a black soul. Most importantly, this frame shaped the way in which the significance of the Nazi camps was considered. Beyond Belsen and Buchenwald, as the rescued victims were willing to tell, and reporters eager to hear, were camps, most notably Auschwitz, which was seen by Swedes as the worst Nazi camp, unlike in Britain. All this, then, implies that the liberal imagination single-handedly cannot account for Swedish society's first encounter with the Holocaust.

# 4

## The Finnish Press and the Liberation of the Concentration Camps

### 4.1 Introduction

Finland's response to the liberation of the concentration camps was considerably different from the British and Swedish responses; the Finnish press wrote far less about the liberations than their British and Swedish counterparts; the event hardly sparked any public discussions in Finland; and there was almost no pictorial record of the atrocities to accompany the news. The purpose of this chapter is twofold: first, to establish what the Finnish press wrote about the liberation of the camps – to investigate what type of discourses the Finnish press subscribed to; and second, to analyse why they wrote in the way they did – to understand why the news was framed in certain ways.

Finland's response to the liberation of the concentration camps, and to the whole horror of the Holocaust, cannot be understood historically unless one considers a wider contemporary context of the Second World War as seen in Finland. Unlike in Britain and to a certain extent in Sweden, the Finnish view of Germany is always compared with the Soviet Union, and in this comparison Germany fares well. In other words, as was the case in 1945 and still is today, in Finnish nationalistic history writing all things related to Germany were viewed through the prism of the perceived Soviet threat. Indeed, following the war, a Russophobic worldview underscored the nationalistic narrative of Finland and the Second World War. In essence, Finland's view on the breadth and depth of Germany's genocidal record is naïve, as that side of Germany was never exposed to the Finns.<sup>1</sup>

Since this work aims to place Holocaust news in wider national, universal (where this is possible) as well as historical contexts, it is necessary to begin the examination of the Finnish response to the liberation

of the camps with discussion of the wider context in which the press operated. However, before moving on, an explicit caveat is necessary. To say that Finland's Russophobic outlook shaped much of the Finnish thinking about the war and the Holocaust is not the same as to excuse Finnish response to the tragedy – for to explain is not to excuse.

## **4.2 The context of Finnish response to the liberation of the camps**

Swedish historian Gunnar Åselius has remarked that after the German invasion of the Soviet Union, the traditional Western narrative of the conflict as democracy versus dictatorship became problematic and was largely discarded. He claims that despite Hitler's war on the Jews, it is equally reasonable to describe the conflict according to the 'approach adopted in Nazi propaganda, as a conflict between Bolshevism and anti-Bolshevism'.<sup>2</sup> While this is a bold claim, particularly its utilisation of an argument put forward by Nazi propaganda, it nevertheless brings into focus the fact that in large quarters of Europe, Nazi Germany was viewed as a buffer against Bolshevism. Corollary to this logic is, then, that (perverted it may seem) Operation Barbarossa must be considered as a defence of European heritage – its customs, culture and civilisation. Åselius' view characterises much of the thinking that took place in the Nordic countries during and after the war in general and in Finland in particular – despite its unpleasant connotations, which cannot be dismissed. Yet, the Bolshevik versus anti-Bolshevik conflict has hardly been given much credit in Western European scholarship, as illustrated by Michael Burleigh:

[...] fifty thousand west Europeans fought in national formations on the Eastern Front, together with enormous expeditionary forces from Finland, Italy, Spain or Romania ... the claim to be defending European civilisation against Stalin's armies was a weak one, since the former included Auschwitz and countless other sites of Nazi depravity.<sup>3</sup>

As far as Finland was concerned, the sites of 'Nazi depravity' as they existed in occupied Europe, especially in Poland, were mostly theoretical issues that had no direct link with Finland. The thought is naturally unsettling, but it should also give us a reason to pause. First, Burleigh's argument may apply to some Western European formations that fought for Hitler against Bolshevism, but it is less convincing in a case like



Finland, which fought against the USSR, with Hitler's help, but essentially for its own reasons.<sup>4</sup> Second, Burleigh's argument is teleological in the sense that it views the appeal of Nazism and anti-Bolshevism as somehow disconnected from (Western) European traditions of thought. Of course, 'Auschwitz' and the Final Solution is perhaps the greatest catastrophe that Europe has witnessed (or experienced), but it should not automatically displace other brutalities committed elsewhere. Third, his argument assumes that countries like Finland knew about extermination camps and readily accepted their existence, whereas in reality, as recent Finnish studies have shown, concentration camps and the Final Solution had very little role in the Finnish-German relationship.<sup>5</sup> On balance, however, it must be noted that Nazi POW camps also existed in Lapland and the Finns ran concentration camps (mainly) for ethnic Russians in the Eastern Karelia.<sup>6</sup> It has been estimated that about 24,000 people were incarcerated in these camps and over 4,200 died.<sup>7</sup> According to the Eastern Karelian population census from April 1942, the death toll in the Finnish concentration camps was 137.5 people per 1,000 inmates. In a camp in Finnish-occupied Petrozavodsk over 3,000 inmates died during 1942.<sup>8</sup>

In Finland, Russophobia was more pronounced than either in Great Britain or in Sweden. After all, Finland shared a long border with the Soviet Union and throughout the centuries had had quarrels with the Russians, and experienced Russian occupation.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, in the interwar years one of the main building blocks of Finnish national identity, fostered by Finland's independence in 1917, was based on the idea of a perpetual nemesis – Russia.<sup>10</sup> Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, when Europe was increasingly influenced by radical right-wing thinking, the image of the Soviet Union as nemesis was widely disseminated in Finland through popular literature and the press.<sup>11</sup> Since 1917, after Finland's independence and the Bolshevik Revolution, it was commonly perceived in Finland that as long as the Bolsheviks ruled the Soviet Union, Finland was under a never-ending threat of invasion. The Winter War (1939–40), the Soviet invasion of Finland, greatly enforced the view of the perpetual nemesis, and consequently shaped the attitudes and actions of the Finnish government, as well as the people, in the years to come. The result was terrifying, as Eino Pietola has noted regarding the Finnish camps:

When we are looking for the real reasons for the unusually high death toll of ethnic Russian POWs and civilians in Finnish POW camps and concentration camps [...] we cannot bypass the premise

that Finns were raised in the spirit of nationalism. With the consolidation of those foundations and fascist ideology, an extreme hatred and contempt against Russians was born.<sup>12</sup>

Finland's co-belligerency with Nazi Germany was considered within the perceived metanarrative of nemesis. On the eve of Operation Barbarossa, Finland's President Risto Ryti told the Parliamentary delegation that a war between the USSR and Germany would be 'Finland's only salvation for the Soviet Union will never give up its attempt to conquer Finland ... if Germany now crushes the Soviet army, we may perhaps enjoy a century of peace.'<sup>13</sup> *Helsingin Sanomat* wrote on 1 September 1941 that Germany's triumphs in Russia 'leave no doubt that once this crusade [Operation Barbarossa] is over, Europe will be set free from the menace of Bolshevism'.<sup>14</sup> Significantly, in the mainstream Finnish press the menace of Bolshevism was never extended (as in Germany) to the menace of Jewish-Bolshevik conspiracy. Also before the war, radical anti-Semitism remained marginal in Finland, although low-level, often privately expressed, anti-Semitism was not uncommon.<sup>15</sup>

*Realpolitik* considerations, as perceived in the north-eastern corner of Europe, guided decision-making processes; the old Arab proverb 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend' was put into practice in Finland. The Finnish logic was in many ways analogous to the British situation: after the German invasion of Russia, Churchill famously noted that 'if Hitler invaded Hell, I would make at least a favourable reference to the Devil in the House of Commons'. The more victorious the Red Army was becoming, the less British talk there was about Stalin's terror and the former Soviet-German pact.<sup>16</sup> In the same manner, the cruelty of German warfare and the apparatus of terror; its treatment of small nations, minority groups and Jews; and the former Soviet-German pact of August 1939 (in which Hitler practically gave Stalin *carte blanche* as regards to Finland) were swept under the rug in Finland.<sup>17</sup> In 1945, Finnish writer Sakari Lappi-Seppälä, who fought in the SS on the Eastern Front with the Finnish voluntary battalion until his dismissal in early 1943, observed the dominant Finnish wartime mentality while on leave in Helsinki:

[In Finland] all the stories one hears about Germany are very positive ... all the readers probably remember how Ufa pictures in Finland were shown, where Germany's generousness was displayed: how Germans were ready to sacrifice for their boys on the front by giving ... car-loads of winter clothes and furs. ... All expensive women's and men's furs and warm winter clothes were from ... Polish Jews ... [w]ho

walked to the fields in a line, where they were ordered to undress ... after undressing they climbed onto a parapet of a mass grave to wait for their executioners' liberating machine-gun fire. ... The assets of millions and millions of people were thus robbed and they were removed from the world in the same outfit as they once were born. ... But this is not true, nobody can believe that, for others would have told about it too, was the answer I received.<sup>18</sup>

Finnish naivety towards the Final Solution was in no small part a result of Finland's own treatment of the Jews during the war. Indeed, the role of Finnish Jews during the war years has been used to illustrate Finland's separate ideology (and war) from the aims of Nazi Germany. As historiographical consensus has it, the Finnish Jews were Finnish citizens in the first instance (which meant that they also carried the burden of Finland's war effort) and Jews in the second instance.<sup>19</sup> Once when Abraham Stiller, a leading figure in the Helsinki Jewish Congregation, was asked what would happen if Germany won the war or alternatively if the Soviet Union occupied Finland, he replied: 'To answer your question, I think you want to know whether I would rather die of cancer or of heart attack?'<sup>20</sup> In retrospect, Finnish Jewry accepted the fact that Finland's political situation between the two totalitarian regimes in 1941 was intricate and Finland had to choose its side, for in 1940 it seemed that the possibility of remaining neutral was unlikely.<sup>21</sup>

During the war years, Finnish censorship, and self-censorship, prevented discussion of Jewish matters. Similarly, in private the German troops stationed in Finland were unwilling to discuss matters relating to Jews.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, the dominant societal impulse was hardly conducive to any talk of Jewish suffering. Only twice did the Finnish press defy the orders of the censors. The first time was in November 1942 when eight Jewish refugees among 19 other non-Jews were extradited from Finland into the hands of the Gestapo. The Finnish government allowed the news to be published. The eminent Finnish Jewish historian Max Jakobson has remarked about the extradition issue that 'the public protests against the extradition show that freedom of speech was not totally curbed. I cannot remember that the right of asylum would have been defended so strongly in the 1970s, when asylum seekers from the USSR were silently returned'.<sup>23</sup>

However, despite the fact that the timing of the extradition coincided with the climax of Western news reporting on the extermination of the Jews under Nazi rule, no links were made between it and the Finnish press debate on the extradition. Rather, the extradition discussion centred

on the issue of refugees' right of asylum, where legality of such operation was in focus, not the fate of the Jews in Hitler's Europe. In other words, the news relating to the extradition matter was seen as a domestic policy issue. Thus, the destruction of the Jews remained hidden at the time.<sup>24</sup>

The second time when the Finnish press broke silence about the fate of the Jews in Europe was in 1943 when Danish Jewry was threatened by destruction. As in the year before, however, there was very little written about the plight of the Jews in general.

Touko Perko has examined the image of 'Co-belligerent Germany' in Finland between 1941 and 1944 as depicted through Finnish newspapers.<sup>25</sup> The Jewish question does not even enter the evaluation. There are several reasons for this. First, the Holocaust did not appear in the Finnish press, so it played no role in shaping Finnish views of Nazism. Second, official censorship curbed any news criticising Germany,<sup>26</sup> so there was no opportunity to draw attention to the tragedy even had there been any knowledge of it. Third, at the time when Perko was doing his research, in the early 1970s, the Holocaust was not an issue in Finland, which would have constituted a research problem begging for an explanation.

Having set the wider context (the naivety of Finland vis-à-vis the true Nazi Germany) in which the reporting of the liberation of the camps must be set, it is time to examine how the news from the newly liberated concentration camps was depicted in Finland. What did the press write, and which themes were dominant? Did the news change the view of Finland's former co-belligerent, which Finland had been (nominally) fighting against since autumn 1944? As the discussion above indicates, the ground for Holocaust news was barely prepared, as it was in Britain and in Sweden. Yet, did this mean that the news from the concentration camps seemed even more shocking – revealing the true nature of Finland's former comrades in arms – or was the firmly established view of Nazism as bulwark against Bolshevism to prevail?

### **4.3 The Finnish press grapples with the liberation news**

The day after Buchenwald was liberated – so before the liberation news was published – the headline on the front page of Finnish newspaper *Ilta-Sanomat* (Evening News) announced 'Another "Death Factory" – 5 Million Jews murdered in 10 months'. The article was based on Dr Bela Fabian's statement that 'during the last 10 months the Germans have murdered by gas and burned 5 Million Jews in a gigantic crematorium

situated in Auschwitz, in Upper Silesia'.<sup>27</sup> A conservative paper, *Uusi Suomi* (New Finland), carried the same news item on its inside pages telling how 'only 40 children out of 100,000 incarcerated in one camp [meaning Auschwitz] had survived'.<sup>28</sup> Some days later, the same paper noted, citing Radio Moscow, that 4.5 million people had been murdered in Osviencim [*sic*]. This time, however, the name was not connected to Auschwitz, neither were the Jews mentioned among the victims, who, it was told, represented 'almost every nationality [in Europe]'.<sup>29</sup>

On 10 April, before the camps were liberated, *Ilta-Sanomat* had noted on page 2 that Dr Rosenberg's archives were found in Hungen (north of Frankfurt Am Main). The report stated that 'in some of these files this ex-German Minister proclaims Nazi scientific attacks against the Jews'.<sup>30</sup> Although a Finnish afternoon paper, like several other papers, published the news about the murder of the Jews, and mentioned the name of Auschwitz, the news had little coherence, and typically sounded unbelievable. Five million Jews murdered in 10 months in one extermination centre? The figure exceeded the whole population of Finland by a million. What was worse, the news described above came from Soviet sources, of which the Finns were highly suspicious. On the other hand, if a reader was able to put scraps of information together, it can be said that it was particularly Jewish suffering that stood out – unbelievable as it may have sounded.

Since the Finnish press not only followed meticulously, but also relied on both the Soviet Union's and many Western news agencies, it was hardly surprising that Soviet and Western rhetoric were blended together. Even though Auschwitz and Oswiecim appeared in the press occasionally, they had various meanings (including the place of Jewish suffering) none of which dominated, and many of which sounded like (Soviet) propaganda. Thus, while there was growing awareness of Nazi Germany's 'other war' it remained fuzzy and incomprehensible, without any context to give it a sense of meaning. The news about the liberated camps that the Finnish press copied from the pages of other newspapers (predominantly English and Swedish) hardly helped in the process of contextualising this news.

Initially the Finnish press reacted to the news from the liberated concentration camps in a similar manner to the Swedish press; the approach was characterised by an impersonal tone and a somewhat delayed reaction. For example, it was not until 20 April that the leading Finnish newspaper, the liberal *Helsingin Sanomat*, commented on the events under the headline 'German atrocities worse than expected – Parliamentary delegation to Germany'. This appeared on page 10, and 'parliamentary delegation' referred to the British delegation due to visit

Buchenwald.<sup>31</sup> The day before, the second largest paper in Finland, the conservative *Uusi Suomi*, had reported on page 6 (the main foreign news page): 'Terrible cruelty, hunger and illness. Visiting Buchenwald prisoner camp.' The news article cited English correspondent James White, and *Dagens Nyheter* (word for word) that it may be true that

99 percent of the German population did not know what had happened [in the camps], but it is also surely true that they did not know because they did not have courage to find out. ... I believe now what I never believed before: not only the Germans, but the whole world will need the courage to find out and to understand the truth.<sup>32</sup>

The article carried on to note how the Germans had reacted to the forced concentration camp tours. Citing *The News Chronicle*, the Finnish paper told how 'the Germans swear they had no knowledge of the cruelty within the camps ... but they are not allowed to forget or to doubt'.<sup>33</sup> While leading Finnish newspapers such as *Uusi Suomi* and *Helsingin Sanomat* regularly cited the news from the British press, it is evident that they only published one side of British opinion, giving proportionally greater space to a theme that absolved the majority of the German population from any direct responsibility, while accusing the Nazi elite only. As British opinion was increasingly indignant about German cruelty, *Uusi Suomi* noted it quoting *The Times* that 'all Germans must be made to understand the righteousness of the punishment which the Allies will demand of those found guilty'.<sup>34</sup> Viewed from a Finnish perspective, *The Times's* argument sounded like a justification for harsh retribution. On the one hand, it was clear that the Allies would find a lot of Germans guilty for the alleged crimes, and some kind of punishment had to be imposed. On the other hand, since there was hardly any pictorial record in the Finnish press, papers like *Uusi Suomi* struggled to understand why the Allies had resorted to such biblical language as 'righteousness of punishment', for it sounded as though the Allies were bent on repeating the Treaty of Versailles, rather than imposing a just punishment that would not totally cripple Germany.

The first long article about the camps in Finland was published in *Helsingin Sanomat* on 27 April, and it was based on a description by Albert Anderson, a Swedish doctor who had visited Buchenwald – it appeared on page 9. The article told that the majority of the bodies undeniably shared features [heads and legs] that were typical of Jewish anatomy.<sup>35</sup> However, despite being a lengthy article (eight paragraphs) there were no other references to Jews, and even this one was only suggestive,

based on the doctor's notions of anatomy – a disturbing (but then unrecognised) thought for it carried in itself a notion of sophisticated racial categorising, something that was not strange to Nazis, or to the Scandinavians. On the other hand, the article made it reasonably clear that the inmates of Buchenwald (especially Jews, but not mentioned in the text) perceived the camp as a *Vorzugslager*, a privileged camp – not the most horrific place on earth as the British press argued.<sup>36</sup>

Typically, all examined Finnish newspapers reported news relating to the concentration camps in a brief and concise manner. Usually the news did not make it to the headlines, although some of them were reported on the front page. One such example appeared on the front page of *Uusi Suomi*, and it read: 'Slave labourers' terror in Germany escalating'. The article, dateline from Stockholm, told how 'tortured and starved slave labourers are moving in big crowds from one district to another demanding vengeance. Hundreds of Germans have committed suicide realising that they are in danger of being captured by them.'<sup>37</sup> Thus, the news suggested that the Germans *en masse* were the victims of slave labourers' wrath, totally neglecting the issue of why there were slave labourers in Germany in the first place.

Not even the main voice of left-wing Finnish social democracy spoke of German atrocities in a manner that would have raised wider questions about German culpability and the treatment of Jews, and other victims of Nazism. This is another indication of how far removed the Finns felt from the catastrophe; it was in contrast to November 1942 when *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* was the most vociferous paper in defending the rights of refugees (mainly Jews) for asylum, but now remained silent about the crimes of the Germans.<sup>38</sup> Only once, on 1 May 1945, did the paper speak about 'the moral decay' in Germany. And even then the gist of the argument was not directed against the Germans but Allied policy planners, for the article referred to the impossibility of carrying out the (envisaged) re-education programme in a few months. Moreover, the opinion was taken from the correspondents of the *Melbourne Herald* and *Yorkshire Post*.<sup>39</sup>

On the whole, first-hand Finnish opinion about the atrocities was not forthcoming. Instead, the Finnish press took its cues from the Swedish and Anglo-American press. In this, they resorted to a 'pick and choose' policy – a scheme that will be demonstrated with reference to *Uusi Suomi* below.

#### 4.4 Beleaguered Germans in the Finnish press discourse

Insofar as there was a personal opinion at *Uusi Suomi*, it was represented by a Swede, Christer Jäderlund, whose articles about Nazi Germany were

serialised in the paper. In general, Jäderlund's article(s) encapsulated not only *Uusi Suomi*'s approach but the Finnish press's approach to the liberation of the camps. On 22 April, *Uusi Suomi* (and Christer Jäderlund) conceptualised the difficult situation in Germany in a manner that, no doubt, appealed to a Finnish readership. The heading read 'Gestapo's and SD's tyranny forces German nation to a hopeless fight. Guillotine and noose constantly at work.' Within the text itself the article told, sympathetically (especially when compared with the reactions of the British and Swedish press), how 'Gestapo men also have their families and they are very worried not only about their families' safety but also about their own. In addition, they have lately had a work-load to bear which is totally unachievable.'<sup>40</sup> The article, printed on pages 10 and 11, thus considered ordinary Germans as victims of chaotic circumstances (no doubt compounded by the relentless Red Army offensive) and largely epitomised Finnish feelings towards Germany. All Germans – including Gestapo men – were, despite their crimes, only humans, caught in a hapless situation. Of course, the paper had no chances of evaluating how determinedly the Gestapo (as well as the SS, German military and the Volkssturm) was still keeping up order – often meaning German-on-German terror and mass shootings of POWs, slave labourers and others. Nevertheless, the article clearly ascertained that the home front must not break down, no matter what the circumstances were, even to the extent that the Gestapo's terror seemed to have a modicum of rationale behind it. The article stands as a manifesto of a hopelessly naïve and outdated stance towards Germany that was depicted in the Finnish (and in some parts in the Swedish) press.<sup>41</sup>

What is more, *Uusi Suomi* fed its readers a very selective diet of Jäderlund's prose. For example, his contentious writing about the extermination of the Jews and the alleged German lack of knowledge about it (which caused much debate in Sweden, as mentioned in Chapter 3) was not published in *Uusi Suomi*. While motives for why *Uusi Suomi* did not print the ambiguous article on the extermination of the Jews are difficult to gauge, it is clear, however, that the paper avoided any discussion of the Jews that may have given too much food for thought concerning the extent to which the German population on the whole was – or was not – responsible for the Final Solution. Thus, the 'pick and choose' approach meant that some arguments from Swedish and Anglo-American newspapers were incorporated into 'Finnish discourses' and some (usually portraying more unpleasant issues about Germany) were left out.

The reasons why the Finns felt sympathy for the Germans are not obvious at first glance – especially given that by April 1945 the retreating



German troops from Finnish Lapland had destroyed the majority of its infrastructure. Apart from the still dominant view of the Germans as civilised and cultured people who had done their best to save Finland from Bolshevism, there is also a more pervasive explanation, especially when viewed from the vantage point of 1945.

To begin with, in Finland there was very little publicly disseminated knowledge about the Nazi extermination policy, as well as unwillingness to believe in such stories, as Lappi-Seppälä lamented in his diary.<sup>42</sup> The official diplomatic break-up with Nazi Germany had not brought forward anti-German feeling. For example, when the media became free to publish news about the extermination of the Jews after autumn 1944, the theme was at the time also largely ignored in the Western media and the Finnish media never caught up with it. Hence, the lack of acknowledgment of the German crimes in the East, no doubt, partly explains warm Finnish feelings towards the Germans (including Nazis). Further, the key to comprehending the Finnish press's attitude relates to the Finnish understanding of the situation in the spring 1945: since 1942, and increasingly in 1943, the Finnish army and the government had been preparing for German collapse.<sup>43</sup> Government circles feared that when Germany was finally defeated Finland would share its destiny. The vital question for Finland, then, was when to sue for a separate peace in order to avoid a total collapse.<sup>44</sup> As the examples of Italy and Hungary proved, premature abandonment of Germany might lead to a German occupation (and terrorisation) of the country. At worst, it might even mean that Finnish Jews would be rounded up and sent to their destruction. On the other hand, suing for peace too late might lead to Soviet occupation of Finland, or at least to unbearable peace terms. With these problems in the background, Finland managed to negotiate an armistice (eventually a peace treaty) that largely stood out from the experiences of other nations caught in the Soviet–German conflagration. Thus, in spring 1945 the downfall of Hitler's Reich reminded the Finns of the catastrophe they had just avoided; the hard fate of the Germans was a horrific illustration of what might have been the destiny of Finland too.

As has been mentioned above, many Finns were still hopelessly naïve as to the real state of affairs in Germany – and this can be ascribed (although tentatively) to the lack of knowledge of the ruthlessness of the Third Reich, an issue that the Finns never experienced.<sup>45</sup> For example, the Finnish State Police report on public opinion from September 1945 mentioned how 'many of the women returned from Norway are appreciative of their living conditions with the Germans. Many of them wish to go

to Germany. Reasons are typically personal, not political.<sup>46</sup> Usually, the situation was that a Finnish woman, often expecting a child of a German soldier, was eager to 'escape' from Finland to Germany, which was seen as the land of abundance. After all, the German troops in Finland were able to offer treats to Finns that they never would have acquired otherwise. Further, in absolute contrast to the German policy of starvation in *Reichskommisariat Ostland*, the Germans in Finnish Lapland even provided a daily free meal for the children of the poorest Finnish families.<sup>47</sup>

In late April, *Helsingin Sanomat* tried to understand the phenomenon of fascism and how it could be connected with the horrific depictions from the concentration camps. A visiting columnist for *Helsingin Sanomat*, the political editor of *The News Chronicle*, A. J. Cummings, argued on the editorial page that 'belief in fascism makes people bestial'. He wrote how

in this country [by which he meant the UK, but Finnish readers no doubt took it as Finland] decent people find it hard to believe that a civilised, enlightened and modern society can execute such cruelties, approve them or remain indifferent towards them ... the commonly held assumption [in Britain] that these concentration camps would be an expression of innate German cruelty, I do find inadequate ... belief in fascism makes people bestial. We all have that same spot of shame clearly visible. I have seen numerous fascists in Germany, Italy, France, Belgium, Hungary, Romania and Spain. I've seen them in our country too. Each and every one of them emits the same contaminated ... intolerance ... if our Anglo-Saxon fascists would have gained power, we would not have been able to live safely from the threat of concentration camps and other horrors of the continent, which we now, from the distance, judge as German crimes.<sup>48</sup>

So, the liberal *Helsingin Sanomat* followed the line of *The News Chronicle*, which was known as a voice for British liberalism.<sup>49</sup> The stance of *The News Chronicle*, which generally adhered to the British frame of reporting in which Jewish suffering did not stand out, but all cruelty stemmed from the moral decay of fascism, was adopted in Finland because it was well suited to the Finnish mentality: by invoking a category of 'Euro fascism', the Finns could find some comfort in the idea that their former allies [the Germans], just like a sizeable minority in Finland, were only representatives of a wider European attitude.

The day after Hitler's death was announced, a leader in *Helsingin Sanomat* speculated that 'a counter effect [of Nazism] might arise soon,

which does not view Hitler as a martyr, but a power crazed fanatic who has plunged Germany into deepest doom'.<sup>50</sup> Hence, the majority of German people were, again, seen as victims of Hitler's rule – and in this respect no different from the other victims of 'Hitlerism', whether Norwegian, Polish, Hungarian, Russian, French or Belgian.

Similarly, *Ilta-Sanomat*, an evening (tabloid) paper owned by *Helsingin Sanomat*, used A. J. Cummings' writings. As for the wider German responsibility of the murders, the paper wrote that everyone was to be held responsible for what had happened, but at the same time, it also acknowledged that Nazism's populist appeal had poisoned the ordinary Germans. The real culpability was to be found with modern mass propaganda for, as the paper maintained, 'it cannot ... be thought that everyone out of 90 million people ... was endlessly evil'.<sup>51</sup>

A different attitude, tainted by open communist propaganda, could be found only on extreme left papers. *Uusi Aika* (New Era) wrote on 26 April under a heading 'Nazi-Germany's death camps' that

it is natural that these 'Buchenwald-stories' can no longer be signed away by arguing for the criminality of the Nazis ... a great number of the criminals cannot mitigate the punishment. Moral decay lies much deeper in Nazi Germany than just among the 'wash-proof' Nazis. The German people cannot be seen as remaining innocent for the crimes of the Nazis.<sup>52</sup>

It is the rarity of this comment rather than its typicality that gives it its significance. The text's somewhat untypical nature in the Finnish press discourse can be elicited from the fact that it was the only article relating to 'Holocaust news' that caught the eye of the State Information Bureau (*Valtion Tiedotuslaitos*):<sup>53</sup> Every day the bureau selected between six and eight news items from Finnish newspapers, which were then made into a sample of that day's press comments. For a period between April and June 1945, the above-mentioned article was the only news relating to the liberation of the camps that ever made it into the samples of the State Information Bureau. The only reason for its inclusion is its different tone. If the officials had wanted to select a typical newspaper item, why not choose a piece of news from the mainstream Finnish press such as *Helsingin Sanomat*, *Uusi Suomi* or *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti*?

On the whole, then, German cruelty was rarely brought home in a manner likely to arouse indignation in Finland – despite the fact that newspapers were accounting for the torture and murder inflicted by Germans. For example, beyond the neutral usage of language, pictorial

representation of the liberation process was minimal. On 5 May, *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* published on its front page a ghastly (and now famous) photo from Belsen where the ground was filled with lines of emaciated bodies. However, this was the only atrocity photo published in the paper during the weeks when liberation news was a front-page staple. In fact, apart from the photo in *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* there were not many atrocity photos featured in the mainstream Finnish press. On 4 May, *Ilta-Sanomat* published three photos on page 4. One of them depicted a pile of burned bones. The caption read: 'A pile formed by burned human bones in Buchenwald. A sight which speaks for itself.'<sup>54</sup> Of course, the photo was ghastly, but how did it 'speak for itself', especially since there was little substance offered to go with the photo? The paper's open-ended statement gave considerably more choice for the readers to make up their own minds than the press in Britain and Sweden allowed their readers. Conservative *Aamulehti* also published one photo from the camps. It showed a few Germans gazing at something that the paper said was a horror scene, but what they were looking at was not in the camera's eye.<sup>55</sup> The photo, the only pictorial representation of the liberation in the paper, seems remarkably benign when contrasted to the atrocity photographic material that was circulating in the British, and even to some extent in the Swedish press. Similarly, as far as can be judged from the letters to the editor sections, the news from the camps (or these few photos) did not elicit any response whatsoever.<sup>56</sup>

Only once was German inhumanity represented in Finland in a manner that surely touched Finnish sensitivities. As an *Uusi Suomi* article on page 11 about two Finnish sailors who were interned by the Germans noted: 'They are the first Finnish people who can testify to the world about the conditions and the treatment of the inmates and internees in German punishment and work camps.' The paper told how 'their story is shocking and the element of shock is increased by their disclosure that more than ten of their Finnish comrades have been killed in bombings or diseases'. The article then went on to relate the experiences of the two Finnish sailors. One of them noted that '[W]ith my own eyes I have witnessed how German camp personnel caned Russian and Italian workers to death.' The article continued to tell how the inmates were given numbers, and how they learnt to call each other by their numbers.<sup>57</sup> A piece of the Holocaust-like story was thus given a Finnish face. However, nowhere in the article was there a link between other German atrocities, including extermination – it was down to each individual reader to construct a suitable meaning, with or without links to Buchenwald, Belsen or Auschwitz. Moreover, the article finished by

accounting for the words of the German commandant of Nyborg: 'This is all going to hell!'<sup>58</sup> Thus, as far as discursive strategies are examined, it is obvious that the final comment of the commandant works as a form of pardon for what has been happening – inhumanity as witnessed by the Finnish sailors was not necessarily typical of German treatment of POWs or systematic, but could be attributed to the rapidly deteriorating military situation and to a desperate act to maintain order. At least, Finnish newspapers were full of news about the military situation.

If the Finnish newspaper discourse predominantly highlighted the experiences of their former co-belligerents, was there much room for a victim discourse to emerge? Were the real victims of Nazi racial policy only depicted as 'conclusive proof' of the vastness of the downfall of the Reich?

#### 4.5 The real victims and the Finnish press

Finnish press discourse on the victims of Nazism is curious for its divided narration of their fate. As has been highlighted above, on the eve of the liberation of Buchenwald and Belsen, the mainstream Finnish press accounted for the murder of 5 million Jews in Auschwitz. However, after the news from the liberated concentration camps appeared in the Finnish press, the victims of the Nazi extermination policy were almost forgotten – the focus was firmly on the perpetrators, although they were hardly made to appear as such. After the liberation news began to fade into the murky background of defeated Germany, Auschwitz came into consideration again. In other words, the liberation of the concentration camps and the news of 'death factories' were two distinct stories – although they both made guarded references to German cruelty.

On 8 May, the press in Finland wrote about Auschwitz. *Helsingin Sanomat* chose to follow the story according to the Swedish lines of 'Nordic Victimhood'. It published a page 4 story about 'Scandinavians in Auschwitz Horror Camp'. Basically, it was taken from *Dagens Nyheter*, and described the experiences of Norwegian victims of Nazism. With regard to Auschwitz, the paper told that 'two women from Oslo had prisoner numbers tattooed on their forearms. The figures were over 70,000. They are a reminder of the fact that they have been in Auschwitz, which makes Buchenwald seem a tolerable place.' Below, the article told how in the

evening roll call, one had to stand four hours in a formation, during which those who had to die were selected. Naked Jewish women had

to march before a commission. ... One Norwegian woman tells that when Auschwitz was evacuated the inmates had to march three days in a January chill. After that they were transported in open cattle cars towards Germany. Many prisoners were shot when they were too tired to carry on. Many returned to Ravensbrück [many Scandinavian prisoners were first sent to Ravensbrück and later to Auschwitz] with their hands and feet covered in frostbite. One Norwegian tells of having seen how those who were sentenced to death were chained to one another, to be executed, 20 at a time.<sup>59</sup>

*Uusi Suomi* and *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* frequently published news telegrams from Moscow. The headlines of one such news from Moscow read respectively: '4 million people killed in the camp of Oswiecim. Executions, death by hunger, poisonings and tortures' and 'German cruelties in Oswiecim death camp indescribable. Over 4 million people were killed there by horrific ways.'<sup>60</sup> The articles were both based on Soviet rhetoric, and made no references to the Jews whatsoever. Rather, it was told, perfectly following the Soviet logic of undifferentiated atrocities, that

Even before the Red Army had liberated Poland's leaders in Upper Silesia, many reports had been received [by the Soviets] which told about a massive camp in the town of Oswiecim which the German government had established in order to liquidate captured Russian citizens...

... by investigating material found in the camp ... it has been possible to acknowledge that the Germans have killed by execution, starvation, poisoning and cruel torture more than 4 million citizens of the Soviet Union, Poland, France, Belgium, Holland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Romania and Hungary ... by its extent and cruelty this camp surpasses every other German 'death camp'. ... There were gas chambers, crematoria, surgical wards and laboratories in this camp – all of which were designed for the inhumane killing of men.<sup>61</sup>

As these two examples from Auschwitz indicate, the Finnish press discourse on the victims, too, remained incoherent. Whether the Jews as chief victims were mentioned or not depended on the original source – for seldom, if at all, did this news truly represent a Finnish view on the victims. In addition, it is noteworthy that the day the Finnish press depicted the fate of these victims of Hitler's coincided with VE day.

The overwhelming majority of foreign news was, understandably, about the final defeat of Hitler. Therefore, it is quite possible to conceive that whatever impact this news from Auschwitz might have had was greatly reduced.

## 4.6 Conclusion

In sum, it is not easy to give reasons as to why the Finnish press wrote very little about the liberation of the camps. One thing, however, is sure. The Finnish censorship did not limit the press discourse on the camps. There is absolutely no evidence in any of the relevant archives examined here of anything even loosely related to the liberation of the camps or the Holocaust that would have caught censors' eyes.<sup>62</sup> In other words, the reasons for the Finnish silence as regards the Holocaust must lie elsewhere.

The Finnish press, and the authorities, may not have deliberately sought to limit the discussion on all the aspects of the liberation of the camps, but its chosen strategy of 'pick and choose' implicitly limited the emergence of a wider-based debate about the nature of Nazism. Especially, the Vansittartist notion of collective German guilt was hardly taken into consideration; in Sweden the papers discussed British public opinion and occasionally contested the wisdom of Vansittartism. In Finland, by contrast, Vansittartism as a concept was not even considered. It is therefore possible to see that for the Finns, the issue of co-belligerency with Nazi Germany was one that was best avoided. Also, since the Finnish-German relationship had been military oriented, and the *Wehrmacht* was highly regarded for its professionalism, the Finns were reluctant to view the ordinary Germans, of which *Wehrmacht* troops were representative, as responsible for the conditions in the camps. Typically, the role of a *Wehrmacht* soldier was seen (and sometimes still is) as analogous to the Finnish soldier; both were 'defending' the fatherland, and the mainstream Finnish press did not seek to change that view. Finally, part of the explanation as to why the liberation discourse in Finland was so lame is due to the fact that no Finnish correspondent ever visited any of the camps. Initially, Swedish response was similar to the Finnish one, but it changed after the press came into direct contact with the liberated camps, first by visiting the camps, and second in the harbours of southern Sweden where over 15,000 liberated people were transported. Thus, it seems that personal contacts were crucial in shaping the way in which the liberation of the camps was framed.

## **Part II**

# **The Nuremberg Trial 1945–6 and the Holocaust through Press Discourses in Britain, Sweden and Finland**



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# 5

## Responding to the Nazi Crimes: The British Press and the Nuremberg Trial

### 5.1 Introduction

Ever since the news of the liberated concentration camps had filled the pages of British newspapers, the majority attitude of the press was that Nazi criminality, including the Final Solution, had to be recorded and remembered. Throughout the summer of 1945, the victorious Allies were wrestling with the question of how the unbelievable scenes, exposed by advancing Allied armies who liberated concentration camps, and the criminality of the Nazi regime that had made them possible, should be investigated.

As a result of difficult inter-Allied negotiations,<sup>1</sup> in an atmosphere of growing international disagreements, the effort for creating a multinational judiciary finally crystallised on 8 August 1945, when the victorious Allies together with France signed the four-power agreement that included the Charter of the International Military Tribunal.<sup>2</sup> As the Charter had it, those who would stand trial were to be charged on three different crimes (later on in the indictment these were turned into four different counts). The three crimes under the Charter were crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity,

namely, murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population, before or during the war,<sup>3</sup> or persecutions on political racial, or religious grounds in execution of or in connection with any crime within the jurisdiction of the Tribunal, whether or not in violation of domestic law of the country where perpetrated.<sup>4</sup>

The day following the agreement on the Charter, a leader article in *The Times* aired the majority view of the British press: *ex post facto*

legislation, while undesirable in principle, was not the major concern since it was seen as obvious that the crimes the Nazi regime had committed violated the most fundamental rights of individuals.<sup>5</sup> The paper therefore rejected the idea of positive law, and the principles of what had been codified in international law, in favour of natural law – or what was understood as common sense. The logic of *The Times* in this early phase is important to note, for it applies to the British press throughout the trial: legal aspects of the trial were not the main concern of the press, but the application of common sense so that ‘the truth’ about Hitler’s regime could be learnt. The idea of common sense versus law thus echoed the words of Robert Jackson’s opening speech, where civilisation in general served as a bona fide source of international law.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, among the British public there were many who thought that ‘the Nuremberg trial marked a great step in progress’<sup>7</sup> and those who wanted to see the trial from a positive perspective: ‘If we cannot trust the judges of international human Law and Order, who *is* there we can trust?’<sup>8</sup>

This chapter will investigate how the British press discussed the extermination of roughly two-thirds of Europe’s Jews, during the period that has been called the ‘Nuremberg Interregnum’.<sup>9</sup> The examination of the period will begin by looking at the wider framework of the Nuremberg trial and the ways in which the press conceptualised it. Once we have obtained a view of wider public understanding and the meaning of the trial we will investigate how the Holocaust was represented in the press discussion of the trial. It will be asked, if the British press managed to refine the muddled view on Jewish suffering that had arisen during the commentary on the liberation of the camps.

From a historiographical perspective, a further examination of the Jewish question during the trial is desired since the current historiography is a matter of an ongoing debate. On the one hand, Michael Marrus, one of the leading historians of the Holocaust, has argued that ‘after Nuremberg the murder of European Jewry could be authoritatively pointed to as an established fact of great historical importance’.<sup>10</sup> In his view, Nuremberg was the first forum in which comprehensive definition and documentation of the massacre of European Jewry was presented to a non-Jewish audience. Similarly, according to one of the earliest historians of the Holocaust, Léon Poliakov, ‘crimes against humanity at Nuremberg more often than not meant anti-Jewish persecutions and massacres, about which there was much discussion and debate’.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, Donald Bloxham has argued that the trial failed to conceptualise Nazi criminality, and it rather obfuscated a

further understanding of the Holocaust since attention was rarely given to victims.<sup>12</sup>

By adding a new dimension to the debate – focusing on the public sphere, the trial, the Holocaust and discussion of it outside the courtroom – our historical understanding of how the Holocaust was portrayed on the public sphere will be increased. Further, it is worth remembering that for the first time the Holocaust was represented to the wider public in an atmosphere of confidence and authenticity.<sup>13</sup>

## **5.2 The meaning of the trial and the press's understanding of it**

In his important work on the Nuremberg trials and the Holocaust, Donald Bloxham has discussed the British domestic opposition to the trials. According to him, there was a substantial opposition to the trials in Britain. His assertion is in many ways accurate, but it is somewhat misleading in the context of the press and the trial of the major war criminals. For example, he has taken the Manstein case as indicative of the dominant mood in Britain when it came to putting Nazi officers on trial. To this end he writes: '[o]ne case study [the case of Manstein] will serve as an illustration both of the general opposition to trials and of the nature of the specific brand of discontent with putting officers on trial'.<sup>14</sup> Presumably this passage also embodies the first Nuremberg trial of 1945–6, but the author is vague on the point.

In contrast, the trial of the twenty-two leading Nazis was enthusiastically greeted in Europe. On a larger scale, going beyond the legal terrain, it was perceived that the trial was needed to cast a light into the darkness of the Nazi regime. As *The Daily Express* put it:

The tribunal provides – and this is its first service to mankind – the answer to those who, overwhelmed by the vastness of the Nazi crimes, wondered how offences of such magnitude could be dealt with by existing law. It would clearly be intolerable, in this age, if the mere size of a crime were to disarm human justice ... the value of the judgement is ... for future warning ... one thing more the judges at Nuremberg are doing. They are writing history. They are – if not destroying – at least making harder any attempt that may be made in the days to come to re-erect those scoundrels into heroes, to falsify the evidence of the great Nazi plot, to hush up the frightful story of the concentration camps, the Jewish massacres ... the authority of judgement rests securely upon law.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, for good or ill, little doubt existed as to the trial's extra-legal role. Rather than pondering theoretical points on the merits of using legal processes as a way of clarifying historical episodes, the press opinion of the time took it for granted that the trial had an immensely important pedagogic role too.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, the press's attitude was an important counter-weight for the section of society that was unwilling to see the trial's educational function: 'All the world [sic] knows everyone of them is guilty over and over, so why the trials?', was how a middle-aged housewife from Sheffield viewed the trial.<sup>17</sup> However, not all viewed the trial from such a negative perspective. In order to understand the public enthusiasm for the trial one must look beyond the uneasiness of opinion about putting German officers on trial towards the late 1940s – the topic that Bloxham has used as a wider-scale indicator of the trial's unpopularity.<sup>18</sup>

When the trial finally opened on 20 November 1945, it captured the attention of the British and the world's press alike.<sup>19</sup> Two themes dominated. First, the press was full of general meanings of the trial, openly advocating the didactic function it was to serve: 'Nuremberg trial will make history – no future Germany will have any excuse for saying that justice was not done', *The Daily Telegraph* argued on its editorial page.<sup>20</sup> According to *The Daily Herald* the trial was about us all versus the Nazi clique.<sup>21</sup> A *Daily Express* article, appearing on the editorial page, clearly reiterated a point that the press universally recognised: the lasting value of the trial was that it tore open the Third Reich for scrutiny: its organisational procedures and the premeditated plots of its leaders to plunge the world into war.<sup>22</sup> A *Mass-Observer* thought enthusiastically that 'the British public ... will learn more about the history of Nazism from these trials than they did when everything was happening under their noses'.<sup>23</sup> *The Manchester Guardian* shared the press's overall attitude but not without caution. In its leader article on 24 November, the paper argued that there was a compelling need to record the trial, but warned at the same time that its value could be lost should there be any doubt about the fairness and the completeness of the proceedings.<sup>24</sup> The day after the trial had opened the paper placed weight on Reich Marshal Hermann Goering's defence counsel, Dr Otto Stahmer's, argument: the trial relied on *ex post facto* legislation and therefore did not rest on solid jurisprudential ground.<sup>25</sup> Thus, *The Manchester Guardian* showed a more reserved attitude towards the trial than the other newspapers as far as purely legal reasoning was concerned.

Second, the press missed no chance to describe the looks and behaviour of the top Nazis in the dock as well as their relationships

with one another. This was, at any rate, the first real opportunity to study the men who had brought human misery on an unimaginable scale. Furthermore, for the British this meant observing their chief enemies. *The Daily Mirror* described how the top Nazis received their charges. According to the paper, the ex-Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop appeared tired and sluggish, the Deputy Führer Rudolf Hess did not know how to behave and Goering's detention, it seemed to the observer, had not changed his arrogant character. Adhering to the most typical Nazi representation (also prominently displayed earlier during the Belsen trial), the paper described Seyss-Inquart, the Gauleiter of Holland, as a simple, uneducated worker.<sup>26</sup> In an IQ test conducted by the prison psychologist Gustav Gilbert before the trial opened, Seyss-Inquart had scored a much above average 141.<sup>27</sup> *The Daily Herald* recorded how 'Nuremberg Nazis begin to turn on each other: Frick betrays Goering as purge killer'.<sup>28</sup> On showing the riveting atrocity film, dully called '*Nazi Concentration Camp*', *The Daily Express* observed that the ex-Governor-General of the General Government (Poland) Hans Frank cried during the film and the Minister of Economics Hjalmar Schacht refused to look while Julius Streicher, the editor of anti-Semitic magazine *Der Stürmer*, remained cool, smirking at the images that depicted a British soldier bulldozing piles of bodies into a mass grave.<sup>29</sup> As Lawrence Douglas has observed, the focus on the Nazi defendants meant that one was left in the dark 'about what the tribunal actually saw' in the film; it may have been that the film was meant to prove the defendant's guilt, but what the supposed guilt was all about remained fuzzy for the readers.<sup>30</sup>

On the whole, there is little doubt that the press was nothing but enthusiastic about the trial. Even when the general interest in the trial began to fade in the early months of 1946, the press habitually reminded its readers of its importance. Moreover, the prevalent press attitude, which enthusiastically supported the trial, did not change during the year-long proceedings. On the closing of the trial, and after the verdicts had been reached, the overwhelming majority of the press thought it a successful and highly respectful process. A fair illustration is an editorial in *The Daily Mirror*, which argued that despite the obvious verdict, the point was not just about charging the men in the dock with their crimes, but ascertaining their responsibility in the public domain too.<sup>31</sup>

*The Daily Express* columnist wrote on the editorial page how he had remained doubtful about the trial until now, when the verdicts had been reached. According to him the proceedings had been, despite all

the difficulties, impartial and transparent.<sup>32</sup> The only major complaint was that the tribunal had no German participation and as a consequence failed to achieve German public confidence in the proceedings. Even *The Manchester Guardian*, the most sceptical voice on the purpose of the trial, cannot be said to have opposed it – only some of the procedures used by the tribunal. The overriding importance of the trial lay in its presenting of the account of Nazi wrongdoing to the world. Victor's justice and applied double-standards were, however, troubling issues.<sup>33</sup> So, overall the press defended the need of the trial and supported it on the premise of its historical importance, and on the importance of disclosing the criminality of Nazism, so that there could be no German self-exculpation as had happened after the First World War. The legal arguments on retroactivity and victor's justice were voiced, but the didactic function of the trial took centre stage as far as the press and the wider masses were concerned.

When there was more specific rhetoric on the trial, it usually revolved around Goering. *The Times's* reporter R. W. Cooper was correct in noting that 'the record of Nuremberg that goes down to history is vividly coloured by the swashbuckling, Rabelaisian quality of his words and personality'.<sup>34</sup> The following sample headlines are a fair illustration, and could be multiplied many times over:

'Goering says: I accept responsibility'

'Goering wants fight'

'Goering – Prime mover in Nazi preparations'<sup>35</sup>

Essentially, Goering's stand in the dock caused worries as to how the Germans would receive his arguments. The press was concerned that the weak German nation would rally behind Goering's ebullient defence. According to *The Daily Express*, British and American authorities faced a serious problem: on the one hand, if they were to hush Goering's defence, the Germans could blame them for censorship. On the other, if they were to publish Goering's cunning defence, the nation might come together to support him and Nazism again.<sup>36</sup> It was hardly surprising that Goering was in the spotlight of Nuremberg reporting. As Richard Overy has observed, apart from his extrovert yet egoistic character, he was the only one alive from the 'central quartet' of Nazi leaders, since Hitler, Himmler and Goebbels were already dead.<sup>37</sup> A *Mass-Observer* thought similarly, noting that 'many of the chief villains' had 'left the stage' and the public 'was left only with Goering'.<sup>38</sup>

As a whole, the wilting interest in the trial was temporarily resumed when Goering's defence began on 8 March 1946. Moreover, Goering's defence offers a good chance to examine how the press in Britain still concentrated on the perpetrators through nationalistic views, shaped by the enemy images. After Jackson's failed cross-examination of Goering, and the concerns that the press expressed (as quoted above), the British press took much pride from the fact that the British prosecutor Sir David Maxwell Fyfe got the better of him. According to *The Daily Herald*, the British prosecutor nearly drove Goering crazy by giving him the lesson of his life.<sup>39</sup> Importantly the issue that brought decisive victory to the British prosecutor was an examination of Goering's knowledge of the extermination of the Jews – the issue that almost made the defendant lose his poise.<sup>40</sup>

However, the more typical context of these articles was that the British prosecutor had crushed Goering's seemingly cunning defence. Over the course of a few weeks, when Goering was in the witness stand, the popular British press was more interested in describing Goering's role in matters of direct relevance to Britain, rather than the Holocaust. Ordering the murder of captured British RAF officers was one of these issues.<sup>41</sup> In general, the murder of the British pilots featured regularly during the trial.<sup>42</sup> Another topic the press displayed prominently was the V rockets. According to *The Daily Mirror*, Goering regretted that he did not have more V-2s,<sup>43</sup> while *The Daily Herald* told how Goering felt sorry for not having more V-1s.<sup>44</sup> For the majority of the British readers, the meaning of Goering's words was clear – Goering, and all the Nazis, were still warmongering enemies who regretted that they could not bring even more destruction to Britain, as a Mass-Observation diarist wrote in her diary: 'Two hours sleep. Dreamed a V-1 air raid and was walking madly up and down passages very frightened by drowning.'<sup>45</sup>

It is against this background that it is useful to evaluate the press's reactions to other more detailed issues that featured in the trial, including the discussion on the Jews. If the didactic function of the trial was so enthusiastically championed in principle and practised through Goering-centred depiction, how did the extermination of two-thirds of Europe's Jews emerge in the didactic-pedagogical terrain of the trial?

### 5.3 Jewish suffering and the British press

Justice Robert Jackson's opening speech at the Nuremberg trial made a clear reference to the extermination of the Jews – indicating that the



matter was firmly in the mind of the prosecution, even if not at the heart of it. Jackson observed:

The most savage and numerous crimes planned and committed by the Nazis were those against the Jews. It is my purpose to show a plan and design to which all Nazis were fanatically committed, to annihilate all Jewish people.<sup>46</sup>

Yet, if the prosecution recognised the importance of the extermination of the Jews, how was it discussed, and, more importantly, how did the press consider these discussions? For one, Jackson's words on the Nazi racial war were not echoed in the British press the following day – unlike in the case of the Finnish press. Only *The Times* briefly noted that, according to the evidence that the trial would present, Jewish suffering had an important role. It told how the Warsaw ghetto was destroyed by the Nazis and how they also aimed to wipe out the Jewish race.<sup>47</sup>

The press in Britain reported the news about the Jewish genocide as represented at the trial along the same lines as in the case of the liberation of the concentration camps. The approach can be said to be elliptical; discussion on the Jews hardly ever featured as the main topic and the focus was not on the victims, but still on perpetrators. A fair example of the press's attitude is the way in which *The Daily Herald* reported Wilhelm Hoettl's testimony in which he reiterated his conversation with Adolf Eichmann. Tellingly, the paper's discussion on the Nazi genocide was hidden under a much more general front-page topic, framed around Goering's defence. Hoettl's disclosure, one of the main pieces of 'Holocaust news' at the trial and central to establishing the key facts on the Holocaust, that the Nazis had exterminated approximately 6,000,000 Jews, did not even make it into the heading of the news item. Similarly, the article did not mention Adolf Eichmann by name. Further, the article hardly managed to create an impression that the extermination of the 6 million Jews was a systematic process.<sup>48</sup> Therefore, the question is: how should such nonchalant reporting be interpreted?

The ways in which a number of different discourses shaped the representation of the Nazi crimes becomes evident while reading the popular *Daily Mirror*. First, when the focus was on the trial and other German issues, the discourse on 'the Hun' was the dominant one. Second, a more general point to bear in mind, is the fact that news that had news value within the domestic setting dominated the headlines.

On 15 December, when the canonical figure of six million murdered Jews was considered, the main news story of the day was a large-scale police operation in West End.<sup>49</sup> A few weeks later Hermann Gräbe's testimony on killing Jews in Ukraine in 1942 escaped the paper's attention, while, in contrast, it was consistently reported in the Swedish and Finnish press. Instead, the main news item from Germany reads 'Hun radio goes Nazi'.<sup>50</sup> As these examples show, it was evident that the more systematic approach to the Jewish genocide was shunned by the nationalistic frame of reporting – which often concentrated on the mistreatment of the Allied soldiers (especially the killings of the captured Allied (British) pilots) by 'the Huns'.

Otto Ohlendorf's and Dieter Wisliceny's testimonies, at least, were noted in the British press. A *Manchester Guardian* headline on page 5 ran insightfully: 'German Army's complicity in mass executions – disclosures by an S. S. General – Slaughter of Jews after retreat from Russia.' The article, under a subheading 'Wiping out the Jews', tells how the

sweeping nature of this final solution of the Jewish problem was made clear by S. S. Major Dieter Wisliceny ... [he] explained that there were three special periods of Nazi activity directed against the Jews. These were planned deportation up to 1940, concentration of Europe's Jews in ghettos in Poland and Eastern territories, and, finally, the extermination of the Jews, which lasted until Himmler ordered its cessation in October 1944.<sup>51</sup>

In other papers, the weight of discourse lay elsewhere. *The Daily Express*, far less sympathetic towards the plight of the Jews than *The Manchester Guardian*, simply noted how Otto Ohlendorf's record of slaughter stood as 90,000.<sup>52</sup> The fact that his victims were Jews could have easily been added. Similarly, *The Daily Telegraph* talked about the deaths of 90,000 Soviet citizens<sup>53</sup> – adhering (ironically, for the *Telegraph* was an anti-Soviet paper) to the view of the Soviet prosecution, which considered all victims as victims of fascism.<sup>54</sup> Evidently, the focus was on the perpetrators and when the Jews were mentioned at all they tended to take a passive role, meaning that they were only considered as the objects of German brutality.

Projecting an image of a colourless 'desk killer' and bureaucratic Prussian, *The Daily Express* noted that this repulsive killer, Ohlendorf, had a mousy face. His so-called humanity, as the paper explained, meant that he preferred an orderly military style execution of his victims in which the executioner's responsibility was non-existent.

The method was preferred in order to spare his troops from unnecessary psychological harm.<sup>55</sup> Thus, the paper noted in ironic tones how utterly perverted Ohlendorf's humanity was. Importantly, Ohlendorf was only a more specific illustration of the more general German barbarism.<sup>56</sup> On the other hand, no words were spent on discussing how innocent victims (Jews and otherwise) suffered from Germans' perverted humanism. These issues were left for the readers to work out, outside the frame of newspaper reporting.

Other important segments of Holocaust evidence were missed out too. The evidence of the destruction of the Warsaw ghetto was mentioned, but only in passing, while in Sweden and Finland, as we will see, it was prominently displayed – in a few cases making it to the front page. *The Manchester Guardian*, again, was one of the few papers that chronicled the destruction of the ghetto as presented at the trial.<sup>57</sup> *The Daily Telegraph* carried a short article on the event, mentioning that the whole ghetto was burned.<sup>58</sup>

During the last session of the trial in 1945, the destruction of the Jews was discussed in connection with the SS. The prosecutors were making the case for the overwhelming criminality of the organisation and as evidence several Nazi documents were exhibited.<sup>59</sup> Newspaper reporting of the court session was sporadic at best. Out of all examined British papers, *only The Daily Telegraph* noted the matter, on page 5 and in a way that hardly conveyed the horror the Jews had faced. Rather, in line with the imagery of the Hun, Jews were only seen as objects of a well-organised German machinery of destruction.<sup>60</sup>

Similarly, significant testimonies on Jewish suffering such as Madame Vaillant-Couturier's (on Auschwitz) and Abraham Sutzkever's (on the terrorisation of Jews in Vilna) were elided too. Moreover, it cannot be attributed to accidental oversight, since the press in Nordic countries depicted these testimonies – even if not necessarily from the vantage point of Jewish suffering (as will be discussed in the following chapters). In April 1946 Rudolf Höss riveted the courtroom with his testimony on Auschwitz. However, important as it was for advancing the trial's and future historians' quest to understand the Holocaust,<sup>61</sup> the British press failed to report and mediate it to the public.

As a whole, it is generally agreed among historians that the trial failed to establish the differences between concentration and extermination camps.<sup>62</sup> Study of the British press's depiction of the camps supports such a view. During the Belsen trial, which took place before the trial of the major war criminals at Nuremberg, some discussion on Auschwitz was applied, but on the whole the reporting of the trial focused on

Josef Kramer and Irma Grese, since they illuminated the depravity of Nazism and the moral legitimacy of the British war effort, although some important testimony on Auschwitz was also heard.<sup>63</sup> Importantly, the Belsen trial as well as the IMT also offered justification for the ongoing military occupation in the name of re-education programme. After all, as the press habitually argued, one of the primary purposes of these trials was to re-educate the Germans about the ways of democracy. Since Belsen was liberated by the British forces it could be used as a further illumination of the contribution Britain had made to the ending of the abhorrent Nazi tyranny. As a consequence, the prominence of Belsen over Auschwitz was established in the immediate aftermath of the liberation of the camps, and since then Belsen has become synonymous with the Nazi camp system – whether concentration or extermination.<sup>64</sup> Further confusions were advanced in the press. In late April 1946, *The Daily Express* cited Martin Niemöller that Germans had killed 6 million Jews and they all were to blame for the crime. Although Niemöller's narrative was certainly right when he claimed that the conditions in the camps were far more awful than newspapers had shown, more perplexing issues prevailed: according to him, nearly 240,000 bodies were burnt in Dachau's crematorium. Therefore, the piece explicitly made the connection between Dachau and the extermination process.<sup>65</sup>

Extermination camps, especially the 'Aktion Reinhard camps', seldom featured in the press commentary.<sup>66</sup> On 15 December 1945, a *Daily Telegraph* article on page 4 discussed Hans Frank's indictment, mentioning the industrial-like killing in Treblinka, Belzec and Sobibor.<sup>67</sup> On the one hand, the paper expressed that mechanical mass murder took place in these little-known camps, while on the other, no further examination or discussion of them took place. The reporting was devoid of any real context in which the extermination was carried out. Earlier on, *The Daily Express* had mentioned different counts on which the indicted would be charged. On war crimes it was told that the accused had organised calculated and meticulous mass murder of various national groups – including Jews. Further on, a subheading reverts to the more common discourse on victims when it discussed the number of Soviet victims. According to the paper 1.5 million Russians were exterminated in Majdanek while overall around 4 million people were killed in Auschwitz (including Britons and Americans). In Lwow, alone, the paper held, 700,000 Russians were massacred.<sup>68</sup> The recourse to the identification of victims as (chiefly) Russians perhaps comes as no surprise, since it followed the logic of the Russian prosecution, whose interpretation of the victims was essentially undifferentiated – all

victims were considered on one merit only: they were victims of Fascist aggression. More striking, yet telling of the overall frame of reporting, was the fact that the death toll of Auschwitz (which was exaggerated) prominently placed Britons and Americans among the victims while no Jews were mentioned.

#### 5.4 The questions of German guilt and re-education

If there was something that hindered the better recognition of what it meant to be a victim of Nazism, it was essentially the continuing focus on the Nazis and the 'new' Germans. We have already noted the Goering-centred portrayal of the trial. Overall, when considering Germany's future the press showed an ambiguous attitude. Sometimes the press discussed what it was like to live in the defeated Germany while often also reverting to the prominent notions of Germans as innately wicked. In order to understand the strength of the ongoing popular British nationalism, a lengthy quotation from a *Daily Express* column (on the editorial page) is necessary. Harking back to Vansittartist notions, the writer (Selkirk Pantton) argued:

Germany, the problem child of Hitler dumped on our doorstep, is now hitting us below the belt. ... The Germans, with that one-track mentality of theirs which only enables them to see their own troubles and none of the harm they have done to Europe, are convinced that it is our duty to feed them. ... Fritz and his frau in the street are not repentant. They have no sense of guilt. ... If you talk about the Nuremberg trial they shrug their shoulders and say, 'Ah, yes, that was the Nazis', just as though the German people as a whole had not stood firmly behind Hitler in his heyday. ... More dangerous than this attitude of the German man and woman in the street is that the men of 'new' Germany, the 'anti-Fascists', still think and talk in Nazi terms. They show that intolerance is not Nazi but German.<sup>69</sup>

In early December 1945, when the trial of the top Nazis had only been going for less than three weeks *The Daily Herald* lamented on its editorial page how the Germans were not interested in grappling with their collective guilt, and how the trial had failed to bring the point home.<sup>70</sup>

On the other hand, when it came to discussion of impending social catastrophe – the famine and diseases – the British press showed more understanding towards German suffering. *The Daily Mirror* frequently

wrote about the German plight.<sup>71</sup> A leader article in *The Daily Herald* noted that Tory papers were exaggerating British plight while ignoring most of Europe, whose inhabitants lived on under 1,500 kcal per day.<sup>72</sup> A few days earlier a reader of *The Daily Telegraph* had not been prepared to believe what was transpiring in Germany. She was of the opinion that it was ridiculous for the British to help the needy ones in German cities and towns while Germans who were living in the countryside did nothing to help.<sup>73</sup>

However, the two things, the hunger and the Germans' seemingly glorified version of their recent past, were not always understood in the context of a defeated nation. A more prominent context was that of the persistence of Nazism and militarism in Germany. According to a *Daily Express* column, indignation against the Germans was justified. It was unreasonable to pay so much attention to reconstructing Germany while Britain was in urgent need of reconstruction in order to save the British way of life. In any case, the column argued in line with Vansittartism – reconstructing Germany would only show the way to the next war against Britain.<sup>74</sup>

*The Manchester Guardian* warned that a hunger-stricken Germany was fertile soil for new radicalism, whether Communism or Nazism.<sup>75</sup> In a more blatant tone, *The Daily Express* argued that most Germans were longing for the Nazi era since their lives were far better in those days.<sup>76</sup> Swedish writer and journalist Stig Dagerman offered some thought-provoking criticism of this type of newspaper reporting, which was also in popular currency in Sweden as well as in Britain in 1945–6. Dagerman, who toured around Germany during 1946 and subsequently published an account of his trip, *Tysk Höst* (German Autumn),<sup>77</sup> which was translated into English in 1988.<sup>78</sup> As a talented writer, full of piercing perceptions, he offered a sharp critique of the press's portrayals of the German problem:

He [newspaper reporter] considers himself a realist, but no one is less of a realist than he is ... [h]is lack of realism here consists in the fact that he regards the Germans as one solid block ... and not as a multitude of starving and freezing individuals. He is particularly offended by the answer to his elaborate question [if life was better under Nazis] because he considers it the duty of the German cellar-people to extract political lessons from the damp of their cellars ... the mere presentation of the matter in such terms indicates an absence of both realism and psychological insight.<sup>79</sup>

## 5.5 Conclusion

Overall, the absence of such insight as Stig Dagerman was calling for was manifested in the British reporting of the 'Nuremberg interregnum'. While many facts and the background to Jewish suffering, for example, were discussed at the trial and outside its confines, the press, nevertheless, treated this news briefly and in the inner pages of the papers. Similarly, the main concern was often on the problem of re-educating Germans and consequently on the fear that Nazism was still alive and kicking in many quarters in Germany. The fear that Goering's testimony would rally the Germans behind Nazism again was a demonstration of ongoing uneasiness about Nazism. Similarly, Goering as a central figure of the trial, the main enemy, and the press's main interest, also meant that the Holocaust was shadowed by his overwhelming presence. On the other hand, the Holocaust, even if in a circumscribed version, became rooted in the emerging memory of the war years, due to the already existing memory of Belsen, the Nuremberg trial and the problem of displaced persons. The frequent reference to the Jews and their recent past may not have introduced any sophisticated understanding of the breadth and depth of the Nazi genocide, but it did foster the public awareness of what had happened to the Jews through a cumulative and multi-layered discourse on their fate.

# 6

## Victors, Vanquished and Neutrals: The Swedish Press and the Nuremberg Trial

### 6.1 Introduction

After the shock of the ghastly revelations from the liberated concentration camps began to wane in late spring 1945, there was little written on the Nazi genocide in the Swedish press until autumn 1945. As elsewhere, the attention and energies of the newspaper media were directed to covering other tumultuous events of the world. For example, the Swedish press followed closely the developments in its neighbouring countries – not least Finland, which seemed to be on the verge of a Soviet-instigated coup, and therefore caused a lot of anxiety and discussion in the Swedish press. In line with the concept of Nordic Brotherhood, as discussed in Chapter 3, the Swedish press functioned as a channel of publicity for the liberal Finnish press, which was increasingly restricted as to what it could print and say about its mighty neighbour.<sup>1</sup>

Yet judging from the newspaper coverage of the situation in Germany, it is evident that Swedish people were interested in knowing what went on there. Importantly, towards autumn 1945 news from and about Germany was becoming more prominent again, as a result of the approaching trial of the major Nazi war criminals. This chapter will investigate how the general situation in Germany, the Nuremberg Trial and ultimately the extermination of 6 million Jews was discussed and represented in the Swedish press. The focus will be on the Nuremberg Trial for it not only dealt with the issue of German criminality (individual and collective) but also enabled, indeed encouraged, a wider examination of Germany's fate, past and present, as well as future. We will examine how the trial at Nuremberg depicted the depth and breadth of the brutality to which Nazism had sunk, with special reference to the extermination of Europe's Jews. Did the Swedish press carry on the



thoughtful insight with regard to the Holocaust as it had done in writing about the liberated camps, and which factors shaped the responses of the Swedish press to the Nuremberg Trial?

Theoretically, whenever a major trial takes place, it faces a number of dilemmas. Arguably one of the biggest problems for a trial like the IMT at Nuremberg in 1945–6, was how to negotiate a thin path between a show trial and impunity.<sup>2</sup> Since in these cases the window of opportunity for laying out the rules of justice is so limited, there can easily be lapses to one side or the other of that path. In other words, if a judgment is reached that seeks to avoid the notion of victor's justice, there is immediately danger of granting impunity to the defendants, or vice versa. With regard to punishing German perpetrators the historical view is gloomy, pointing towards impunity, as a title of Tom Bower's work makes clear: *Blind Eye to Murder: Britain, America and the Purging of Nazi Germany – a Pledge Betrayed*.<sup>3</sup> Frank M. Buscher has also written how the Allies failed to negotiate this difficult question:

the war crimes programme did little to change German attitudes. Cries of foul play and 'victor's justice' accompanied the proceedings. ... The constant attacks against the Allies, especially the United States ... demonstrated that the war crimes programme had not re-educated and democratized the Germans.<sup>4</sup>

Another problematic question was to what extent it was individual criminal guilt that trials seek to establish and to what extent it is collective guilt and a wider historical context, in which the crimes were perpetrated. While there were – or are – no definite answers, it can be said that for good or ill, great historical trials tend to involve elements of both tendencies. At Nuremberg the prosecution made it clear that the aim of the trial went beyond the question of individual guilt: 'One of the primary purposes of the trial ... is to document and dramatize for contemporary consumption and for history the means and methods employed by the leading Nazis.'<sup>5</sup>

## 6.2 Individual guilt in the Swedish press discourse

It is appropriate to start with the question of individual guilt, as from the narrow legalistic viewpoint the purpose of a trial, any trial, is, as Hannah Arendt has argued, to 'render justice and nothing else'.<sup>6</sup> Leaving aside the merit of Arendt's view as trials such as Nuremberg also function as a form of history lesson, it is important to examine the issue

of individual guilt as it also informs us more about the nature of a wider problem of levying guilt in Germany. Indeed, as we shall see, the way in which individual guilt was discussed in the courtroom offered the press a convenient way to engage with the wider notion of collective guilt. At its most basic level, the top Nazis constructed this avenue themselves as they (apart from unrepentant Goering) eagerly tried to shift the blame on to someone else's shoulders – eventually leading to the question of to what extent the German people ought to be seen as guilty as well. However, the road from individual to collective guilt went through Hitler, Himmler, Goebbels and other top Nazis – dead or alive. Hence, in order to have a correct perspective on the question of German guilt, we will begin with these individuals.

First of all, it must be remembered that apart from many sensational disclosures and pieces of evidence on the Nazi genocide that the trial offered, it was also a perfect opportunity for the press to learn more about the leading Nazi personalities who had plunged Europe into the abyss, as has already been noted with respect to the British press. After all, many of the men in the dock were almost virtually unknown to the wider masses, while interest towards the better-known Nazis was also assured. The world was keen to know more about the men who had been second to Hitler, and about the relationships between these men. It was no wonder, then, that on the opening of the trial, *Stockholms-Tidningen*, for example, covered widely what the defendants looked like rather than what was said. According to the paper's front-page article, Goering was very composed, but the sight of Russian uniforms made him lose colour on his face; the *Wehrmacht* Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel looked colourless as if he was going to have a stroke; while, as the sub-headline made it clear, the ex-Chancellor and wartime ambassador to Turkey, Franz von Papen, looked the most elegant of the defendants.<sup>7</sup> In the same manner, Victor Vinde, who covered the trial for *Dagens Nyheter* as well as writing for Gothenburg-based *GHT*, observed in his book, *Nürnberg i blyxtljus* (Nuremberg in the spotlight) that the defendants do 'not look like great men, not like the ones with world historical significance, but neither do they look like bandits or troublemakers (*skurkar*). They look so unbelievably banal and insignificant.'<sup>8</sup>

The days after the charges against the men in the dock were published in the press, *Dagens Nyheter* dedicated a lot of space to describing the reactions and looks of the defendants rather than sensational charges, which among other things recapitulated the murder of Europe's Jews. Instead, issues such as who was defending whom and what the defendants thought about the charges formed the content

of the initial reporting.<sup>9</sup> Why did the press report in such an elliptical manner? According to Lawrence Douglas, this type of narration of the trial was 'not accidental' because the defendants' legal culpability was 'presupposed' from the start and this, in turn, meant that the actual events did not require investigation as such. Instead, the journalists and other commentators asked 'readers to see the defendants through the reflection of atrocities in their eyes'. In other words, observing how the defendants reacted to the crimes with which they were charged was more interesting than actually concentrating on what the court in fact saw.<sup>10</sup> So what kind of diet of news was fed to the Swedish public?

One of the most prominent themes in the Nuremberg Trial that the Swedish press concentrated on was an investigation of Hitler's role, as *Expressen's* editorial argued: 'his actions are examined there and the world will – which is of great importance – through documentary and witness's evidence confirm a miserable picture of the man who ... became a German ruler and the world's menace'.<sup>11</sup> In recent decades research into Hitler and his administrative machinery has persuasively shown that the 'Hitler State' was essentially a chaotic system of governance, 'a jungle of competing and overlapping agencies of rule',<sup>12</sup> yet working towards a shared goal. If 'working towards the Führer' meant for Nazis essentially a chaotic system of governance, the press was also finding it hard to fathom how the Nazi system worked. For our purposes, it suffices to say that 'the Hitler State' offered a framework for shifting the blame for Nazis' actions between various Nazi organisations in the postwar trials, since both individuals and institutions could always lay the blame on someone else. Significantly, this function has also left its mark on the historiography of the Third Reich, with typical arguments pointing towards Hitler's and the SS's overwhelming culpability while other institutions, especially the *Wehrmacht*, seemed to escape guilt. This paradigmatic view of the Third Reich has only been corrected recently.<sup>13</sup> Wilhelm Keitel's comment after having seen the horrendous film at Nuremberg that depicted scenes from the liberated concentration camps, is a case in point in the early differentiation between the SS, Wehrmacht and the Germans: 'It's terrible. When I see such things, I am ashamed of being a German! – It was those dirty SS swine!'<sup>14</sup>

Yet, the extent to which the Nuremberg Trial perpetuated 'the Hitler myth', seeing him as an omnipotent dictator and conforming to the more typical image of totalitarianism, should not be exaggerated. The same is also to a large extent true with regard to the SS. The question to ask is how, in fact, the culpability of Hitler and his most enthusiastic followers was seen in the public sphere when the leading surviving Nazis

attempted to shift the blame from themselves to the others, essentially to Hitler, Himmler and the SS. How did the press contribute to establishing 'the Hitler myth' and, on the other hand, how did it look beyond Hitler's and the leading Nazis' guilt?

From the outset of the trial, the press in Sweden reported the defendants' attempts to show that they did not share the responsibility of the horrendous acts that were examined in the courtroom. Hitler planned the war against peace, and the Army had no choice but to obey, as they had sworn an oath of loyalty; then Hitler took control of military operations; Hitler only delegated his wishes to unfold the 'Final Solution' to very few people and so on. 'Hitler-hostile group image among the Nuremberg prisoners' was how *Stockholms-Tidningen's* news article reported the growing attempts at self-exculpation of the men in the dock in December 1945.<sup>15</sup> *Svenska Dagbladet* reported that Julius Streicher, in his own words, had never even read Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. And in any case, Streicher had never had real influence on the Reich's policy on anti-Semitism or anything else.<sup>16</sup> In other words, the extreme and exterminationalist anti-Semitism of which Streicher was accused was purely of Hitler's own making and now Streicher had to suffer as a scapegoat since Hitler was dead. Ironically, some of Streicher's arguments were not incorrect. For example, it is now known that Streicher did not have any real stake in power and was despised by even the Nazis themselves. However, as Marrus has pointed out, his denial of not having incited others to murder Jews was dubious at best.<sup>17</sup> Victor Vinde, too, was strongly opposed to 'the Hitler myth':

It was not only a small clique of professional criminals [Nazis] who led the German people into barbarity and lust for murder. It was German Reich Marshals and Field Marshals, Great Admirals [Admiral of the Fleet] and Admirals, scientists and professors, industry bosses and lawyers – people who stood on the shoulders of generations of education and social refinement ... [a]nd the German High Command has a crushing responsibility [for the German crimes] which will forever taint its reputation.<sup>18</sup>

On 15 March 1946, the front-page news of *Stockholms-Tidningen* reported Goering having said that he 'convinced Hitler about Sweden's willingness to remain neutral'.<sup>19</sup> Apparently, without Goering's foresight, Hitler would have invaded Sweden before the Allies would do so. In similar tones, *Dagens Nyheter* reported von Neurath's interview under a heading 'I despised Nazi party's fighting methods' in which von

Neurath told how 'before Hitler, I protested on many occasions his anti-religious policy and emphasised that I disliked the excesses against Jews, although I felt that their general influence, and influence on cultural life ought to be eliminated'.<sup>20</sup>

Hitler was dead, but the full trail of destruction he had left behind was only just being established through the Nazi documents displayed in the courtroom. On the question of guilt *Expressen* opined that it was not 'only the guilt of the German war criminals that is being established ... but it also emerges that Hitler ... was in fact more of a dwarf than a great figure'. Moving on from individual guilt to collective (although in fairly moderate tone), the paper continued that it was 'all the worse for the Germans that they had chosen such a bungler as their leader'. That the defeat of Germany was so horrendous was directly attributable to Hitler's personal stupidity, the article argued. The argument that the paper presented portrayed Hitler as an impulsive fool rather than a tyrannical lunatic with a preconceived plan to conquer the world. In addition, as the paper concluded, the guilt was not only Hitler's – although he bore the responsibility for the chaotic downfall – but also that of his ardent supporters and of the masses who chose to co-operate with him.

On 27 July, the *Dagens Nyheter* foreign news headline on page 6, taken from Justice Jackson's speech, reminded readers that the actions of Hitler were actions of the defendants too.<sup>21</sup> To bring into the focus the collective nature of the Nazi criminality, the paper, like Jackson, reminded its readers that Germany had exterminated two-thirds of Europe's Jews. The article then referred to this murder as 'mass production industry'. No doubt, such language conjured up an image of efficiently run German business, taking place in 'the gas chambers and ovens of Auschwitz, Dachau and Buchenwald'. More importantly, the text had a line running from Hitler through the Nazi elite to the wider spectrum of German society since 'mass production industry', by definition, cannot be run without the involvement of the masses. Similarly, *Svenska Dagbladet's* news article lamented on two occasions that it was Hitler and Himmler who were constantly blamed for the German catastrophe, while the others, especially the leading Nazis (with the exception of Hermann Goering and Hans Frank) sought to evade their personal responsibility.<sup>22</sup> Victor Vinde extended the guilt question to cover the defence lawyers as well. In a sarcastic manner he argued that

most of the lawyers – of whom many are Nazis from their heart and soul – do not understand what the trial is about. According to their view, what is at stake is a question of grade difference between the gas chambers in Auschwitz and a German spy who has been

sentenced to be electrocuted in Sing-Sing prison [in New York]. ... The defence lawyers thus may argue long and extensively in order to show that neither here nor there was two or three hundred thousand Jews or Ukrainians killed – it might have only been fifty or the maximum of eighty thousand! The cruel methods used, they also will not acknowledge. ... It was Himmler's, or it was Hitler's making. At least it is for certain that *my* client cannot be blamed. And [*sic*], one after another they add: neither the German people, nor us personally [can be blamed].<sup>23</sup>

On the whole, like Vinde, the press did not believe in the defendants' attempts to exonerate themselves from the crimes for which they were held responsible. A good illustration of this is *Stockholms-Tidningen's* brief news article in late March 1946 with regard to Ribbentrop's arguments that he had objected to the persecutions against the Jews and the Church. According to the report, the evidence represented at Nuremberg ran counter to his arguments, and 'it was shown that Ribbentrop was one of the most ruthless Nazis in Jewish persecution'.<sup>24</sup>

The more problematic question for the press to fathom was the extent to which the German people should be seen as culpable for the crimes that were examined at Nuremberg. It was easy enough to make the basic connections between the Nazi elite, including Hitler, and the rest of Germany. But how should the Germans be treated in the new post-Nazi era? How should they be made to realise their own guilt?

### 6.3 Ongoing questions of German collective guilt in the Swedish press

In great historical trials the extension of individual guilt to a wider notion of collective guilt is always manifested. When crimes perpetrated are of such a magnitude as the Holocaust, it becomes evident 'that punishing an individual does not come close to measuring up to it'.<sup>25</sup> Further, a strict legal framework where the focus is necessarily fixed on individual leader(s) runs a risk of introducing an alibi for the population at large, and to absolve it from responsibility.<sup>26</sup> The press in Sweden was keenly aware of these matters. Introducing a wider context of German culpability, *Svenska Dagbladet's* front-page article argued that with regard to the proceedings at Nuremberg:

[T]he most significant question is: how will the German people react and get themselves interested in the matter? In the first place, the Germans are preoccupied with the daily troubles [of finding] food,

warmth and clothes, and [only] thereafter about the disclosures of the Nazis' atrocities and the ruthless mass murdering in concentration camps.<sup>27</sup>

In the earliest representations of the Nazi genocide in the Swedish press, conjured up at the time when the concentration camps were being liberated, the notion of Vansittartism, an innately perverted German national character, was largely rejected, as has been shown above. Instead, the Swedish press offered a number of different explanations as to why the Germans had sunk to such depths of brutality, the bottom line being that the German national character had been infected by a stealthy poison.<sup>28</sup> However, the main focus had not been on the Germans but, perhaps surprisingly, on the victims. At Nuremberg, the roles were reversed; the victims' voices were effectively lost amid the reporting, which concentrated more on the leading Nazis as well as the nation that had stood behind the regime. When there was discussion about the fate of the victims of the Nazi extermination policies, they were often used in order to illuminate the actions of the men in the dock.

This was not surprising, however, as the newspaper media from all over the world had little choice but to adhere to the prosecution's paradigm of proof, which relied on documents as the key evidence rather than on witness accounts.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, as the examination of the leading Nazis as well as the ongoing political problems of how the defeated Germany should be treated illustrated, the immediate postwar European problems culminated in the German problem: it was continuously considered that Nazism was still alive and difficult to root out.

Indeed, the issue of re-education, or the persistence of Nazism, was very much at the forefront of the news flowing from Germany. However, *Stockholms-Tidningen* injected some optimism for the future of Germany – making a case for the trial as a didactic tool when it argued that 'the Nuremberg process is opening the eyes of the Germans about Nazi brutality'.<sup>30</sup> On the other hand, *Expressen* categorically rejected the notion of Germans being able to put the past behind them and working towards a better future. In an ironic tone the paper's editorial page in early 1946 discussed Nazism's 'conception of justice':

it should ... be imprinted on them what one of their leading experts in the area of legal scholarship, Rudolf von Jehring [sic], said in the introduction of his book 'Battle for Law' [*Der Kampf ums Recht*] published in Vienna in 1872: 'For a nation which will enjoy a respected position outwards, firm and harmonious inwards, there exists no

more precious treasure than to watch over and to take care of its people's sense of justice.'<sup>31</sup>

It is clear that in *Expressen's* opinion the Germans had miserably failed, and were still failing, to nurture people's sense of justice. The last twelve years were a clear illumination of the Germans' obliviousness to justice. In mid-February, the paper talked about the re-education of the Germans and the Nuremberg Trial. The title on page 4 reads 'Germans not guilty of waging the war – Goebbels' hate propaganda still works in people's minds.' The argument in the text was injected with overt pessimism: 'The Germans have learnt nothing yet, but they lay the blame on others. Not even the war crimes process at Nuremberg has influenced the German people in the slightest.'<sup>32</sup>

A conservative paper, *Stockholms-Tidningen*, this time shared the pessimistic view of its critical counterpart. Christer Jäderlund, who had stirred *Expressen* in April 1945 when he argued that the Germans did not know about the persecution of the Jews, had altered his tack. In late March, his article from Germany was published on the front page under the title 'Germany's desperate youth hopes for new war – Jäderlund's terrifying eyewitness report.' According to Jäderlund, Nazism was still growing among 'outlaws' who were fantasising of a 'better Hitler'. Yet, even more depressing depiction of the contemporary Germany was offered when Jäderlund quoted his interviewee: 'we had work and bread under Hitler, now we only have democracy'. But on the burning question of confessing their own shame, the interviewee explained, the Germans just could not place themselves 'on a roadside and shout: "yes, yes, we are guilty"'. The article's depressing conclusion for the future of Germany was that 'the essentials for fixing German democracy are missing'.<sup>33</sup>

Only a month later, *Stockholms-Tidningen* revisited the issue – with a similar tone. According to the paper's special correspondent in Nuremberg, Hugo Björk, there were 'scary tendencies in Germany: the hatred of Jews and sympathy for Göring & co.'. The Germans were willing to discuss the Jewish question, the story stipulated. 'It has become a fixed idea upon them, that if Hitler only had allowed the Jews to remain free, there would have been no war – not at least such a terrible bombing of German cities. It was the Jews' revenge.'<sup>34</sup> Therefore, the guilty were Hitler and, on the other hand, the Jews. As the article made it clear, the idea of the 'eternal Jew' was still very much present in Germany. This time, the war, or at least the bombing of German cities, was the making of an international Jewish conspiracy, which avenged the treatment of



their European brethren by bombing Germany flat. Vinde also grappled with the same tendency when he argued that

[d]eep in their hearts they [the Germans] believe that Hitler's treatment of the Jews was right. ... It is possible to meet so-called decent Germans who detest gas chambers and Auschwitz. It is the methods they detest, not that five or six million innocent people were killed. ... Human life means nothing any more.<sup>35</sup>

Entwined with the question of the German re-education programme was the purpose and legitimacy of the IMT to pinpoint the German problem. Conservative *Stockholms-Tidningen* published Norwegian legal expert Albert Brock-Utne's criticism of the trial in early February 1946. In the piece he pointed out three fundamental problems that hampered the legitimacy of the Tribunal. Echoing Anglo-American criticism, he argued that the application of retroactivity infringed the most fundamental foundation of the Western principles of justice – the principles that the Allies tried to re-root to Germany. Dangerously, retroactivity meant that the defendants gained a posthumous victory, since the rule of retroactivity was one of their own methods. Secondly, he argued that it was a mistake not to include German judges in the Tribunal's work; it would have been better if uncompromised German judges had led the proceedings. The high standards of a pre-Nazi German legal system could have been applied in Germany once again. Thirdly, leading to a logical conclusion, Brock-Utne argued that the process was nothing but victor's justice. An alternative would be an international body to which all parties, even the vanquished, could bring forward their cases against war crimes. The result would be that every nation's conduct would be judged according to the same civilised principles of justice.<sup>36</sup>

In a reply to Brock-Utne's arguments, *Expressen* revealed its own editorial view on the work of the trial. The first point, regarding retroactivity, *Expressen* dismissed by referring to old-established moral norms of Christianity. According to the paper, humankind had always recognised the most basic human values, as represented in monotheistic religious cultures. 'Is it not an axiom that a crime against the great spirit of community is the greatest crime of all? Göring and the others in the dock must have known, being brought up in a Christian state, the foundational ethical norms of justice.' Thus, in *Expressen's* reasoning retroactivity lost its meaning since the crimes with which the defendants were charged on a retroactive basis were in fact embedded in the ethical norms of Western cultures and customs, even if they were not

codified in positive law. On the second point, the paper simply held that had the numbers of uncompromised German judges been much greater, German high principles of law would not have sunk to Nazism. On the third point, *Expressen* advocated a need for transparent legality: the crimes of the Allies should be investigated too, but where and when remained unclear. Yet, the paper argued that at Nuremberg, the victorious countries' legal systems were also examined and tested. If they were to fail in rendering just punishment, the merits of their legal systems would be tarnished. Finally, on Brock-Utne's point of an international judiciary body, the paper simply argued that 'utopias are easy to handle in theory'.<sup>37</sup>

Sharing *Expressen's* opinion, Vinde had his misgivings about having German and neutral judges in the Tribunal. According to him there were two types of German judges. First there was a type that had been in concentration camps, and secondly Nazi associates. The problem with the first type was that they 'would have been even more partial than Anglo-Saxons [Anglo-Americans] and Russians were. With regard to the latter type, they were lacking a moral backbone to judge.' Further, the neutrals were hardly in a position to judge either, as they had 'washed their hands and refused to take sides between Nazi violence and its victims'. In any case, they would have lost their neutrality, so the argument went, 'as a human cannot remain neutral when facing gas chambers and torture cellars'.<sup>38</sup>

Generally speaking, the positive function of the trial was confirmed in leader articles that followed the judgments in early October 1946. *Svenska Dagbladet's* leader article brought up some of the contentious issues, like the Tribunal's charge of organisational guilt, which seemed to mitigate the principle of individual guilt, 'practised since the times of Socrates', and the German military's argument that 'they were [only] guilty of having sworn obedience to military leadership under all circumstances'. Despite these difficult legal viewpoints, the paper concluded that 'the awkward process has, however, been performed with exceptional precision and in a dignified manner. ... It should be desirable that the Allies would show a similar kind of capacity to co-operate in other areas'.<sup>39</sup> *Dagens Nyheter* wrote in its leader that the Tribunal had adhered to its own limits, as laid out in the indictment:

The respected judges ... are very conscious about the main apprehensions which the ... trial is subjected to. ... [A]dhering to the utmost objectivity and scrupulous examination of the material which the prosecution has exhibited, the Tribunal has balanced out the

principled objections which can be made against it. Nobody has been left un-heard: the defendants, their lawyers and their witnesses have been free to submit everything that could be seen as mitigating [the defendants'] circumstances.<sup>40</sup>

While opinion was favourable concerning the conduct of the trial, more uncertainty was expressed about the lacklustre attention that the Germans showed towards the trial. According to *Dagens Nyheter*, the Germans took the outcome 'calmly'.

All information fits in with Lord Chancellor Lord Jowitt's statement in the House of Lords: 'I have asked the people who are in charge of administering mail in Germany: "Now when it has become known that these horrible things happened, have you noticed any feelings of anger or indignation that these things were done by the German leaders?" The answer has always been: "There's no hint of such feelings."' <sup>41</sup>

While the Swedish press expressed an array of opinions regarding what was happening in Germany, the overall picture between 1945 and 1946 remained gloomy: German disinterest in the trial, unwillingness to admit to collective guilt and the anti-Semitic and anti-Bolshevik tendencies showed that Nazism was well and alive. Yet, to what extent should the fears of the Swedish press, that Nazism had not vanished with the fall of Hitler, be taken at face value? By 1947, there is some evidence that the anti-German barrage of the Swedish (and international) press had run its course. One critic of the press discourse on Germany was Stig Dagerman. Commenting on the seeming continuity of Nazism, he writes:

It is important to remember that statements implying dissatisfaction with or even distrust of the goodwill of the victorious democracies were made ... in all too palpable cellars in Essen, Hamburg or Frankfurt-am-Main. ... They [journalists] asked cellar-Germans if they had been better off under Hitler and these Germans replied 'yes'. ... [I]f you ask someone starving on two slices of bread per day if he was better off with when he was starving on five you will doubtless get the same answer. Each analysis of the ideological position of the German people during this difficult autumn will be deeply misleading if it does not at the same time convey a sufficiently indelible

picture of the milieu, of the way of life to which these human beings under analysis were condemned.<sup>42</sup>

According to Dagerman, the journalists working in Germany did not sufficiently examine the real 'ideological position of the German people'. Instead, they filed eye-catching scoops, as exemplified by *Expressens*'s headline on page 6: 'Wonderful German youngsters in the Hitler Jugend – a Lutheran pastor praises German militaristic virtues.'<sup>43</sup>

Dagerman paints rather an ironic picture of the process of news-gathering at the time. After getting the (wanted) answer that life under Hitler was better than life in postwar Germany, the reporter

stooping with rage, nausea and contempt ... scrambles hastily backwards out of the stinking room, jumps into his hired English car or American jeep, and half an hour later over a drink or a good glass of German beer in the bar of the Press hotel composes a report on the subject 'Nazism is alive in Germany'.<sup>44</sup>

If Nazism was the press's main concern, how, then, were the main victims of the Nazis portrayed in the Swedish press?

## **6.4 The trial, the press and the Jews**

The 'Jewish question' during the Nuremberg Trial had two dimensions that were sometimes linked together, sometimes not. On the one hand, the Nuremberg Trial attempted to offer the first historical record of the Nazi era and its criminality, including the extermination of the Jews. On the other, the 'Jewish question' as an ongoing European and German problem was still very much present, although it was discussed outside the Tribunal (this latter dimension will be examined in Part III, especially in Chapters 8 and 9).

In general, the portrayal of the Holocaust in the press was cyclical: the first few months of the trial saw much discussion about the Nazi genocide. Towards the spring, the press coverage on the issue became more sporadic, to be rejuvenated towards the end of the trial when the verdicts were considered. Secondly, even if there was frequent discussion of the Nazi genocide in the Swedish press, the issue was not as prominently portrayed as the question of German guilt – although the persecution of the Jews was often mentioned as an object of German guilt. On the other hand, it must also be observed that the discussion

of the fate of the Jews was liveliest at times when the overall attention to the trial was at its peak too.

Despite the fact that the totality – the full depth and breadth – of Nazi criminality was not discussed in the trial, it is not correct to say that the press did not grasp the significance of the matter.<sup>45</sup> Victor Vinde's *Nürnberg i blixtljus* is a striking interpretation of the trial precisely because the Holocaust permeates the analysis throughout the book. Whatever scholarly wisdom has said about the trial since then, Vinde's work essentially testifies to the fact that the treatment of the Jews made a huge impression on many of the trial's contemporaries. Similarly, the way in which *Stockholms-Tidningen's* quotation of Justice Jackson's opening speech at Nuremberg was worded is a fair representation of the Swedish press's overall attitude towards Nazi criminality. According to Jackson, the paper observed, Nazi crimes 'culminated in the destruction of the Jews'.<sup>46</sup> But what were these crimes? How were they portrayed?

One of the earliest and most significant days during the trial when the Holocaust was reflected upon was in mid-December 1945. In one session, significant evidence about different events of the Holocaust was brought forward. In some papers the destruction of the Warsaw ghetto was the main topic. For example, *Svenska Dagbladet* reported the tragedy by giving it an air of totality. Repeating SS-Brigadeführer Jürgen Stroop's testimony, it reported that 'On 23 April [1943], Himmler ordered that the Warsaw Ghetto must be destroyed without mercy. I [Stroop] therefore decided to destroy the area by setting it on fire.'<sup>47</sup> On the same day, *Dagens Nyheter's* news article disclosed the Gestapo's plan to sell one million Jews, for two dollars 'apiece'. Another sensational piece of news reported that a human head from Buchenwald was used as evidence.<sup>48</sup> *Stockholms-Tidningen's* main story from Nuremberg was: '2 million people murdered in a sole death camp' – remarkably referring to Mauthausen.

As a whole, *Stockholms-Tidningen's* article reveals many of the typical confusions of the time, but while doing so nevertheless reminds readers of the vastness of the Nazi genocide. First, the destruction of the Warsaw ghetto was reported – based on Stroop's testimony. Second, a one-column article beneath the ghetto news tells how in June 1944 Eichmann (written 'Aichmann' in the text) oversaw the deportation of 475,000 Hungarian Jews to a death camp (the camp was Auschwitz, but remains unmentioned). Third, the piece stipulates that the US Army's 'research had shown that two million people were murdered in Malthausen [sic]'.<sup>49</sup> Hence, Mauthausen was also labelled as a death camp, with a vastly exaggerated death toll,<sup>50</sup> while the extermination

camps in Poland, the Aktion Reinhard camps, remained almost unknown.

However, there is no doubt that the story of the razing of the Warsaw ghetto formed one of the central segments at Nuremberg through which the extermination of the Jews was gauged. *Expressen's* centrefold in April 1946 bears witness to the legacy that the story left the postwar world – offering a powerful link between the Warsaw ghetto, the extermination of the Jews and the postwar situation. A large photograph, spread over two pages, pictures a young Polish Jewess overlooking a vast destroyed area. The headline reads: 'Warsaw in the spring sun. Life goes on amidst the city's ruins.' The caption of the photo is more telling, a sharp contrast to the headline: 'Here the little Jewish girl played when she was a child, and now her eyes meet nothing but rubble. It is Warsaw's ghetto, where thousands of Jews were murdered and it is estimated that over 50,000 bodies still lie underneath the rubble.'<sup>51</sup> Vinde dedicated the last 23 pages of his book to the topic. Importantly, since his book had no conclusion, the section of the book that dealt with the Warsaw ghetto worked as an epitaph for the whole Nazi era:

With this document [Stroop's report], the Germans have unwittingly erected a monument to those men and women, '*Juden, Banditer und Untermenschen*', who the murderers' bullets killed. They fought for their freedom and for their people – alone, encircled, abandoned and they died like free people should. *Their memory must live on.*<sup>52</sup>

The day following the reports on Stroop's testimony, the Nazi genocide was reported again. The news that was featured, for example, on *Stockholms-Tidningen's* page 8, was significant, although it is at the same time very telling that such news did not make it to the headlines. The by-line told of the evidence exhibited by prosecutor Walsh: 'a whole pile of documents that he [Walsh] displayed, clearly indicated that there was a premeditated plan to starve millions of Jews to death'. Later on, the article discussed the role of Treblinka, which was an 'extermination facility designed for mass murder of Jews through asphyxiation in steam rooms'. 'It can be assumed', the article continued, 'that several hundreds of thousands of Jews were exterminated there. The only crime of the Jews was that they belonged to the race which Hitler had condemned to death.' Accounting for the death toll in Auschwitz, Birkenau followed, with an estimate of 1,765,000 Jews being murdered in two years. Finally, SS-Sturmbannführer Wilhelm Hoettl's testimony was mentioned, with an overall census of the murdered Jews: the canonical

figure of 6 million.<sup>53</sup> The same news, headlined '6 million Jews done to death by Germans in the Eastern Territories', featured on page 11 in *Dagens Nyheter*.<sup>54</sup>

Less than a week later, the Final Solution was portrayed again. This time, the prosecutors were charting the organisational criminality of the SS, Gestapo and the SD. *Dagens Nyheter* printed sections of the Nazi documents presented at the trial. Under a headline 'Burial of living people touched the boundaries of sadism', taken from Alfred Rosenberg's report to the Gestapo, the paper offered a grim census of *Einsatzgruppe A*'s extermination activity in the Baltic region: Latvia 35,238; Lithuania 136,420; Belarus 41,828; and the area north of Belarus 3,600 Jews murdered. All this had been accomplished with a force of 1,000 men.<sup>55</sup>

The year 1946 began with some of the most remarkable witness testimonies heard at Nuremberg about the extermination of the Jews. Otto Ohlendorf's and Dieter Wisliceny's extraordinary testimonies featured in the press, but as usual confined to the inner pages. *Svenska Dagbladet* reported how under Ohlendorf's leadership 90,000 people were killed in Russia – men, women and children. The same story also noted that Adolf Eichmann had the deaths of at least 5 million Jews on his conscience.<sup>56</sup> *Stockholms-Tidningen* reported, as had *The Manchester Guardian*, that

Wisliceny had discussed with Adolf Eichmann, an SS officer who on Hitler's order specially devoted himself to 'the Jewish question' ... Wisliceny explained that the Jewish question was dealt with in three steps. Up until 1940, emigration of the Jews was planned. Up to 1942, ghettoisation was planned. From thereon, Himmler ordered that the Jews must be exterminated.<sup>57</sup>

After chronicling the 'path to genocide' – reasonably accurately in line with current historical understanding – the article told how Wisliceny, working on Eichmann's orders, had organised the transportation of the Jews of Salonika to the 'death factory' Auschwitz. This piece of information is also significant for the fact that it reminds readers of the Europe-wide dimension of the Holocaust: Ohlendorf's testimony covered much of the Soviet Union, sections on Eichmann reminded of the tragedy of the Hungarian Jews and Wisliceny's testimony reached to Southern Europe. It was notable that Auschwitz formed a central point in the extermination process; whether it was the deportations of the Hungarian Jews or of the Greek ones, all Nazi roads seemed to lead, momentarily at least, to Auschwitz.

The role of Adolf Eichmann is interesting in this context too, for it has been argued that he remained an obscure figure during the Nuremberg Trial.<sup>58</sup> Yet, in several of the momentous pieces of information with regard to the Holocaust, Eichmann's name kept cropping up, although sometimes spelled as 'Aichmann'. Furthermore, he was frequently referred to as 'a specialist in Jewish matters'. Thus, it is fair to say that he might appear to have been an obscure figure for he was not in the dock, but as evidence increasingly placed him into the core of the Nazi genocide, there is no doubt that his significance was recognised.

If Eichmann has come to symbolise the 'banality of evil', he was not the first one to be seen as a mundane bureaucrat sending innocent victims to their deaths.<sup>59</sup> Rudolf Höss's dramatic testimony on Auschwitz prefigured the image of a stereotypical Nazi bureaucrat – matter of fact, dull and unimpressive.<sup>60</sup> The way in which *Dagens Nyheter's* article portrayed the witness is a testimony to an early image of the lacklustre Nazi bureaucrat. The by-line was simply bland: "Were you the commandant of Auschwitz from 1940 to the end of 1943?" "Yes." "Is it true that two million Jews died there during that period?" "Yes." The paper then described Höss as 'a little ordinary man, whose answers to the questions the defence lawyer Kaufmann put before him were like a [Catholic] Mass'. What followed was a chilling reportage on Auschwitz, reiterating many of the central themes with regard to the camp: 2 million Jews were murdered there (in reality the figure is about 1,100,000),<sup>61</sup> the doors to the gas chambers had signs saying either 'shower' or 'delousing' in numerous languages, and the people in the vicinity of the camp knew what was happening because of the sickening smell that the burning bodies emitted.<sup>62</sup>

## 6.5 Conclusion

On a number of occasions the Swedish press discussed the Nazi genocide. Although the papers examined here grappled with the Holocaust in a forthright manner, the news did not make it to the front page, partly indicating that this news was not considered as the top priority. However, by looking at what actually featured in the headlines on those days when significant pieces relating to the Holocaust were scrutinised in the courtroom, it is evident that 'news of the day' featured on the front pages. In the context of the mid-1940s, the extermination of the Jews was seen as a tragedy in recent history, with some implications for current issues. To be sure, the proceedings at Nuremberg were current affairs, but insofar as the Holocaust was discussed, the trial was gazing



into the past. It can be said that when the punishment of the defendants, the purpose of the trial or the collective guilt of the Germans (for example) were in focus, the trial, as well as the press, was contemplating the future, as much as they were contemplating the past and the present. It was precisely those issues that seemed to have immediate effects for the future, at home as well as abroad, which made it to the headlines.

Overall, then, the press in Sweden understood the significance of the Holocaust, even if the matter was not embellished in any way. The final evidence of this is the way in which the matter was portrayed at the closing of the trial. After the verdicts had been reached *Stockholms-Tidningen* told in a page 8 article what formed the basis for the death penalties. Importantly, the extermination of the Jews assumed a high priority: on Goering's sentence, the paper wrote 'he was the director of the slave labour programme and the instigator of the tyranny against the Jews'. Discussing von Ribbentrop's role, it was told how he 'played an important role in Hitler's Final Solution of the Jewish Question'. Kaltenbrunner, the paper argued in bold print, 'murdered approximately four million Jews in concentration camps' while Rosenberg's 'subordinates were involved in the mass murder of the Jews'.<sup>63</sup> Similar comments were also made about Streicher, Frank and Seyss-Inquart. Thus, crimes against humanity – essentially the Holocaust – underlined the whole purpose of the proceedings; as Vinde pleaded, the Jewish victims' memory must live on. Indeed, the discussion on the Holocaust had the noble goal of educating the world about the evils of the Third Reich, and the Swedish press endorsed the trial's didactic mission, as *Dagens Nyheter* made clear on the judgment day when it argued that the extermination of the Jews was the most frightening chapter in Nazi history.

# 7

## The Nuremberg Trial in the Finnish Press Discourse

### 7.1 Introduction

The opening of the Nuremberg Trial was widely reported in Finland, as in other countries examined here. Like the reportage from the liberated concentration camps, the Finnish press was not represented on the spot although it had a quota for one journalist. However, the trial was a much-awaited event in Finland. The Belsen Trial (the trial of Josef Kramer and 44 others), which had ended on 17 November 1945, was duly reported in Finland, and in part indicated that the interest in Nazi criminality was running high.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, the Nuremberg Trial aroused considerable interest in Finland because of Finland's former co-belligerency with Nazi Germany. No doubt, for many in Finland, the main interest with regard to the trial was the question of to what extent Finland's participation in the war would be probed into at Nuremberg, and how Finland would come out of such examination.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of this chapter is to examine the ways in which the Finnish press portrayed the Nuremberg Trial; which themes emerged as the dominant ones, and, as in the two previous chapters, how the press represented the Holocaust, especially given the fact that the reporting of the liberation of the camps had been so patchy. Further, since Finland was also a defeated nation, the Allied Control Commission (ACC), headed by the Soviet Union, demanded that Finland stage its own postwar trial, which eventually brought eight Finnish wartime leaders to the dock. As will be shown below, Finland's own trial, the so-called 'War-guilt trial', had a profound impact on the way in which the Finnish press framed the news from Nuremberg.

## 7.2 The Finnish 'War-guilt trial', Nuremberg and nationalistic discourse

Coinciding with the Nuremberg Trial was the War-guilt trial of Finland's wartime political leaders, who were indicted for attacking the Soviet Union and delaying negotiations for peace. From the outset, article 13 of the armistice agreement between Finland and the Soviet Union (as well as Great Britain) stipulated that Finland had to undertake the prosecution of Finns who would be charged for war crimes. However, in late 1944, Finland's radical left, with the aid of the so-called 'Peace Opposition',<sup>3</sup> began to demand the indictment of the country's political elite as well. On 12 September 1945, Parliament passed a (retroactive) bill permitting the prosecution of eight political leaders who were instrumental in waging the war against the Soviet Union in 1941.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, no Finns were, eventually, charged for traditional war crimes, which constituted count three at the IMT in Nuremberg.

The Finnish War-guilt trial united press opinion in Finland (excluding the radical left). The traditional freedom of the press was pitted against the will of the ACC during the trial.<sup>5</sup> The head of the ACC in Finland, Andery Zhdanov, had notified Finnish authorities that a platform for 'Nazi propaganda' was not to be tolerated in the courtroom. Thus, even if the trial was to be open the historical context under which it was constructed was defined by the prosecution. According to Esko Salminen, the idea of holding the proceedings behind closed doors altogether was not far from the surface.<sup>6</sup> Further, in the immediate aftermath of the war it seemed that Finnish political leaders might be given a summary trial, either in the style of the Soviet show trials of the 1930s or in the style of the purges that were sweeping the newly established Soviet satellites, such as Romania and Hungary.<sup>7</sup> Essentially, it was feared that if the Finnish authorities would fail to try the 'war-guilty' (and if the accused would deny the legitimacy of the Finnish court) they would be taken to court in the Soviet Union, which would have meant almost certain death penalties.<sup>8</sup> Despite the fact that the retroactive law that Parliament had passed under pressure from the ACC violated Finland's practices of justice, the trial went ahead, and newspaper readers were offered a heavily censored version of it.

The international background to the War-guilt trial made the situation in Finland seem even more dismal. Vidkun Quisling and his Nazi regime in Norway had been on trial, and Quisling was executed in October 1945. The trial was preceded by a large-scale hunt for Norwegian Nazis.<sup>9</sup> Pierre Laval's trial in France was also well publicised

in Finnish newspapers. Echoing the calls for retribution in postwar Europe, the radical left in Finland tried to capitalise on the issue. For example, on 8 December 1945, *Vapaa Sana* (Free Word) wrote that the ex-Prime Minister of Hungary, László Bárdossy, was sentenced to death by hanging. According to the paper, Rangell's (Prime Minister of Finland, 1941–4) crimes were no less heinous than those of his Hungarian counterpart.<sup>10</sup> Yet, the mainstream Finnish press never juxtaposed these European trials with the Finnish one and vehemently denied that there were any similarities. *Uusi Suomi*'s editorial is a case in point when it reminded that the defence had highlighted the differences between the Finnish trial and the trials of 'Quislings'. The question was not about traitors as in other defeated countries; 'the process is not about fascism, Nazism or any other totalitarian ideology', the paper argued.<sup>11</sup> A Social Democratic paper, *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti*, recapped the situation in Finland, reporting that among the defendants one could find the finest and the most courageous member of the social democrats (Tanner), only one right-wing Conservative and not a single fascist or a member of the military 'junta'.<sup>12</sup> The dominant defensive line infuriated the radical left in Finland, which wanted to see a complete purge of the Finnish wartime political elite. A Communist paper, *Vapaa Sana*, asked in its editorial why 'Helsinki is not on the same juridical meridian as Nuremberg. Why does the trial in Helsinki not follow the same straight line as [postwar trials] elsewhere in the world?'<sup>13</sup>

Finland's nationalistic and self-interested press discourse becomes even clearer when it is contrasted with Swedish reporting of the War-guilt trial. For example, *Expressen* linked the Finnish trial closely with Nazism:

the leaders of all major parties, which the Finnish people have learnt to trust have been made responsible for not only the lost war, but also the collaboration with the criminal Nazi government. The prosecution's indictment holds such heavy material [incriminating the defendants] that it should act as a coolant for patriotic Finns.<sup>14</sup>

Similarly, *Stockholms-Tidningen* argued how 'Nuremberg casts its shadow over Helsinki'. According to the paper, Finnish military authorities knew already in spring 1941 that Germany would invade the Soviet Union.<sup>15</sup>

Uncertainty in Finland as to what would happen to the nation's political leaders also aroused more interest in the Nuremberg proceedings. Finland's War-guilt trial thus acted as a catalyst for a widespread interest in the Nuremberg Trial, but it is worth pointing out that the writings

on the two trials were totally opposite. The news from Nuremberg, and the actions of the Nazi leaders that were under scrutiny seemed so far removed from the 'honourable' actions of the Finnish leaders that there could not possibly be any harm in publicising widely what was happening in Nuremberg. On the contrary, the Nuremberg Trial seemed to illuminate what did *not* happen in Finland, what the Finnish leadership did *not* participate in. Indeed, in mid-December the Finnish press told its readers that neither President Ryti nor Prime Minister Rangell had known about Operation Barbarossa until less than a month before the attack on the Soviet Union.<sup>16</sup> Further, the press typically made Finland appear as a passive partner in its collaboration with Nazi Germany. In Finnish discourse the collaboration usually revolved around military co-belligerency only, while ideological conjunctures, as far as they existed, were not discussed. Tellingly, the papers victimised Finland with the use of Nuremberg evidence. For example, *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti*'s report from Nuremberg highlighted the fact that Germany was unsatisfied with Finland's military capability and therefore it was trying to get Sweden to join the war – by promising it Finland's Åland Islands.<sup>17</sup>

The divorce between the Finnish trial and the Nuremberg proceedings can be further demonstrated by the way in which the Finnish press considered the legality of the Nuremberg Trial. It is worth bearing in mind that while many in Britain thought that the trial was a forgone conclusion, the Finnish press certainly took a different view. For example, *Helsingin Sanomat* described in a page 4 article the opening of the Nuremberg Trial as follows: '[D]efeated Germany's old powerful men will now have to answer for the murder of more than 20 million men in the battlefields and concentration camps. They now meet their judges face to face.' To embellish the point, the paper reminded one that the atmosphere in Nuremberg was thick with the 'incorrupt coldness of law and justice'.<sup>18</sup> In contrast to the discourse over Nuremberg, the discourse on the War-guilt trial never accepted that it was anything but a political trial. *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* mused in the paper's main column that 'we don't know if, because of the necessities of foreign policy, the verdicts have already been decided'.<sup>19</sup> Thus, 'the incorrupt coldness of law and justice' that characterised the Nuremberg process hardly fitted the Finnish proceedings, since the press thought that the ACC had decided the verdicts before the trial had barely begun. In the same way, within the limits of censorship, the Finnish press bitterly criticised the unlawfulness of the Finnish trial, its *ex-post facto* legislation and political motivations,<sup>20</sup> while Nuremberg's *ex post facto* legislation hardly troubled the Finnish press.

So far the discussion has tried to point out some ways in which the Nuremberg trial offered the press an avenue to divorce Finland's wartime record from the Nazis. In this project the press discourse that accounted for the German extermination, murder and slave-labour policies implicitly strengthened Finland's position as having waged a 'separate war', as will be shown later on. It therefore becomes imperative to examine what the press wrote about the Nuremberg Trial – especially about the Jews.

### **7.3 Nuremberg, the Finnish press and the extermination of the Jews**

On 22 November 1945, the day following Robert Jackson's opening address in Nuremberg, *Helsingin Sanomat* wrote on page 4: 'Nine pages of his speech dealt with the crimes committed against the Jews. He said that it was his responsibility to disclose the plan which aimed at the destruction of the whole Jewish race.' The commentary continues in bold print: 'Accused Hans Frank described in his diary the Nazi policy as follows: Jews are the race which must be exterminated. Whenever we manage to catch a Jew, he'll meet his end.' Returning to Jackson's speech, the article carried on to tell how all excesses against the Jews formed a foundation for all Nazi plans, and all accused were held responsible for it.<sup>21</sup>

Along the same lines, when the evening paper *Ilta-Sanomat* editorial contextualised the charge of crimes against humanity, it observed that 'count four of the indictment has its detailed focus on "crimes against humanity"'. It deals with, for example, the fate of the Jews very systematically.<sup>22</sup> The paper's comment as regards the 'systematic examination' of the Jewish experience under the Nazis was exaggerated, particularly in hindsight, but it tells us how the Holocaust took hold of the press's imagination. Yet, as we know, and will see further in this chapter, there were many aspects of the Holocaust that remained hidden and obscure. On the other hand, it is significant to point out that from the outset, when public attention on the trial was at its highest, there was already a considerable interest in and acknowledgement of the fact that the Jews had suffered more than any other group, 'race' or nation. Similarly, a month before, when the indictment was released, the conservative *Uusi Suomi* published it on page 6, first noting that the indictment was the widest ever drafted in mankind's history. The article then reminded the readers that

Göring is the primary accused and responsible for the events in concentration camps. Next to him stand Rosenberg, Ley and Streicher,

who are charged with spreading German race theories. Each of them is held responsible for anti-Semitic utterances. After this the indictment reads: 'Out of those 9.6 million Jews who lived in different parts of Nazi ruled Europe, according to cautious estimation, at least 5.7 million have vanished.'<sup>23</sup>

The way in which *Uusi Suomi* chose to portray this news is telling. The upshot of the reportage focused on concentration camps, German race theories and anti-Semitism. The fact that Rosenberg, Ley and Streicher were mentioned after Goering is equally noteworthy. The only reason why that was the case was because they were explicitly connected with the Nazi genocide. Usually when the hierarchy of the men in the dock was considered Goering was always mentioned first, followed by Hess and Ribbentrop. After that the order was dependent on the theme being scrutinised.

The first time that the Jewish suffering formed a centrepiece in the press commentary was what now is considered as one of the most compelling events in the Holocaust – the destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto in 1943.<sup>24</sup> After the war, the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, despite its tragic, but nonetheless expected outcome, conveyed a message of honour and dignity, which was also captured in popular literature.<sup>25</sup> The Jews had resisted the Nazi onslaught, in spite of great odds against facilitating any insurgent activity, and therefore did not always go to their deaths like 'sheep to the slaughter'.<sup>26</sup>

On 14 December, the front page in *Ilta-Sanomat* reads 'How the Warsaw Ghetto was destroyed. 56,000 wooden houses were destroyed – only 8 houses still standing.'<sup>27</sup> The next day *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* published the news on its front page too. Bold print, highlighting SS-Brigadeführer Jürgen Stroop's report, tells the story: 'On 23 April [1943], Himmler ordered that the Warsaw Ghetto must be destroyed without mercy. I therefore decided to destroy the area by setting it on fire.' The newspaper article then continues to the second page, noting that 'prosecutor [Walsh] cited a report which disclosed that 1,765,000 Jews were murdered in the concentration camp of Auschwitz and Birkenau during two years, 1942–1944'.<sup>28</sup> On the same day *Helsingin Sanomat* had in its main news page a big headline, which read 'Nazis' persecution of the Jews resulted in at least 6 million victims.' The article notes that according to the testimony of Wilhelm Hoettl, 4 million Jews were murdered in the SS-run concentration camps and a further 2 million Jews were killed during the war against the Soviet Union. The paper also said that the figures were based on 'Jew hunter' Eichmann's report. Finally, the

article then tells how during the Warsaw Ghetto uprising at least 60,000 Jews were killed.<sup>29</sup> Yet, even if the final destruction of the ghetto was reiterated in the press, it is equally telling that apart from the regional *Aamulehti* no other paper mentioned what had happened to hundreds of thousands of Jews who were deported to Treblinka. *Aamulehti* noted briefly that 'in October 1942 over 300,000 Jews were taken away'.<sup>30</sup> Where the Jews were 'taken' was not indicated, although it must be pointed out that the court session in Nuremberg did not pay much attention to the deportation either, and Treblinka was not mentioned in relation to the destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto.<sup>31</sup>

Less than a week later the Final Solution was again prominently represented in the Finnish press. This time, the prosecutors were charting the criminality of the SS, and it was the story of the Nazi resettlement policy in the East that offered an avenue for probing the Nazi genocide. *Helsingin Sanomat* cited a number of documents presented in the courtroom. The most horrific one, which was deservedly printed in bold, notes 'a report which had arrived from Lithuania told how one district had been fully cleansed from "the Jews of both sexes". Altogether, more than 136,000 people had been slaughtered'.<sup>32</sup> *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* printed the story in bold too, telling how a certain Gestapo document from Latvia stipulated that by the end of October 1940 around 30,000 Jews had been executed.<sup>33</sup>

By the end of 1945, the Finnish press was telling the story of the Jewish extermination with vigour. Even though the Holocaust was not in the news every day, it cropped up in press reports perhaps more frequently than any other issue that the reporters filed from Nuremberg. Moreover, the sections of the reports dealing with the Holocaust were frequently printed in bold type, indicating their significance and news value. Thus, the early press comment is instructive for its reporting on Jewish suffering, for the weight of the discourse centred on the planned extermination of the Jews, not on the idea of conspiracy or on crimes against peace.

When the trial continued after the Christmas break, the first report from Nuremberg in 1946 carried on from where matters were left a few weeks earlier. As throughout the first period of the trial, it was again the liberal *Helsingin Sanomat* that seemed to be most attuned to the particular suffering of the Jews. On 3 January, the page 5 headline from Nuremberg read: 'Mass slaughter of the Jews discussed yesterday at Nuremberg'.<sup>34</sup> The report tells about the slaughter of Jews in the Soviet Union, based on Hermann Friedrich Gräbe's testimony. A German engineer, working in a construction firm, Gräbe had been an



eyewitness to slaughter of the Jews in Ukraine in 1942. *Aamulehti* also offered a graphic front-page description of Gräbe's eyewitness account of the scene of the mass shooting of the Jews in Dubno. The witness saw 'an immense grave where, in his estimation, approximately 1,000 people lay. The execution was carried out by one SS-man, who sat on the parapet, swinging his legs, holding a machine gun and smoking his cigarette.'<sup>35</sup>

The following day, the same paper chronicled how 'Hitler had decided to exterminate Russia's Jewish population'.<sup>36</sup> *Helsingin Sanomat* published Otto Ohlendorf's extraordinary testimony under a headline 'Execution groups were tailing advancing fronts in the East.' The same story also accounted for Adolf Eichmann's deputy, SS-Major Dieter Wisliceny's testimony:

'Jew-Specialist' SS-man Wisliceny declared that the Jewish question was dealt with in three stages. Up to 1940, Jewish emigration was planned. Up until 1942, the plan was to amass them in the ghettos. After that, it was Himmler's order to destroy the Jews. According to Wisliceny's estimation, destruction activity targeted at least 4 million Jews.<sup>37</sup>

Throughout January 1946, news from Nuremberg frequently chronicled the fate of the Jews under Hitler's rule.<sup>38</sup> To be sure, the news was often isolated and given without a wider context, but, on the other hand, this news appeared often enough to allow the reader to be able to piece some of this information into a more coherent story, which focused on the unimaginable slaughter of the Jews. It should not go unmentioned either that this news as mediated to the public was to become central to popular understandings of the Holocaust, not least the figure of 6 million.

In late January 1946, the fate of the Jews was reported again. Writing on Marie Claude Vaillant-Couturier's testimony, *Helsingin Sanomat* noted, in horror, that 'Jewesses had no access to any medical treatment and the babies they had given birth to were drowned in water buckets.'<sup>39</sup> According to the *New York Herald Tribune*, even the defendants removed their headphones on hearing her testimony.<sup>40</sup> On the other hand, Mme Vaillant-Couturier's powerful testimony did not focus solely on the extermination of the Jews, and the majority of reports in the Finnish press reflected that. For example, *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti's* report on her testimony noted how members of the European intelligentsia were tortured in concentration camps until they went mad. The news item, which ran for two columns, did not even mention the

Jews. Similarly, *Uusi Suomi* report, taken from Associate Press's bulletin, noted briefly how the French prosecution was exposing Germany's slave-labour policy.<sup>41</sup>

There were three reasons why a powerful eyewitness account, like Vaillant-Couturier's, went without the acknowledgment it deserved. First, by late January, public interest in the trial was generally waning. Even as early as 28 November 1945, only a week after the opening of the trial, *Uusi Suomi* had lamented on the front page that 'many correspondents have already left Nuremberg, and it is speculated that during the next week most of them will travel away'.<sup>42</sup> Second, and more profound, was the structure of the prosecution. That a non-Jewish witness, like Vaillant-Couturier, gave evidence on the extermination of the Jews was an extension of the prosecution's paradigm of proof, which relied on the use of documents. The logic, as Lawrence Douglas has observed, 'assumed that proof of extreme crimes became less credible and more impeachable as one moved from perpetrator to bystander to victim'.<sup>43</sup> This fact is worth mentioning here since Vaillant-Couturier's testimony was the first and only one during the trial where the prosecutor's strategy had a direct effect on newspaper discourse.<sup>44</sup> However, even if Vaillant-Couturier's testimony was the only one in this regard, it still leaves a nagging feeling that the prosecutor's strategy had a tangible and direct impact on the conceptualisation of the Holocaust in the press. Third, closely linked to the second point, as Bloxham has observed in the context of the British press, but largely applicable to the case in Finland too, 'the press coverage reflected the bias of the French evidence towards the maltreatment of "political prisoners"'.<sup>45</sup>

During the spring and early summer of 1946 the reports from Nuremberg were short, more infrequent and confined to the inner pages of newspapers. Only on one occasion, albeit briefly, did the reportage from Nuremberg attain any interest and was more vividly portrayed. Significantly, it was Rudolf Höss's testimony that scrutinised the depths of Nazi criminality. *Aamulehti* noted on its front page that '2.5 million people were killed in Auschwitz during Höss' command'.<sup>46</sup> *Helsingin Sanomat* reported this exchange on page 5: "'Is it true that there [in Auschwitz] were more than 2 million Jews killed during 1940–43?" "Yes". This is how Rudolf Höss's testimony, who is [Ernst] Kaltenbrunner's last witness, began.'<sup>47</sup> *Uusi Suomi*'s well-headlined article on page 6 told how Höss's testimony utterly crushed Kaltenbrunner's defence. Among other things, the paper noted that 'during the summer 1944 alone, 400,000 Hungarian Jews were gassed to death in the camp [of Auschwitz]'.<sup>48</sup>

On the whole, it was not just these seemingly isolated pieces of news regarding the Holocaust (as examined above) that tell us how seriously and with what a keen interest the Finnish press treated the matter. As the speculation on the pending judgment was getting more vivid in summer 1946, the Nazis' treatment of the Jews was considered to be one of the main factors shaping the Tribunal's final verdict.

## 7.4 The conceptualisation of the Nazi Genocide: The judgement

The press commentary on the trial sprang back to life in late July 1946, when the judges gave their final prosecution speeches. Like the majority of the press's coverage of the trial since late 1945, the Jewish tragedy played no small part. *Uusi Suomi*'s article reported that every defendant in the dock deserved the harshest punishment. The story, which ran for five columns, noted in the first one, in bold print, that Jackson particularly charged the Nazis for 'destroying' 6 million Jews. The following day, the paper titled its headline from Nuremberg as follows: 'The extermination of the Jews alone is enough to convict the Nazi leaders – British prosecutor Shawcross' concluding speech.'<sup>49</sup> *Aamulehti* cited Shawcross too. According to the paper, Streicher 'was guiltier than anyone else of the most horrendous crimes which have ever been committed in the world. For 25 years his actions were directed towards [the goal of] exterminating the Jews from the face of the earth ... he has lost his right to live a long time ago.'<sup>50</sup> The paper might have inflated Streicher's historical role in the genocide, but the implications were clear: the more intimately one was associated with the Holocaust, the harsher the judgment.

Throughout the autumn of 1946, the press was full of speculative articles with regard to what the judgment might be. Not infrequently, the Jewish issue was mentioned. For example, in an article that dealt with Walter Funk's fate (he was preparing for capital punishment), *Uusi Suomi* noted how the Minister for Economic Affairs had systematically looted all Jewish assets, including gold.<sup>51</sup>

However, it was not until 1 October 1946 that the trial again became the main foreign news topic in the Finnish press. The verdicts had been read the previous day, and the press comments that day were vivid. On summing up the verdicts the press introduced nothing new. Yet, the examination of the press commentary offers a window to gauge what the press thought of as the most salient features about the Nazi criminality.

On reading the verdicts, the judges followed the established strategy of highlighting count one as the overarching category, under which all other counts were subsumed. Therefore, it was not surprising that the press commentaries first dealt with the broad scheme of Nazi government and its deliberations to wage aggressive war. As in the indictment, the verdict dealt with the extermination of the Jews as the final point of Nazi criminality. However, this does not mean that it was seen as less important in the press commentary. For example, *Uusi Suomi*'s page 6 report on announcing the verdicts ran for four columns. Only four lines in the main body of text were printed in bold. These lines read 'the director of the Jewish extermination action Adolf Eichmann has calculated that Germany's Jewish policy resulted in the death of six million Jews'.<sup>52</sup> Above, the article noted that in the trial's opinion the persecution of the Jews was a focal point in the Nazis' systematic inhumanity. *Helsingin Sanomat* followed the same logic too. Discussing the same issues as *Uusi Suomi* almost word for word, the paper also printed these lines in bold: 'Germany's Jewish policy resulted in the death of six million Jews'.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, the papers, on quoting Eichmann's estimation that 6 million Jews were massacred, made it an important piece of news – perhaps more important than the deliberations with which the prosecution had pursued it.

While the first commentaries on the verdicts noted the extermination of the Jews as an important issue, leader articles on Nuremberg verdicts, which all major Finnish newspapers published in the aftermath, did not. It must be asked, then, whether this is an indication that the Holocaust was not, after all, seen as a symbol of Nazi barbarity, and whether the trial had, in the final analysis, failed to acknowledge it, even to downplay it.

First, the context of the leader articles is of vital importance. Typically, the main theme was the trial's innovative use of, and contribution to, international law, and a willingness to put the past to rest. *Helsingin Sanomat* wrote in its leader article that Nuremberg was to serve as an example of what crimes against peace could lead to. The article also noted, with optimism, that the trial was a big step forward in international law.<sup>54</sup> *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* argued in its leader that the Nuremberg process was a reflection of the twentieth-century eagerness to break free from the threat of terror. The paper also argued that the trial constituted a historic milestone, marking the end of one era and the beginning of a new (hopefully more peaceful) one.<sup>55</sup>

The second vital observation regarding the context of the editorials is the controversy over the verdicts, which became a hot topic – particularly

the acquittals of Schacht, von Papen and Fritzsche.<sup>56</sup> Therefore, the context of the leaders was grounded on what would happen in the future; how international law might change and what was to happen next – the press contemplated the fact that the ‘new Germany’ might retry the three acquitted men.

On the whole, in an atmosphere of relief and hope, any further discussion of Nazi criminality was abandoned, for it seemed that the court had established the significance and the centrality of the extermination of the Jews in the Nazi project of violence. Similarly, as has been shown throughout this chapter, the press in Finland (unlike in the case of the liberation of the concentration camps) responded to this incredible news with verve and compassion. Those numerous Finns who followed the press commentary between autumn 1945 and 1946 were certain to have their first encounter with the Holocaust.

What is striking about the Finnish press’s reporting from Nuremberg is the fact that the Holocaust lies at its centre. This seems even more striking if one bears in mind the marginal reporting of the liberation of the camps. Further, the Finnish press hardly considered the issue of the Germans’ collective guilt – a theme that was the most prominent topic in Britain as well as in Sweden. How can these notable differences be explained? Here a short digression into psychoanalysis might help to aid our understanding of why the Finnish press, after years of silence, gave such central attention to Jewish suffering. The discussion below will show how the Nuremberg Trial, with all its manifested differences to the Finnish trial, acted as ‘a screen memory’ to the War-guilt trial and, more generally, to the way in which the wartime relationship between Finland and Nazi Germany was considered.

In 1899, Sigmund Freud wrote an essay titled *Screen Memories*.<sup>57</sup> In it he argued that screen memories are substitute images that displace more traumatic memories in our conscious recollections. Also, as he claimed, the memory does not unify itself with the source,<sup>58</sup> meaning that screen memories are not linked with the original (traumatic) memories. Consequently, it also means that they cannot be approached directly. Since with the utilisation of screen memories the unconscious psyche jealously conceals traumatic memories, as Patrick Hutton has pointed out,<sup>59</sup> it becomes clear that the more radical the screen used for the displacement of the original painful memory, the more distance there is between the screen memory and authentic memory. Therefore, it would seem that the process of recovering the original memory, penetrating through the screen, as it were, is also harder. If we accept this position, it tells us much about why the Holocaust, unwittingly, took

hold of the Finnish press's imagination. Indeed it is instructive to point out, *pace* Freud, that there exist a number of motives, 'with no concern for historical accuracy' in forming screen memories.<sup>60</sup>

As discussed in the first part of this chapter, the Finnish press candidly established the differences between the Nuremberg Trial and the Finnish War-guilt trial. As far as Freud's 'no concern for historical accuracy' is concerned, the dominant historical understanding of the Finnish-German co-belligerency as 'the separate war thesis' is just that – inaccurate. Indeed, the separate war thesis was formulated at the War-guilt trial and it has only recently come under constant challenge.<sup>61</sup> Further, the press attention given to the extermination of the Jews at Nuremberg was, perhaps, the most radical screen memory available, and therefore its utilisation worked as the best safeguard against Finland's own silenced crimes, which related to gross maltreatment of Russian POWs and civilians in the concentration camps.<sup>62</sup> The fact that the Holocaust was used as a screen memory would imply that the Holocaust was considered as of lesser consequence to the Finnish psyche than Finland's own wartime traumas. Granted, the way in which Finland grappled with the Holocaust truly confirms its status as of lesser significance for Finland (since it seems far removed from Finnish experience) and therefore makes it suitable for a screen memory. For example, recall here that in 1942 the Finnish State Police (Valpo) handed over eight Jewish refugees to the Gestapo. At the time the matter was hardly discussed, and the trial of Arno Anthoni, the head of Valpo, between 1947 and 1948, did not get much publicity in the Finnish press. In retrospect, the trial has been described as such a farce that there have even been calls for a re-examination of the whole trial in order to remedy its historical injustice.<sup>63</sup>

However, even today, because of the screen between the Finnish war experience and the German one, the sending of eight Jews to the hands of the Germans has been considered as unrelated to the Holocaust.<sup>64</sup> Although we cannot do justice to such a complex phenomena here as Finland's memory on the Holocaust, spanning over half a century, the words of a Finnish journalist and former ambassador, Tom Söderman, uttered in 2003 in the middle of a controversy raging over extraditions of Soviet war prisoners – among them over 70 Jews – to the Gestapo will suffice here:

Finland seems to have an ability to distance itself from anything that feels uncomfortable ... news about the Holocaust will not grow old. We have not understood that in Finland, but we labour under

a miscomprehension that everything is forgiven and forgotten. Our trouble is the screen of silence we are so quick to erect.<sup>65</sup>

## 7.5 Conclusion

The Finnish encounter with the Holocaust at Nuremberg was perhaps surprisingly high on the news agenda, especially given the fact that the Finnish press had fallen short on reporting the liberation of the camps only six months earlier. Yet, it is worth bearing in mind that the overall frame of the reporting concentrated on the advances in international law and a desire of humankind to invest in a more peaceful and just world after the calamity that the Second World War had brought about. In this sense, Nuremberg was not only an instrument in the hands of the victorious nations but it was also a positive step for the defeated Finland, for any advances in outlawing aggressive war were more than welcomed from the Finnish perspective. However, this stance formed a paradox in the Finnish reasoning, for at the same time as the Nazi elite was in the dock in Nuremberg, eight members of Finland's wartime leadership were in the dock in Helsinki charged with 'war-guilt' – for waging aggressive war against the Soviet Union in conjunction with the Nazi invasion.

However, in Finland, the two processes were seen as two opposing events, which had nothing in common. In a sense, the negativism of the Finnish War-guilt trial was projected into a positivism that concerned the Nuremberg trial. As a consequence, the Holocaust rose, perhaps unwittingly, into a prominent role in the Finnish press's reporting on the Nazi regime. After all, there was nothing that would better illustrate the real differences between the two processes. The Nazis were in the dock not because they had lost the war, but because of the horrendous criminality with which the Nazi regime had ruled. In this reasoning the Holocaust was the ultimate proof of the criminality of the Third Reich. In contrast, the Finnish leaders were in the dock only because, in the eyes of the Allies, particularly the Soviet Union, they had lost the war. Unlike the Nuremberg Trial, the Helsinki process was from start to finish a political trial. The indictment of the defendants only consisted of the charge of the planning of and participating in the aggressive war. No concrete war crimes, such as murdering innocent civilians or prisoners of war, were included in the indictment. Further, as has been argued above, the trial, it was strongly argued, was not about bringing the 'Quislings' into justice, as was the case in the Nazi-occupied countries like Norway, France and Hungary. In Finland,

the process was not so clearly about domestic policies – or postwar retribution – as it was about the process of national humiliation envisaged by a foreign superpower. To this end, then, the Nuremberg Trial served as a screen memory to many real wartime horrors that Finland had also committed. The nationalistic project of newspaper writing of history in the Finnish context of the Nuremberg Trial meant that the Holocaust was given a relatively high importance but, as a result, the darker side of Finland's own recent past was overshadowed and has only come to be revisited in recent years.



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## **Part III**

### **From Suffering to Silence: The Press and Holocaust Discourses, 1946–50**

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# 8

## The Problem of Displaced Jews and the Holocaust

### 8.1 Introduction

So far we have discussed how the Holocaust was portrayed as part of the discourse on the liberation of the camps and the Nuremberg Trial. The last part of this book takes on a theme that runs parallel to, sometimes converging with, the 'Nuremberg interregnum'. As *Suomen Kuvalehti* pointed out in 1945: 'The Nazi war of extermination against the Jews did not resolve the Jewish question. On the contrary, the persecution has made the agenda more complicated than ever before.'<sup>1</sup> Therefore, an examination of the press discourse on Jewish Displaced Persons (DPs), the creation of Israel and the emergence of the Cold War is necessary. However, it makes sense to deal with these topics separately in order to gain contextual clarity. Further, as the quote above indicates, rather than looking back to the Nazi genocide (as the liberation of the camps and the Nuremberg Trial did), the discussions on Jewish DPs, Palestine and the Cold War were far more future-oriented in outlook. In an increasingly pessimistic world outlook, the Holocaust was invoked as a historical reference point, despite the fact that its repercussions were still sharply being felt. This, in turn, gave it a peculiar kind of presence; it was a presence that was used for various contemporary purposes, while at the same time it was being ignored in its own terms – as 'the Holocaust', as inconceivable suffering in history.

As far as the press was concerned, as we shall see, the utilisation of the Holocaust was not a value-free exercise, stemming from the West's moral viewpoint or from 'universalist' sympathy for the Jews. Instead, as was the case with the liberation of the camps and Nuremberg, the discussion on Jews, whether in relation to the DP problem or the trouble over Palestine, was conducted within very specific national contexts. Whereas

each nation's relationship to Germany was crucial in deciding the portrayals of the liberation of the camps and the Nuremberg Trial, in the context of Jewish DPs and the problems in Palestine the ways in which Zionism was understood (whether in political, nationalist, religious or imperialist terms) had a crucial effect on shaping all the news relating to Jews, including the framing of the Holocaust (as Chapter 9 in particular will show).

Writing in 1946, Zorach Warhaftig, a Warsaw lawyer and native of Belarus, Zionist and later Minister for Religious Affairs in the Israeli Government, was absolutely right when he pointed out the situation which European Jewry was facing: '[e]ighteen months after liberation the war is not yet over'.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, he keenly recognised the depressing situation faced by approximately 150,000 European Jews (and growing) – the remnants of the Holocaust – in postwar Europe.<sup>3</sup> 'The war' referred to the ongoing life-threatening situation of Jewish survivors in Eastern Europe, in the DP camps and the war for a new Jewish state, as well as many Zionists' attitude towards the British troops in Palestine. Indeed, not only Jews, but also the British, Swedish and Finnish press frequently referred to the situation as 'war'. As early as June 1946, *Aamulehti's* front page stipulated that there was a war going on in Palestine.<sup>4</sup> Ongoing Arab threats of 'holy war' or '*jihad*' added another dimension to the 'war' narrative. *Expressen* speculated as early as October 1945 over a possibility of an Arab holy war if the 'Zionist plan' (partition) to solve the issue of Jewish immigration to Palestine was followed.<sup>5</sup> Further, Warhaftig's writing is also instructive for it stresses that for many Jews the end of the war in 1945, VE Day or *die Stunde Null*, did not exist. Yet, the majority of Holocaust histories conveniently finish in 1945, thereby ignoring the fact that for European Jewry the war, if not an explicit threat of extermination, was not yet over. Indeed, the Jews had to battle through a number of obstacles in postwar Europe. In events like the Kielce pogrom in July 1946 and the interception of the immigration ship *Exodus 1947*, to name but a few, the Jews – usually the survivors of the Holocaust – were still suffering from the problems that the war had only intensified.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine press discourse on the issue of how the postwar Jewish problem in its varied ways emerged in the press, and what role the Holocaust played in it. The chapter will explore how the DP camps and the Jews' desire to move to Palestine was recognised as a result of the Holocaust. The first section of the chapter focuses on the Harrison Report in October 1945, which was instrumental in bringing the problem of the Jewish DPs into the public eye, followed by the discussion on escalating Jewish immigration from East to West

and onwards to Palestine. The chapter will finish by investigating the most famous immigration voyage, the 'Exodus affair', which in 1947, in a time of escalating crisis in Palestine, once again reminded the readers of the European press of the current plight of the Jews as well as their tragic past.

Andrew Sharf has argued that the true test of press attitude towards the Jews after the Holocaust remained the same as throughout the Nazi era: 'to what extent Jewish suffering in Europe was given some weight; to what extent the Press took note of what, rightly or wrongly, the struggle was about'.<sup>6</sup> However, Sharf offers very little evidence for his conclusion, which argues that the press rarely understood the issue behind all the violence in Palestine: the nearly complete extermination of Europe's Jews.<sup>7</sup> We have already seen that at the Nuremberg Trial relatively little attention was paid to Jewish suffering, although the press in Britain, Sweden and Finland publicised the Holocaust reasonably well, despite the differences between these nations' press coverage. Further, a careful analysis does point in the direction that it was known and recognised that the Jews had suffered more than any other group of victims.

Sharf also exaggerated when he argued that the British press failed to pay sufficient attention to Jewish suffering during the war as the main motive behind their desire to immigrate to Palestine. To some extent, his argument reflects the anti-British attitude of Yad Vashem in the 1960s and 1970s, where Sharf worked. Moreover, he never examined why the British press failed to pay sufficient attention to Jewish refugees. Further, in terms of methodology his argument is built on a degree of tunnel vision. It must be pointed out that Sharf's analysis was based on fifty-two (unspecified) extracts of press commentary from July 1946. Thus, the main problem with Sharf's method is essentially its narrow timeframe. In addition, July 1946 was a month during which the violence conducted by Jewish terrorist organisations in Palestine rose dramatically. The press, rather than analysing what was behind the violence, responded to the new developments in the format of news being an informative tool, not an analytical one. If a Jewish brigade blew up a hotel, the event was told. In essence, the news was about what was happening at that precise moment, not what had happened in the preceding months and years. Thirdly, given the limitations of time and space in which this news had to be squeezed, it should not come as a surprise that the wider context in which the violence of Jewish terrorist groups took place was often – but not always – missing. On the whole, it is a little short-sighted to draw a conclusion based on one month's reporting, for in reality the problems in Palestine and the Jewish DPs in Europe were noted a long

time before July 1946 and a long time afterwards. Indeed, if we adopt a wider time scale than Sharf, it becomes evident that there was, perhaps, a little more sympathy towards the Jewish plight than he argues. What is more, he has not considered how the press's views on Zionism played a vital role in contextualising the situation. For the majority of the British press, which took part in an active anti-Zionist propaganda campaign, the focus of the news was British suffering at the hands of Jewish terrorists. As will be shown below, Jewish terrorism in Palestine had a huge impact on the press reporting of Jewish suffering, as Susan Carruthers has pointed out:

Following the lead set by the government (in Britain and Palestine) of tending not to stress the political motivation underpinning the terrorist campaign, the press devoted much attention to terrorist atrocities, often without much analysis of why the violence was occurring.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, Sharf's argument that the British press's attitude towards Jews as a whole can be examined simply by looking at its reporting of the Holocaust is too monocausal. Therefore, if we are to fully understand the complexities of the issue of press reporting on Jewish suffering, the importance of Zionism requires closer scrutiny. Further, from the press's perspective, making a mental leap from a blown-up hotel in Jerusalem to an extermination centre in Poland was hardly possible, as Sharf assumes with the benefit of hindsight. The importance of Zionism as shaping the press's attitude to Palestine becomes clearer when British responses are examined together with responses of the Swedish and Finnish press. On the whole, by insisting on a longer timeframe than Sharf's, a more contextually sound, as well as nuanced, view can be attempted.

## 8.2 The Harrison Report and the Jewish DPs in Europe

After the camps were liberated in April/May 1945, the majority of those who had survived the Nazi genocide now became Displaced Persons (DPs). These people, the Jews and non-Jews, were put together in makeshift camps and divided into national groups.<sup>9</sup> As has been pointed out on numerous occasions, this caused great dismay, especially for the Jews, because as the result of national division, ex-guards and their former victims were often thrown together into the camps.<sup>10</sup> *The Jewish Chronicle* lamented that the American troops treated the Jews in a similar manner as the SS guards had.<sup>11</sup> It was as a result of this

media attention and American Jewish organisations' lobbying that the Truman Administration decided to investigate the conditions of the non-repatriable refugees in Germany and Austria, with special attention given to the Jews.<sup>12</sup> The job was given to the dean of the University of Pennsylvania Law School, Earl G. Harrison, who had also represented the USA in the Inter-Governmental Committee on Refugees.

Harrison's Report, compiled during summer 1945, was publicised in the European press at the turn of September and October 1945. Many a paper placed the news on the front page, as well as giving it editorial attention. In its conclusions and recommendations it was not only critical of the United States' handling of the DPs, but also far-reaching, advocating a shift in US policy. Significantly, Harrison wrote that

[t]he first and plainest need of these people is a recognition of their actual status and by this I mean their status as Jews. ... Jews as Jews (not as members of their nationality groups) have been more severely victimized than the non-Jewish members of the same or other nationalities.<sup>13</sup>

Since the dominant European press discourse on Nazi victims suggests that they were essentially seen in terms of their nationalities (as we have seen in Part II of this study), Harrison's report was clearly a divergence from the press's paradigmatic approach. Indeed, from one perspective of this study, it is precisely in this context where the report's significance lies, for it was the first document produced in the higher political echelons that explicitly considered the Jews as Jews.<sup>14</sup>

*The Manchester Guardian* was quick to editorialise the report, hoping that a similar report would also be conducted in the British zone of occupation. Trying to raise the status of the Jewish survivors, the editorial argued that even if the number of Jews was not very high in the total number of DPs, their lot was, nevertheless, the worst. The editorial held that the basic failure in the treatment of the Jews was that they were not considered in their own distinct category but according to their nationalities. This was a mistake as deep hostilities within the category of nationalities were detectable.<sup>15</sup> The same point about the desperate lot of the Jewish DPs was also echoed in the paper's 'letters to the editor' section.<sup>16</sup>

The Harrison Report bore particular significance for the British press in that it forced it to look at the situation of the Jews in the British zone in a different light. As has already been pointed out, *The Guardian* hoped (in vain) that the British authorities would follow the American



example. Reporting from Lüneburg on 2 October, *The Daily Herald's* correspondent reminded that 'Survivors of Belsen are prisoners still'. The column, appearing on the editorial page, sharply criticised the British Military Government for a number of flawed policies. As for the Jews, the reporter mentioned that only 60,000 out of a 1.5 million DPs were Jewish. 'The proportion' was small, he told the readers, somewhat ironically, 'because the gas chambers were busy. But the follies in handling the sixty thousand make quite a catalogue.'<sup>17</sup>

Harrison's Report was also front-page material for the Swedish and Finnish press. The leading Stockholm paper, *Dagens Nyheter*, quoted Harrison in the now-famous passage: 'As matters now stand, we appear to be treating the Jews as the Nazis treated them except we do not exterminate them.'<sup>18</sup> The same line was also published in *GHT's* main foreign news section under a heading 'Truman criticises the handling of the Jews: circumstances in the camps barely better than under Nazis.'<sup>19</sup> *Stockholms-Tidningen's* news article cited in bold Al Easterman's claim that 'Belsen had become a Jewish prison camp'. 'A number of prominent Jews', the Jewish Agency official continued, 'who participate in relief work in Lüneburg have described the complaints against the circumstances under which 60,000 transfer Jews in the British, American and French Zones live.' Furthermore, Easterman claimed that nine out of ten Jews in these camps desired that Palestine should be opened to the Jews.<sup>20</sup> Although the Jews received much sympathy from the Swedish press immediately after Harrison's Report, some criticism of it was also expressed. A few days after *Dagens Nyheter* had publicised the report, an article with a dateline from Wiesbaden appeared in the paper, on page 8. According to the writer, who had just visited two camps, one Jewish camp in Bavaria and one 'transit camp' in Wiesbaden, 'Harrison's report to Truman was considerably exaggerated on the question of Jewish handling in the American zone.'<sup>21</sup> Of course, it could be argued that there was a good deal of truth in it. While Harrison was right in disclosing the depressing situation of the Jews, it was nevertheless inappropriate to compare American troops with Nazis.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand, this comparison tells us something of the contemporaneous lack of understanding of the depth of Nazi depravity and the role of ideology in it.<sup>23</sup> Be that as it may, Harrison's comments certainly hit a receptive chord in the press, showing how the postwar world had become slightly more sensitive towards the Jewish question. The Finnish paper *Uusi Suomi* headlined the report on the front-page article thus: 'Jews still in concentration camps. "We are treating the Jews like the Nazis used to."' <sup>24</sup>

Another result of the Harrison Report (apart from voicing Jewish suffering), visibly seen in both the Nordic and the British press, was that

it pitted the British Government against the Truman Administration. *GHT* observed the British press's reaction to the report by citing *The Daily Mail*, which clearly conveyed a sense of foreboding with which much of the British press treated the matter: 'England should not be responsible for Palestine alone. If the USA will give advice, it should also take over [some] obligations.'<sup>25</sup>

*The Daily Telegraph* editorialised the report, not from the perspective of the DPs as such, but from a perspective of Palestine's future. The editorial argued that the plight of the Jewish refugees was secondary while simultaneously suspecting that Harrison's analysis from the camps exaggerated the extent of Jewish suffering anyway. Further, the editorial did not accept Harrison's view that for a lot of Jews, Palestine was the only possible place of immigration. The main point of criticism that the piece voiced was that the Harrison Report endangered the hope for finding an agreement in Palestine by uncritically siding with the Jewish claims. Instead, using the Arab argument, the paper held that Palestine was a small area and could offer a home for a tiny minority of the Jewish DPs.<sup>26</sup> Unsurprisingly, no other alternatives, such as Jewish immigration to the USA or indeed Britain, were discussed.

*GHT*'s London correspondent wrote a lengthy column dealing with the issue. It told how 'President Truman's intervention in the Palestine question has got a cold reception in London.'<sup>27</sup> The heart of the matter was the immediate entry of 100,000 displaced Jews into Palestine and the British reaction to it. In a sense, the humanitarian problem was overshadowed by 'the new Palestine crisis' (as the column's title suggested). The 'new crisis' now referred to the rift between British and American policies towards the Jews and Palestine, and not so much to the Jewish DPs' misery. The main news on the Harrison Report in the Finnish paper *Helsingin Sanomat* also contextualised it from the perspective of the Palestine issue. While the news contains many quotations from the Harrison Report, including the one on the Americans treating the Jews just like Nazis save exterminating them, the political issue of what was going to happen in Palestine dominated the frame of the piece. Two other short articles under the main news, one with a dateline from Damascus and one from New York, made the case even more explicit: 'Arabs threaten with Holy War' and 'Zionists planning on boycotting England.'<sup>28</sup>

If the framing of the news according to the political situation in Palestine relegated Jewish suffering to a secondary role, it must be pointed out that the release of the Harrison Report coincided with the 'Belsen trial' where Josef Kramer and over forty other camp guards were charged for crimes committed in the Belsen and Auschwitz camps. Significantly,

some key testimony about the treatment of Jews in Auschwitz was discussed at the same time as the Harrison Report was debated in the press. Reporting from the trial, *The Daily Telegraph's* page 3 article told the story of Anita Lasker, a young German-Jewish musician who played the cello in the Women's Orchestra of Auschwitz. In the *piece* *The Daily Telegraph* reiterated Lasker's testimony in which she described the long queues for the gas chambers in Auschwitz.<sup>29</sup> Decades later, she made the same reference in her autobiography when she described the arrival of Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz in summer 1944: 'The death machinery was totally unable to cope with the influx – gassing, murdering, burning. The crematoria worked round the clock.'<sup>30</sup> Lasker's testimony was publicised widely, just like Dr Sigismund Bendel's report on the Lodz Ghetto, where over 80,000 Jews were murdered.<sup>31</sup> On the whole then, the two pieces of news, the Harrison Report and the Belsen trial certainly offered cumulative support to the theme of extreme Jewish suffering at the hands of the Nazis. But how was the issue of Jewish DPs' suffering, which Harrison had brought on to the press's agenda, depicted between 1946 and 1947, when a great number of other sensational news stories tended to dominate the headlines?

Unlike the case with Britain and Sweden, the war had displaced the Finnish population from many parts of eastern Finland, particularly Karelia, which had well-developed industry and agriculture. The city of Vyborg, which was surrendered to the Soviet Union, was Finland's second largest city. Thus, beside the European DP problem, Finland had its own concerns as to how nearly 500,000 displaced Finns (over 10 per cent of the population, and twice as many as the number of Jewish DPs) could be integrated into new postwar national life. As a consequence, the wider DP issue in Europe seemed more distant from a Finnish perspective than from the British and Swedish. It is no surprise, then, that only on very few occasions did the Finnish press initiate any discussion about the Jewish DPs. To this end, the Finnish press gave the topic far less editorial treatment than its Swedish and British counterparts did. Yet, the issue kept cropping up on newspapers' foreign affairs pages, with frequent links to the recent Jewish past.

### 8.3 From the Displaced Persons camps to Exodus

The Harrison Report had certainly raised the Jewish DPs' profile in the British and Nordic press. Only a few months after the disclosures of his report were debated in the press, the issue of the Jewish DPs made it a hot topic again. This time, the UNRRA chief General Fredrick

Morgan's insensitive comments about the Jews in early January 1946 caused adverse comment in the British as well as in the Nordic press. The Morgan incident is significant and worth exploring in more detail because it illustrates the mainstream press's sensitivity towards the Jews' situation in Europe. According to him, European Jews had a systematic 'secret' plan to leave Europe and 'flood' Palestine.<sup>32</sup>

*The Manchester Guardian* wrote about the issue in its leader article: 'After years of persecution in almost every country in Central Europe, six million Jews were put to death by the Germans ... a Jew is not a criminal because he wishes to go to Palestine, and these wretched people ... deserve more sympathy than they got from General Morgan.'<sup>33</sup> Even *The Daily Telegraph*, not usually the first paper to rally around the Jews, argued on the front page that Morgan's statement was likely to make the difficult situation of the Jewish DPs even harder to understand. The paper lamented that, according to Morgan, the Jews' desire to leave Eastern Europe was not because of their past suffering under the Nazis but was attributable to the current postwar unrest and the anti-Semitic violence of the Poles.<sup>34</sup>

Morgan's comments were not well received in the Swedish press either. *Dagens Nyheter's* approach to answering Morgan was a typical one. The paper interviewed Marcus Nurock, a rabbi from Riga, who argued that there was no place for Jews in Europe. The few 'who were saved from Hitler's crematoria and mass graves had their only hope in Palestine'. The article continues in bold so as to undermine Morgan's comments that 'Out of 3.5 million Polish Jews there are only 200,000 left – and out of them 2,500 have been murdered during the last three months! ... The majority of Europe hardly considers the Jews as humans...'<sup>35</sup> Thus, in *Dagens Nyheter's* formulation, it was hardly surprising that the exodus of the Jews, with their goal set first for the Western Occupation Zone and ultimately for Palestine, had begun. Similarly, *Svenska Dagbladet* reported in early January about the high Jewish emigration from Poland.<sup>36</sup>

*Aamulehti* reported on the front page on 6 January that 'the Morgan case' would be investigated. The article cited American actor Eddie Cantor, 'who thought that Hitler was dead. The Anglo-Saxon [Anglo-American] press refers to the fact that the evidence which the Allies hold and has been represented before the court at Nuremberg tells enough of the distress and terror under which the Jews had to live under Hitler's rule.' According to Cantor, then, the paper maintained that 'any further discussion' in the manner of Morgan, was simply 'unnecessary'.<sup>37</sup>

About a week after Morgan's comments, Finnish Communist paper *Vapaa Sana* wrote a lengthy editorial entitled 'Jews.' Despite its

unashamedly Communist tinge – it argued that Europe should follow the Soviet Union in their civilised way of dealing with the Jews – the piece had a valid point in arguing that

[w]e can paradoxically say that Adolf Hitler lost all his other wars but the war against the Jews. ... There are only scattered fragments of European Jews left. All those countries which Hitler occupied are free now, but the remaining Jews are at this very moment living in anxiety and misery. ... General Morgan's statement once again showed that Nazi anti-Judaism did not die with the Third Reich. ... It is a European shame that even half a year after Hitler's defeat they have to feel themselves as homeless and persecuted, and find salvation from moving to different continents.<sup>38</sup>

However, in a more atypical Finnish note (yet in line with Finnish Communist Party), the paper did not support the idea of a Jewish national home in Palestine, but saw it as useless 'dreaming'. According to the piece, the Jewish question was essentially a 'capitalist problem', which could be solved in Europe, in countries where the Jews had already been 'rooted'. Of course, the Jews could continue to live in Europe, where they had been rooted and had 'proven their worth in many strands of life', if Europe would solve its 'capitalist problem' and turn Communist.<sup>39</sup> Be that as it may, the point about anti-Semitism was certainly accurate, for the press reported the continuing anti-Semitism in Poland.<sup>40</sup>

In 1946 and 1947, anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe was one of the main factors for the increasing number of Jewish DPs.<sup>41</sup> Throughout 1946 and 1947 the press in Finland, as elsewhere, carried news of the flight of Eastern European Jews. For example, in mid-January 1946 *Helsingin Sanomat* reported that 'Polish reactionary forces' had murdered as many as 32,000 Jews.<sup>42</sup> On the whole, the following sample of headlines illustrate the point:

Boycott of Jewish Goods in the Middle East.

Jewish and German clashes near Jew-camp in South-West Bavaria.

Effects of anti-Jewish propaganda still strong in the world.

Pogroms in Poland – tens of Jews Murdered.<sup>43</sup>

In early July 1946, the press reported the Kielce pogroms where, according to the press reports, 36 Jews were massacred.<sup>44</sup> On 6 July,

*Ilta-Sanomat*, among other papers, reported how 'terrorists' provoked Polish masses to attack Jews. In the aftermath of the pogrom, the same paper reported how, according to a Polish archbishop, the Jews themselves were to be blamed for the pogrom. The reason, according to the archbishop, was that Polish Jews held prominent positions in the new (Communist-dominated) government. Unwittingly, the frame of reporting helped to shape the early Cold War view where recent Nazi history was increasingly distanced from anti-Semitism at the expense of Communism.<sup>45</sup> *The Manchester Guardian's* editorial of 15 July noted how anti-Semitism had not stopped at the fall of Nazism, and commented how it was hardly surprising that the European Jews were dreaming of the Promised Land.<sup>46</sup> *Aamulehti* placed the Kielce pogrom into a wider context of Polish anti-Semitism. According to the paper, anti-Jewish feeling was 'smouldering' in Poland and the Kielce pogrom was indicative of the general trend.<sup>47</sup> *Expressen* reiterated the whole story of how a 9-year old boy was told to lie that he had been kidnapped by the Jews but managed to escape. Outside the town, he was supposed to have said he had seen 15 Christian children kept for a blood ritual. *Expressen* noted that those who were responsible for staging the pogrom belonged to General Anders' forces.<sup>48</sup>

The anti-Communist rhetoric on the Jews' plight and Eastern European anti-Semitism caused real concern as what was to happen to the Jews. In early January 1946, the liberal *Helsingin Sanomat* asked: 'Can the persecuted Jews return to their ancient homeland?' Beyond the discussion on Hitler's open statement to wipe the Jews from the face of the earth, the article defended Jews from typical anti-Jewish accusations. According to the paper, it was 'nonsense' that Jews detested physical labour. Jewish settlements in Palestine were clear proof against such accusations. In contrast to growing prosperity in Palestine, Jews' old homelands in Europe were nothing but their 'graveyards' now.<sup>49</sup> At the same time, a feature article in *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* asked: 'will the persecuted Jews be given access to their ancient homeland?' It is worth citing the opening of the article at some length because it captures the contemporary Finnish view on the Holocaust:

The Palestinian question and particularly the question of Jewish immigration is at a critical stage. Therefore it is appropriate to touch on this topic and its history, especially due to its global importance.

During the Jewish homelessness of the last two thousand years, they have had to face numerous bloody persecutions, but the destruction

of the Jewish people under Hitler and Germany has been by far the most far reaching and bloodiest. Even before the latest great war, Hitler had started persecuting the Jews, his ultimate goal was, as he openly declared, to wipe the Jewish 'race' from the face of the earth. This side of his programme, as is known, he managed to conduct on a terrible scale. At first, the German Jews had to face destruction, and thereafter the Jews from the occupied territories. Particularly in Poland Nazi corpse factories were working hectically, killing thousands of innocent people daily, principally the Jews who were deported there from different countries.<sup>50</sup>

In a similar manner a year later, *Helsingin Sanomat* interviewed Schlomo Lewertoff, the conductor of the Palestinian Symphony Orchestra, and representative of *Keren Kajemmet*, a Zionist fund that supported Jewish settlement in Palestine. A caption of the photograph accompanying the piece of news read: 'One Jewish settlement which had risen from arid and fruitless rock and sand desert, and which is slowly transforming into fertile and beautiful farmland.'<sup>51</sup> More importantly, the article raised a point on the crux of the DPs, their ultimate settlement in Palestine and ongoing Jewish terrorism. According to the paper:

Political life is active. The largest party is the Social Democratic Party, and the second largest party is based on religious and national traditions and has both right and left wing policies. *Terrorists enjoy very little support in the country, so it is wrong to blame the Jews as a whole for terrorism.*

Keren Kajemmet is still facing a mammoth task. It ought to move 1.5 million Jews to their homeland without delay, of which 300,000 are still in refugee camps in Germany. They have lost almost everything which a human can lose and they are lacking all basic necessities for making a livelihood.<sup>52</sup>

Thus, Jewish immigration to Palestine, and a Zionist organisation helping to achieve it, was certainly seen in a positive light. On the whole, the Finnish and Swedish press' pro-Zionist attitude, as the example above most vividly shows, stands in marked contrast to the majority view of the British press, where Zionism was considered entirely differently, as we shall see. Essentially, the human tragedy of the DPs was often obfuscated in order to 'portray the Zionist activists as shrewd, unscrupulous people', as Arie Kochavi has argued.<sup>53</sup> Yet, the plight of the Jews was not totally forgotten.

On the whole, the British press's response to the new emerging Jewish problem in 1946 was one of ambiguity and conflicting reporting. Even though the Jews received the press's sympathy in the Morgan incident, it was hardly the whole picture. The way in which the press responded to the Jewish question depended on the merits of every individual case, not so much on any systematic approach to Jewish suffering. This can be demonstrated with reference to *The Daily Telegraph*. On the one hand, the paper wrote somewhat sympathetically about the Jews when it responded to the uproar caused by Morgan's comments in early January 1946, as we have already seen. On the other hand, only a few weeks earlier, the paper's military correspondent H. G. Martin's argument anticipated the Morgan controversy when he claimed in his column (next to the leading article) that the Jews' march from Poland was carefully planned and not caused by anti-Semitism in Poland, as the Jews themselves maintained. According to Martin, the Jews did not seem to be suffering anyhow, whether physically or materially, and they just wanted to make it to Palestine rather than remain in Europe.<sup>54</sup>

Rather than showing any compassion towards the plight of the Jews, the *Telegraph's* correspondent reiterated old Jewish stereotypes; they had plenty of money and they were whining about their mistreatment, of which there was lack of evidence. Hence, along the lines of low-level, but deeply ingrained, anti-Semitism, it seemed like the victims were the ones to blame for their victimisation. In a similar way, Peter Smollett's article, which appeared on page 4 in *The Daily Express* (under a dateline Vienna), showed considerable antipathy and thinly veiled anti-Semitism towards the Jews. Despite noting the ongoing anti-Semitism in Poland, the article spared no sympathy for the Jews, who were 'trekking' en masse to Bari, in the heel of Italy, 'where they hope to start *secret* voyages to the Promised Land. ... I saw hard-faced, determined young men going round the wards *whispering* to some of the inmates and [I] recognised them as *Zionist partisans* who will try to organise their journeys.' The story continues under a subheading 'willing to die':

Some of these men are resolved to rescue their compatriots, others – *nationalist fanatics* – probably care little for the fate of individuals ... [the] stories of the travellers are always the same ... [s]ome had been hiding with Christian friends, others had not reached the top of the gas chamber queue.<sup>55</sup>

On reading these stories, it is not difficult to imagine the despondency of the more informed public, and especially the British Jews, about the



lack of compassion of the popular press. The day before, *The Manchester Guardian* had publicised the following letter to the editor:

Sir – in your report of the clandestine landings in Palestine on December 26 it is stated that almost all the illegal immigrants were young men and girls, their age ranging from 15 to 35. This is not surprising, since only a very small percentage below 15 and above 35 managed to escape extermination in the concentration camps. Children and old people are a rare sight amongst the Jewish displaced persons who still languish in Germany in the displaced persons' centres. ... It is not to be wondered at if they continue to use illegal methods to reach the one country in which they believe they can find home.<sup>56</sup>

Earlier on, *The Guardian* had written in a page 6 article titled 'Camps for homeless Jews in Germany' that '[i]t is against the ghostly background of Buchenwald, Auschwitz, and of a dozen other places whose names have acquired an indelible significance of horror that the present condition of Jewish "displaced persons" must be studied'.<sup>57</sup>

Yet, it cannot be said that *The Guardian* was the yardstick with which the British press's attitude towards displaced Jews could be measured. Indeed, the Colonial Office had even argued that '[w]e do not want big headlines in popular papers so much as leading articles in papers whose opinion responsible Jews respect such as the *Manchester Guardian* and *The Times*'.<sup>58</sup> Further, unlike the liberal press, government circles seemed to link the negative conceptualisation of Zionism with the Jewish DP population, desperate to move to Palestine: in 1944, Sir Harold MacMichael, High Commissioner of Palestine, reported to the Colonial Secretary, Oliver Stanley, that 'Palestine has been entered by a large number of Jews from Central Europe whose background is anarchist'.<sup>59</sup>

Towards 1947, the discussion about the Jewish DP problem had developed through multiple avenues and viewpoints. First, the Harrison Report had introduced the Jewish DPs' plight to readers. Since then, the discussion on the camps had become more complicated owing to the emergence of Eastern European Jews who had very little desire to stay under new Communist regimes where anti-Semitism seemed to be rife. For example, in January 1946, *Ilta-Sanomat* reported how 150,000 Polish Jews had moved to Czechoslovakia within the previous few months and how some 130,000 more were expected.<sup>60</sup> Finally, the fact that the number of Jewish refugees was increasing while the number of non-Jewish DPs was diminishing partially helped to keep the question of Jewish immigration

to Palestine acute. Indeed, the link between Jewish refugees and Palestine was growing more important by the day. Nowhere else was the triangle between the DP problem, Palestine and the Holocaust as prominent as in the case of the so-called 'Exodus affair' in the summer 1947.

#### **8.4 The saga of *Exodus* 1947 and Holocaust survivors in the British, Swedish and Finnish press**

The story of three ships that set sail from France for Palestine on 11 July 1947 is now remembered as the 'Exodus affair'. In many ways it was the very occasion that highlighted the connection between the Jewish DP problem and the rising tension in Palestine.<sup>61</sup> In retrospect, the affair has been granted a heroic status in collective memory, especially in Israel, as one commentator has noted: 'it [the Exodus affair] instantly found a place in the saga of suffering and heroism in the years of drift and reconnection between the Holocaust and Jewish independence'.<sup>62</sup> In a similar manner the affair's symbolic importance can be gauged by looking at some of the literature on the topic. Ruth Gruber, an American journalist who was aboard *Runnymede Park*, one of the three ships that were returned to Germany, wrote an account of the journey in 1948, titled *Destination Palestine: The story of the Haganah ship Exodus 1947*.<sup>63</sup> A more recent version of her book illustrates the connection between the affair and the founding of Israel. The Haganah ship and the story were now called *Exodus 1947: The Ship That Launched a Nation*.<sup>64</sup> Beyond the symbolism, as the rereading of Zionist politics now has it, however, Zionist leadership exploited the plight of the passengers for their nationalist cause and ignored them as soon as they had lost their political worth in highlighting the drastic consequences of the British White Paper of 1939 on the Jews.<sup>65</sup>

In 1947, the affair was closely followed and throughout the Western world it generated a good deal of press commentary on Jewish DPs, British immigration policies in Palestine, the question of Palestine's future and occasionally on the Holocaust. Above all, the end of the survivors' voyage – their disembarkation on to German soil – was the event where sad irony did not escape the Western press's commentary on the Holocaust. The beginning of the Exodus voyage seemed no different from any other attempt at illegal Jewish immigration, which the (particularly British) press had grown accustomed to publicising. As Idith Zertal has observed, there was nothing clandestine about the journey, but from the outset it was a demonstration, 'a journey of political protest'.<sup>66</sup> The first time that the affair received more than a short news

commentary was in the second half of July when the British Navy intercepted the ship, which resulted in the death of three immigrants. News commentary of the tumult was publicised in the Nordic as well as in the British press. *Svenska Dagbladet's* news article, with a Jerusalem dateline, was a typical one in Scandinavia, and could be repeated many times over, when it told about the 'fight with teargas and smoke bombs when the Jewish immigration boat was boarded'.<sup>67</sup> In a similar way, *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* reported how the British navy had stopped 'President Warfield's' desperate attempt to reach Palestine'.<sup>68</sup> What is significant in terms of framing the news, no Nordic paper examined here labelled *President Warfield* as an illegal immigration ship, although when the saga continued, the term 'illegal' was occasionally used too.

If the British Government had decided to send the refugees to Cyprus the voyage would have been seen as another attempt by the Jews to reach Palestine. However, the change in British policy, which meant returning the immigrants back to their port of embarkation, together with Zionist die-hard attitude and the plight of the Jewish survivors onboard, assured that the saga was to attain legendary status. In reaction to the Attlee Government's new policy, when it was announced that the Jews were to be sent back to France, *The Daily Telegraph* briefly observed on the front page that despite the new tougher line against illegal immigrants, it was running the risk of turning unsystematic too.<sup>69</sup> A *Daily Mirror* front-page article juxtaposed the decision to send the Jews away with the renewed outbreak of Jewish terrorism.<sup>70</sup> The Swedish conservative paper *Svenska Dagbladet* also wrote how the British policy towards (what now were called) 'illegal' immigrants was becoming more forceful. 'Contrary to earlier practice,' the paper said, 'the last contingents of illegal immigrants to Palestine have been returned to France in greatest secrecy.'<sup>71</sup> However, despite the paper's claims, the Exodus affair ensured that the change in British policy was not to remain secret.

As the Exodus ships docked in Port-de-Bouc in France and the Jews refused to land, it meant essentially that the Government's decision to send the Jews back to their ports of embarkation had backfired. France was willing to let the Jews disembark, but that was beside the point, for the Jews maintained that they were survivors from the Nazi policy of extermination and willing to go nowhere but Palestine.<sup>72</sup>

As the British ships were docked in France, the propaganda war between Britain and the USA was intensifying. *The Manchester Guardian* editorial defended the government and criticised the USA when it argued that 'it is one thing to agree that all Jews who suffered under the Nazis should have the right to leave Europe if they wish to do so;

it is another to accept the full Zionist case and say they all must go to Palestine'. The problem was not merely the government's policy, which had admittedly 'made a mess of things in Palestine', as the paper purported, but the bottom line was that American Zionist pressure meant that the conflict over Palestine was impossible to solve in a way that would guarantee a modicum of satisfaction for both parties, the Jews and the Arabs. Sharply criticising the Americans, the paper argued that

There is ... more than a touch of racketeering in this business. The organisers have plenty of money, contributed by innocent and well-meaning Americans and few scruples. ... It is a sorry game in which the refugees take the risk and the British take the blame. ... But the men who organise this traffic are doing a doubtful service to their people.<sup>73</sup>

The fact that even a pro-Zionist paper like *The Guardian* showed such aversion towards American support for the Zionist campaign serves to indicate how inflammatory Anglo-American public relations had become over the issue of Palestine. Mainly, from the British perspective, the problem was a belief that the US policy on Palestine was conducted in terms of political expediency rather than having genuine sympathy for the Zionist cause; Washington's support for Jewish immigration to Palestine meant that Jews would be kept away from the USA (as Bevin had declared at the Labour Party conference in June 1946) while, at the same time, such attitude ensured the Jewish vote and financial backing in presidential elections, both in 1945 and 1948 (as well as in the 1946 mid-term election).<sup>74</sup> *The Daily Telegraph* had complained about Truman that his policy of admission, concerning letting 50,000 Jewish and non-Jewish DPs into the USA, was far too strict if he really was trying to resolve the DP problem.<sup>75</sup> To no small extent, *The Guardian*, as well as *The Daily Telegraph*, was right because not only London but also many in the State Department in Washington shared this view. As early as 1945, Secretary of State Edward S. Stettinius argued that the Palestine question goes 'far beyond the plight of the Jews of Europe',<sup>76</sup> meaning that while Jewish suffering ought to be taken into account, the USA should not bow to American Zionists' insistence that Palestine was the only destination in the minds of the DPs. However, Truman personally was not only sensitive to electoral calculations, but was also genuinely concerned for the Jewish DPs and their wishes, a feeling that Whitehall, according to Kochavi, did not share.<sup>77</sup>

The resoluteness of the Jews (with or without Zionist pressure) together with their worsening situation inside the ships also meant that

press publicity was guaranteed the world over. More often than not, the press was sympathetic to the plight of the passengers. The Swedish afternoon paper *Expressen* published an interview with a Jew who had been landed in France. The interviewee told how there was no food on the ships and that Jews who were kept in cages were dying.<sup>78</sup> The Finnish paper *Ilta-Sanomat* used the same telegram, which came from the *United Press* and added that already seven people had died.<sup>79</sup> *The Daily Herald* cited Leon Blum, who argued that the position of the 4,500 Jews was 'heart-rendering, unjustifiable, intolerable' and added that the 'French press comment on the refugees' plight was almost uniformly unfavourable [for Britain]'.<sup>80</sup> Indeed, the French communist paper *Humanité* went as far as to refer to the three ships as 'a floating Auschwitz'.<sup>81</sup> The Swedish liberal paper *GHT* reported how there had been a Jewish demonstration against Britain in New York where people were carrying banners saying 'Englishmen in the Nazis' footsteps'.<sup>82</sup>

Understandably, the British were sensitive towards the harsh and judgemental press commentary on the issue, since it seemed that the world's press showed little understanding for the British policy on Palestine. Nevertheless, if the situation in the French port was difficult enough from the British point of view, the decision to send the Jews back to Germany was far worse, and certainly helped the Zionist aims, as well as sharpened anti-British attitudes in the USA and elsewhere.<sup>83</sup>

HM Government's debate on how they reached the decision to send the Exodus Jews back to Germany is not within the scope of this study,<sup>84</sup> but it must be observed that the British press was adopting an increasingly harsh attitude towards the Jews – including those onboard the Exodus ships – as a result of Jewish terrorism in Palestine. The situation was paradoxical, for on the one hand, the press called for a 'gloves off' approach to the problems in Palestine, and on the other, recorded the plight of Jewish refugees with sympathy, although they were often seen as pawns of Zionist intrigue.

A good example of the 'gloves off approach' is the morning of 1 August 1947. The front page of *The Daily Express* carried photos of the two hanged British sergeants, whom the Jewish group Irgun Zvai Leumi had killed in retaliation for the hangings of three Irgun men. On the inside, the paper wrote that even Nazi foulness could not match the murder of the British sergeants (one of them was Jewish). The piece next argued that if the British forces in Palestine had to flatten Jews' homes they were justified in doing so.<sup>85</sup> *The Times* also told its readers how '[t]he bestialities practiced by the Nazis themselves could go no further'.<sup>86</sup> The language bears a great resemblance to that of the British

press's rhetoric on the Germans at the wake of the liberation of the camps, but, on the whole, fits in with the pattern identified by Susan Carruthers: since the end of the war the British press and the Mandatory Authority in Palestine had increasingly defined the Jews as their enemy in the region.<sup>87</sup> While the homes of Palestinian Jews could be knocked down to the ground if necessary, *The Daily Express* found it shocking that anti-Jewish violence had caught on in Britain, discrediting the whole country for the deeds of a tiny intolerant minority.<sup>88</sup>

At this point in 1947, 'Hitlerism' and 'Nazism' were part of a common abusive vocabulary that all parties were using – showing the extent of anger and frustration that the immigration issue was causing. As seen above, Jewish terrorism was characterised as worse than the actual Nazi atrocities. *The Daily Telegraph* reported that many British consulates in the USA were defaced, coupling Nazis and the British.<sup>89</sup> *The Guardian*, for its part, editorialised the anti-Jewish riots in Liverpool, Manchester, London and other places, warning that terrorism in Palestine should not lead into the acceptance of Nazi methods of persecution in Britain.<sup>90</sup> The domestic context of the riots – a shrinking economy, rationing and a traditional English view of Jews, which considered them as foreigners – was very important in sustaining an atmosphere where such riots could materialise, as Tony Kushner has shown.<sup>91</sup> Yet, the spark came from Palestine. Although a Mass-Observation survey conducted a month after the riots found that there was a general lack of interest regarding Palestine and that 'the hanging incident' had 'not had any pronounced lasting effect upon opinion [on Jews]', it was still the case that, as the report stated, insofar as the masses showed interest in Palestine 'they are annoyed about Jewish terrorist activity, especially when it involves loss of British life'.<sup>92</sup> Further, to a significant section of society the riots did not come as a surprise, as a middle-aged housewife observed: 'I am not surprised and quite glad people are taking their revenge on Jews in this country. The British have been long suffering about Palestine. ... In their hearts, I believe, all Jews are glad to hit us British – they are notoriously lacking in moral courage on the whole.'<sup>93</sup>

In marked contrast to the British reporting of the hangings of the British sergeants and the anti-Semitic outbursts in England that followed, newspapers in Sweden and Finland took the role of a distant observer. Both these events were frequently noted in the news, as was the tense situation in Palestine, but the difference was that in both Sweden and Finland this news was given a short event-based narrative, void of any in-depth analysis of the situation. In other words, anti-Semitic rioting in Britain, its causes and the level of anti-Semitism that

existed in both Britain and Western Europe was not considered worthy of commentary in the Nordic press. Only *Expressen* editorialised the riots. The paper argued that British opinion strongly opposed these anti-Semitic excesses, but attributed the source of trouble to the unbalanced expression of the natural abomination that the British felt as the result of killings of their military personnel in Palestine. Yet the paper firmly reminded that 'the Jewish terrorists, who represent only a very small section of Palestinian Jewish people, are going to have a great liability if even in Great Britain combatant anti-Semitism can develop'.<sup>94</sup> Thus, the Jews as a collective were not held responsible for the disorder in Palestine, but by the same token, the idea that anti-Semitism (at least in a 'combatant' form) existed in Britain was also rejected. From the Nordic perspective it seemed, then, that the riots were only a direct response to the events in Palestine.

While the anti-Jewish riots in England were aflame, the story of the Exodus momentarily disappeared from the press's radar, although there was some speculation as to what would happen to the ship, especially in the British press, but as was often the case, the sheer volume of other news pushed the Jewish story to the inside pages. However, when the final phase in the Exodus saga began in early September as the ships were approaching German shores, its front-page status was guaranteed. According to Ruth Gruber, one of the main purposes of the Exodus was to guarantee a safe haven for the new generation. She reiterates a survivor's story:

I'm going to stay alive so my child won't be burned in a gas chamber, I'm going to live so my child can grow up in decency, without being afraid. There are no frontiers to Jewish hope.<sup>95</sup>

Thus, the fact that the Jews were returned to Germany was appalling.<sup>96</sup> No doubt, for the Jews and others, the unloading of the ships seemed reminiscent of unloading freight cars in the camps. In a similar manner, the loading of the Jews onto trains that took them to German DP camps brought back images from recent history when Jews were also loaded onto cargo trucks and sent to the East.

No wonder, then, that the disembarkation and sending of the Jews to DP camps was a big news event, which was witnessed by journalists from all countries examined here and beyond. On 8 September an *Aamulehti* headline on page 2 read: 'Jewish rage as their brethren are returned to Germany.' Below, the paper related a story of the Jewish demonstration in Belsen, which was repeated in the world's press: 'In Belsen

concentration camp on Sunday, which nowadays houses Jewish trans-immigrants there was staged a great demonstration against the Brits.' The Jews were then cited: 'We elicit our deepest protest because of this shameful act [the return of Exodus Jews to Germany] and the silence with which the whole world follows this brutality.' Finally, the paper told how the Jews burned a Bevin-dummy, which was wrapped in a 'swastika-daubed English flag [sic]'.<sup>97</sup> Some days later *The Daily Express* wrote about the event, arguing that it was staged by some American journalists who sympathised with the Zionist propaganda.<sup>98</sup>

When the three Exodus ships were approaching Hamburg, the main news in the Nordic press was speculation as to whether the Jews would disembark peacefully or whether they would resist, and how the British forces would handle the situation.<sup>99</sup> There was certainly suspense in Hamburg. *The Manchester Guardian* went on to report that around 170 journalists and photographers had arrived in Hamburg to witness the disembarkation.<sup>100</sup>

The unloading of the first two ships, *The Ocean Vigour* and *Empire Rival* took place without anticipated conflict (except that the passengers had left a home-made time-bomb in the hold of the *Empire Rival*). However, when the last vessel, *Runnymede Park*, was unloaded, violence erupted. According to a *Helsingin Sanomat* page 5 article, 'blood was running on the boarding planks of the third and last Jewish ship ... when British soldiers were dragging Jews to the pier in Hamburg'.<sup>101</sup> GHT reported how one of the Zionists onboard shouted 'here comes Nazis! Remember Belsen!' when British troops 'scrambled' on him.<sup>102</sup> *The Daily Express* praised the way in which the British soldiers acted under difficult conditions, saying they could not help using some force.<sup>103</sup> *Expressen*, alternatively, focused on the Jews when they were put in trains. Under the subheading, 'I was in Auschwitz', the paper quoted a Jewish girl as follows: 'I have been in Auschwitz together with my sister ... since then, we have always been together. You cannot separate us now.'<sup>104</sup> *The Daily Telegraph* also reported how many of the Jews had tattooed arms showing that they had been enslaved by the Nazis.<sup>105</sup>

On the whole, editorial commentary on the tragic end to the Exodus affair was contextualised in terms of the Nazi Holocaust, and certainly helped the Zionist cause, as Idith Zertal has noted: 'the refugees fulfilled their part in the Zionist political campaign to persuade the world of the link between the fate of the Holocaust survivors and the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine'.<sup>106</sup> In *The Manchester Guardian's* opinion the whole episode was such idiocy from Bevin and the government that it was difficult to compare with anything else they had done. *The Guardian*



was shocked not only because the government's move was nothing but sheer horror for the victims of the Nazis, but because of the way it tarnished Britain's image abroad:

for the sake of the few [Jewish fanatics] the British government sends these miserable creatures to German camps which they, and the outside world, look on as revivals of the Nazi concentration camps. Belsen can never become a paradise for the Jews even if it were to be renamed as Bevinstadt. The lack of imagination on the part of the Government is frightening. Most Ministers do not read foreign newspapers; if they did they would blush for shame at the way the name of Britain has been dragged down by this affair.

Contrary to the majority of press comment, *The Daily Express* was annoyed by the publicity that the Jews received. Unlike any other paper examined, the paper's editorial on 9 September 1947 held that although the Jews were the loudest of all destitute Europeans, their plight was no greater than any other group's. In the paper's opinion, it was simply unfair that all other unfortunates were left unrepresented in the press. In an anti-Semitic fashion the paper argued that a continuous stream of money enabled the Jews to complain about their problems in the world's newspapers and – most importantly – keep anti-British sentiment alive.<sup>107</sup>

*Expressen* in Sweden carried a leader article titled ironically 'operation oasis', which referred to the cover name for the British action against the Exodus Jews. The action

was most of all a terrible human tragedy. It is tragic that Englishmen in their bitterness resort to the final solution (*en ultima ratio*) and it is awful that the 4,500 refugees, most of them with experiences of Auschwitz and other concentration camps behind them, are forced to return to the very country which was the root and the source of their affliction.<sup>108</sup>

*Svenska Dagbladet* also editorialised the event under the title 'the tragic Exodus-affair'. However, unlike *Expressen* or other papers that commented on the saga, *SvD*'s main bone of contention was that the main Swedish communist paper *Ny Dag* had editorialised the issue only to hit hard on the English and sing the praises of the Soviet Union. The issue was not so much to deal with the Exodus affair as to ridicule Swedish

communism, which only laboured under (Soviet) misconceptions of world politics.<sup>109</sup> The Finnish press, on the contrary, remained one step more removed from the affair and as far as the examined papers go, the Exodus affair did not receive editorial treatment, although the news of the event was often placed on front pages. For example, without any elaboration *Uusi Suomi* noted that 'the Jews were bitterly stubborn' when they were forced to disembark.<sup>110</sup>

## 8.5 Conclusion

In general, the Swedish press followed the fate of the Jewish (and other) DPs closely. After all, the Swedish Red Cross's expedition to Germany, headed by Folke Bernadotte, had brought around 15,000 Scandinavians, Russians, Poles and other victims of the concentration camps to Sweden.<sup>111</sup> Although it is difficult to ascertain how many Jews were included, according to Steven Koblik the figure will fall between 3,500 and 6,500.<sup>112</sup> Thus, the DP problem physically touched Sweden too. Among those who came to Sweden with the Swedish Red Cross were tens of thousands of citizens of the former Baltic States. According to Lars Olsson, as many as 25,000 Baltic refugees – the majority of them Estonians – were staying in Sweden.<sup>113</sup> So on the whole, it can be said that Swedish press readers were reasonably well informed in the matters of European DPs, and, as has been shown in this chapter, the Swedish press reported on the plight of the Jews both in Europe and in Palestine, also giving editorial treatment to Jewish issues. Significantly, on the rhetorical level, the problems were often connected to the Nazi genocide. To a large extent, the Finnish press followed in its neighbour's footsteps, offering much sympathy to the Jewish DPs and their desire to emigrate to Palestine. However, the Finnish press did not write about the DPs as extensively as the Swedish press. Similarly, the DPs did not receive editorial treatment in the Finnish press.

A great part of British hesitancy towards the Jews, as illustrated in this chapter, was caused by the issue of Palestine and particularly Jewish terrorism, which sought to end the British mandate in the area. No doubt, the press had a difficult role to play. According to Arie Kochavi, 'London set out on a propaganda campaign, whose aim was to blur the human aspect of the Jewish DP problem.'<sup>114</sup> From the perspective of the press at least, this assessment is a little exaggerated. As has already been shown, the British press did not automatically dismiss the theme of Jewish suffering in favour of sustaining the Government's approach to the Palestine issue, but the plight of the Jewish DPs was often linked to

the American Zionist lobby, which in a way shifted the focus away from the DP Jews to American Jews.

From the British domestic point of view, too, the problem of the DPs was cumbersome. On the one hand, more sympathy for the Jews could be interpreted as legitimising Jewish terrorism and recognising their goals in Palestine. At its most extreme this could amount to a *de facto* recognition of the Jews as a separate nation. Similarly, this could be seen as undermining the Labour Government's effort to deal with the whole Palestine issue. It must be remembered that even if Attlee's Government was a target of almost daily press abuse, especially from the right, these same papers usually did not attack the government on its handling of the Palestine issue *per se*. The main criticism in the British press against Attlee's handling of Palestine was not so much about policy. Indeed, the press supported the idea of hard measures to safeguard British lives whenever possible, but the crux of the Palestine issue was the fact that the troops were there in the first place. In other words, the press campaign tended to overlook particularities of the policy in favour of advocating a quick withdrawal. On the other hand, there was no doubt that the Jews had suffered greatly at the hands of Nazis and that they deserved some kind of recognition for their suffering, but the question was how to negotiate between these two themes, which, it seemed, were pulling in two different directions. As has been noted already, the contradiction was never righted, leading to a situation where the press (with the exception of *The Manchester Guardian*) applied an ambivalent approach. On the whole, with the end of the Exodus saga, the European press's attention to the plight of Jewish DPs largely came to an end and Palestine was brought under a sharper focus in view of the pending report of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP).

# 9

## The Holocaust, the Founding of Israel and the Arab-Israeli War in the British, Swedish and Finnish Press

### 9.1 Introduction

The fact that the gap between the founding of the state of Israel and the end of the Holocaust was only three years (almost to date), creates, at least in retrospect, a strong link between the two events. Articulating this view, Walter Harrelson has written that '[A] shamed world was certainly ready, after the Holocaust and the struggle of Jews from Europe to get to Israel, to support the Partition Plan that led to the establishment of the state.'<sup>1</sup> Yehuda Bauer has argued that the birth of a nation 'bridges the gap between an unconquered past tragedy and the hope for the resurrection of an almost mortally wounded people'.<sup>2</sup> Peter Novick also agrees that the link exists, although in less certain terms: '[i]n countless ways, it was the survivors who were indispensable middle term in the equation linking the Holocaust and the birth of Israel'.<sup>3</sup> In similar tones, Mark Wyman has added that 'the Jewish DPs' suffering in overcrowded camps must be counted as major factors in the rise of modern Israel'.<sup>4</sup>

It cannot be denied (as all these statements indicate) that there is a link between the Holocaust and the rise of Israel. However, the debate, particularly between Bauer and Novick, is about how the link was forged. According to Bauer, the link was a natural one, rising from the survivors' own Zionist instincts; the Zionist organisations' agitation was 'marginal'. 'All in all,' he contends, 'Zionism became what today would be called the civil religion of DP camps'.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, Novick's post-Zionist analysis holds that the Zionists in America and in the Yishuv often coerced the Displaced Persons (DPs) to accept that immigration to Palestine was the only option available to them. Consequently, they exploited human suffering of the same hapless DPs in order to pressurise world opinion, while at the same time they were keen to repudiate their past.<sup>6</sup> He cites

Nahum Goldman, an ardent Zionist and a long-time president of the World Jewish Congress (1949–77): ‘the DPs, in general, do not represent the human material Eretz Yisroel needs today’.<sup>7</sup> In other words, DPs were useful for the Zionists because of their media value, not because they were seen at all as a key component in the new Israeli state.

In truth, the impact of the Jewish genocide on the establishment of Israel in 1948 is a topic that scholars, politicians, journalists and others have discussed in various forms since the late 1940s. It is not within the limits of this study to reiterate the debates relating to the question of the birth of Israel, as they can be found elsewhere.<sup>8</sup> However, it suffices to say that the way in which the debate on the birth of Israel and its historical representation was conducted in the European press in the late 1940s is far less known than political and military, Jewish and Arab aspects of the topic.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine how the press in Britain, Sweden and Finland depicted the birth of Israel. In essence, this will be examined from the purview of the Holocaust: how, if at all, did it feature in press discourse? What forms did it take? Following from the previous chapter, what did the causal nexus between the Holocaust, displaced Jews and the founding of Israel look like in 1947–8? In order to answer such complicated questions, this chapter will investigate the press discourse on the Holocaust by focusing on the main issues that related to the Holocaust between 1947 and 1948. The press debates on the United Nation’s partition plan for Palestine (UN General Assembly resolution 181), the end of the British Mandate, birth of Israel in 1948 and the ensuing Arab–Israeli War will be investigated. Finally, the murder of Count Folke Bernadotte in September 1948 and the press coverage of that event will be studied. This affair provides a useful window through which the contemporary view of the Holocaust and its legacy can be gauged, especially with regard to the newly established State of Israel.

## **9.2 From the Partition Plan to the end of the British Mandate in Palestine, 1948**

The press in Europe was not under any illusion about the problems that the Jewish immigration to Palestine would create. For example, *The Daily Mirror*, hardly famous for its salient analysis of international relations, had argued in late 1945 that the Jewish question would ultimately be settled in the context of Palestine. Whatever happened in Europe or in the USA would have an impact, but the key to solving the problem remained in the eastern shores of the Mediterranean.<sup>9</sup> Finnish magazine *Suomen Kuvalehti* had argued along the same lines in late 1945

too, encapsulating the core of sympathetic European thinking on Jewish suffering: 'Those who are moving away from war and persecution will hardly have any space in the ruined, war-torn Europe, inundated with anti-Semitism.'<sup>10</sup> As we saw in the previous chapter, the problem of displaced Jews in Europe formed the bridge between the Holocaust and the problem in Palestine. However, by late 1947 after the Exodus affair was forgotten, the Palestinian problem was not considered mainly as a refugee problem, but was more and more often framed as a problem of the superpowers, the Jews, Arabs and the UN. The assessment of the situation was also increasingly gloomy and the cautious optimism for finding a solution between the Jews and the Arabs, which prevailed 1945–6, was increasingly in short supply by 1947.<sup>11</sup>

Since late 1947, when the UN General Assembly finally approved the Partition Plan for Palestine, the news that followed was increasingly framed as war news. As was the case with the liberation of the camps in 1945, viewing the situation in Palestine mainly within a framework of war reporting was obscuring the recent Jewish past. This was especially true in Britain, where the news had a direct domestic impact. Not only the fiscal burden, but also the fact that the British troops in Palestine were caught in the middle of the problem and taking casualties – mainly from Jewish terrorism – shaped the stories in the British press. The public, according to a Mass-Observation survey, thought in a similar manner:

Jewish sufferings during the war are not often mentioned as a reason for sympathising with Zionist aims. When this crops up, moreover, it is by no means always an argument for a National Home. Sometimes Concentration Camps are even mentioned in anti-Semitic context – 'Hitler was right, exterminate the lot' is the attitude then.<sup>12</sup>

The frame of reporting was viewed through the lenses of British nationalism, which often depicted the situation as Britain versus the rest. Certainly, the British press was exasperated by the fact that the news media (especially) in the USA, and elsewhere, as in the Nordic countries, was largely anti-British when it came to its Palestine policy, and tended to oversimplify the problems that Britain faced.<sup>13</sup> When the UN General Assembly approved the Partition Plan, the British press was particularly relieved. *The Daily Herald's* leader following the Partition Plan is a good illustration of the mood in the British press:

Those in the outside world who throughout the last two years have been giving advice to the British Government and simultaneously impugning its motives, will now also have a chance of showing their

ability to find a solution and their willingness to share the cost of enforcing it.<sup>14</sup>

The Partition Plan resulted in two kinds of news coming from Palestine. First, the leader articles across Sweden and Finland, as in Britain, welcomed the step. This was not done so much because of any particular sympathy for the 'deserving Jew' but because it was increasingly clear that Britain alone could not deal with the situation. Second, the news following the UN's Partition Plan accounted for Arab rioting and consequently read like that accounting for *Kristallnacht*. These are front-page samples from *The Daily Telegraph*, between 1 and 5 December 1947:

Arabs attack Jews – Kill nine.

Palestine Arabs battle with Jews – Jaffa houses blaze in night attack – Jerusalem shops looted & burned – Holy War proclaimed.

Arabs storm Tel-Aviv in 15-hour battle.

Arabs in convoy battle.<sup>15</sup>

According to Walter Harrelson, 'the continuing conflicts between Israel and Arab states have been reminders of how precarious the life of this small state is, a fact that immediately calls to mind Hitler's effort to exterminate the Jews'.<sup>16</sup> On the face of it, it seems that this was the case. When the neighbouring Arab states invaded the newly proclaimed State of Israel, their avowed goal was to destroy the new Jewish state and to annul the UN's Partition Plan. In hindsight, the extermination of the new Jewish state has an uncanny connection with the extermination of the Jews in Europe only some years earlier. Particularly, the words of Azzam Pasha, the first secretary-general of the Arab League, on the eve of the 1948 War – '[t]his will be a war of extermination and a momentous massacre which will be spoken of like the Mongolian massacres and the Crusades' – have now become famous.<sup>17</sup>

However, in 1947 and 1948 little of all this was recognised. Harrelson's argument is simply anachronistic, although it may be appealing in retrospect. In the days around the proclamation of Israel, virtually all the examined newspapers carried leader articles about the new state. Some references to the extermination of the Jews were voiced in the Nordic press and none in the British press, although the situation changed when life in the new Israel was examined, as we shall see below. The British press took, understandably, a very different view on the whole matter from the Nordic press. Essentially, the British press conceptualised the whole issue from the perspective of the end of the British Mandate,

which also offered the possibility of seeing the end of Jewish terrorism. This frame of reporting was not the most suitable one for the recognition of Jewish suffering – or the Jews' possible extermination; indeed, as we have seen above, the case was often to the contrary. Truly, the most prominent recognition was that British suffering in the area would come to an end. Significantly, it meant British suffering in the hands of Jewish terrorism, which had outraged the British public on a number of occasions, as the anti-Semitic riots of September 1947 most dramatically proved. Further, the killings of the two sergeants, 'our boys' (of whom one was actually Jewish) sparked a notorious libel case against James Caunt, who had written in his small *Morecambe and Heysham Visitor* that the British Jews ought to

disgorge their ill-gotten wealth in trying to dissuade their brothers in the United States from pouring out dollars to facilitate the entrance into Palestine of European Jewish scum, a proportion of whom will swell the ranks of the terrorist organisation and thus carry on the murderous work which British Jewry professes to abhor. There is a growing feeling that Britain is in the grip of the Jews. ... The Jews are a plague on Britain.<sup>18</sup>

Yet, the editor was acquitted as the judge did not want to infringe the freedom of the press under any circumstances. The jury took thirteen minutes to decide on its verdict.<sup>19</sup> *The Daily Express*, whose leader articles on Palestine had long been calling for as quick a withdrawal from Palestine as possible, rejoiced that the day had finally come, arguing that from now on it was down to the Jews and Arabs, not Britain, what would happen in the area.<sup>20</sup> The last line of the leader seems particularly incongruous – even malign – given the fact that the area was practically ablaze and the possible political outcome seemed to be nothing but indefinite deadlock. However, the point, it seems, was that the matter was no longer merely a British problem. An editorial in *The Daily Herald* summarised the record of the British Mandate in a concise manner, leaving no room for the Nazi genocide: politically the mandate had been a failure, while the British administration of the area had brought many infrastructural advances there.<sup>21</sup> Even the more analytical papers, like the pro-Israel *Manchester Guardian*, did not delve into the 'Hitlerite' past of the Jews. What was critical at that moment was the war with the invading Arabs. On the one hand, the Jews stood to lose everything should the war continue, and on the other a quick termination of hostilities would work to their favour.<sup>22</sup>



The press in Sweden and Finland, emotionally much more distant from the troubles in Palestine, viewed the whole affair differently. The crucial difference was the lack of a nationalistic frame of reporting that the majority of the British press utilised. In Sweden, the press was, on the whole, supportive of the idea of the new state.<sup>23</sup> In November 1947 when the UN General Assembly voted for the Partition Plan, Sweden was one of the 33 nations favouring the partition and the establishment of Israel. Yet, as was the case with the British press, the press in Sweden did not usually link the recent Jewish past with the unrest in Palestine. For example, *Dagens Nyheter* reported the escalating violence in Palestine since the partition in great detail, yet there was hardly any comment on Jewish suffering at the hands of the Nazis. On the other hand, it should be mentioned that Jewish terrorism also received less attention. For example, *Stockholms-Tidningen's* editorial on the resolution plan did not even mention Jewish terrorism, but instead framed the future of Palestine in uncertain terms. The situation after British withdrawal could develop 'into a terrible tragedy when the Jews and Arabs equip themselves with arms inside Palestine. The UN has a great responsibility, and it remains to be seen how the organisation can fulfil it.'<sup>24</sup>

When the Swedish press's framing of Palestinian news shifted from general political and war news to considering the role of the Jewish immigrants in particular, the Holocaust's shadow became more visible. After the partition resolution *GHT* reported how a new Jewish state would welcome immigrants. For example, there was room for 'a million Jews who still are in concentration camps in Germany, Italy and Romania'.<sup>25</sup> A few days later, the same paper returned to the theme of DPs in its leader article:

Even two and half years after the war's end, the remains of a whole people and groups of people are still adrift, in the surroundings where the storm raged. Among these remains, the Jewish refugees still constitute a great part; after Nazi crimes, civilisation's lack of enterprise has contributed to the completion of European Jew-hatred's tragedy.<sup>26</sup>

*Expressen's* editorial after Israel's declaration of independence and the following war was the only explicit report examined here to have made the point on the language of extermination that the Arab nations used:

the Egyptian government follows in Hitler's footsteps. Its war communiqué from the expedition of plunder (*rövertåget*) in Palestine is quite remarkably reminiscent of those of the Oberkommando der

Wermacht [sic], which were broadcasted during Germany's years of success. Perhaps it is those ex-German officers who are at their service ... or perhaps it is Hitler's close friend, the so-called great Mufti of Jerusalem who advises and directs [the Egyptian army].<sup>27</sup>

While this news showed the sympathy that existed in Sweden towards the Jewish DPs, it can similarly be read as a criticism of Britain, the USA and the UN for their lack of co-operation in resolving the DP problem. To this end, *Dagens Nyheter's* roving correspondent dispatched two articles from Cyprus immediately after the termination of the British Mandate in Palestine. The first of the reports, 'Will to live is our only weapon,' is a mixture of criticism of Britain, hope of reaching Palestine and the Holocaust's legacy. The byline states that 'the British have no right to keep interned Jews as prisoners in a Cyprus camp'. The beginning of the article is filled by the recent Nazi past:

He is blond and blue-eyed, but in these eyes one can find nothing which directly gives away his Jewish lineage. A 24-year-old Polish Jew – no. 247359 in Vernichtungslager Auschwitz ... 'It was my will to live that saved me', he says as a clarification for a wonder, the wonder that he is still alive, that he survived Auschwitz. ... 'It is the same intractable will to live that keeps us together here, it is also our only but terrible weapon in the national fight.'<sup>28</sup>

The second article tells a story of many Jews' 'final stage' – sailing from Cyprus to Palestine on board S/S *Dolores*. This time the report portrays how some of the Jews on the vessel were 'prototype wandering Jews' while others were 'new types'; athletic, physically ready for the Haganah forces – and patriotic, which reminded the reporter of 'hero worship à la Hitlerjugend'. As in the first article, the Nazi persecution of the Jews was strongly present. According to the reporter, 'God only knew how many different camps these people had gone through: from the Nazis' Auschwitz to the British Famagusta, from the perfect earthly hell to the final tolerable intermediate stage.'<sup>29</sup>

Unlike the case with the British and Finnish press, the Swedish press's stories often recounted the stories of individual survivors. This time the reporter tells a story of an unnamed 19-year-old girl,

Whose first concentration camp experience was in 1940. For her all these eight years, from the time she was 11 until now when she is 19, it was the same in the umpteen concentration camps or internment

camps: hunger, thirst, cold, torture, fear of death, joylessness, childhood and adolescence years which ought to be every human's unchangeable right to remember with thankfulness' smiling lips. Behind her was only darkness ... this morning she saw the sun rising over Erez Israel, over her fathers' land, and that was the only thing that mattered to her.<sup>30</sup>

This section, printed in bold, is full of empathy for the girl. Significantly, the two articles cited here must be seen as very understanding towards the Jews and their immense desire to go to Palestine. Although Zionist agitation was present in Cyprus and in the camps in Europe, these people's genuine desire to go to Palestine should not be dismissed either.<sup>31</sup>

In the volatile atmosphere of 1948, the Jews received much sympathy from Finland. First, Finland was one of the first nations to recognise Israel.<sup>32</sup> Second, according to Taimi Torvinen, 29 Finnish Jews travelled from Finland to Israel in order to participate in the 'War of Independence'. While the number is small, it is worth noting that proportionally it was the largest contribution from the Diaspora.<sup>33</sup> Third, a Finnish Jew, Boris Grünstein, told that many people he met on the streets in Finland congratulated him for the Jewish victories in the war.<sup>34</sup> To a large extent, the Finnish press also viewed the new Jewish state sympathetically. The conservative *Uusi Suomi*, not always the most friendly towards the Jews, wrote in its leader article that

the Jews have established their longed-for nation, Israel ... the people who have especially suffered and lost a lot during the last decades have now obtained their own national home, but in what tragic circumstances, mirroring their past suffering. It [Israel] is not showing any signs of hesitation, but is ready to validate its right to national life, based on its own nationhood, with blood.<sup>35</sup>

The editorial in *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* also drew the connection between the Nazi genocide of the Jews and the new Arab-Israel conflict. Its leader of 21 May finishes with a degree of despondence:

The Arabs have already pushed long spearheads into the Palestinian interior. The new state is in danger of being divided into disconnected, isolated areas. ... During the Second World War the Jews had to experience great suffering. One must earnestly hope that the UN can, before it is too late, stop any further human suffering and save peace.<sup>36</sup>

There are three reasons why the Finnish press was so openly pro-Israel. First, and most importantly, there was a nationalistic motive at play; the Finns often drew parallel lines between the Jewish fight for their own nation and Finland's own experience. Before independence was achieved in the two countries, both Zionists and Finnish nationalists had dreamt of a sovereign nation for decades. In a sense, both states, small and vulnerable, came into being as a result of fervent nationalism in the middle of great international upheavals, while at the same time the materialisations of these nations were seen as a result of national will and determination. Reporting from Israel in 1949, Max Jakobson reflected on this parallelism:

Representatives of powerful and old nations often criticise Israel for its fervent nationalism. One who has grown up in a small nation perhaps understands better the Jewish youths' concentration on defending the newly blossomed and constantly threatened independence. Negba's soil, covered by shrapnel reminds one of Summa;<sup>37</sup> the mood radiating in the stories of the defenders of Jerusalem is like in Winter War Finland; the drive of the right-wing freedom party to extend Israel to include its historic border, including Transjordan, also seems familiar, just like the craze for Hebraising of surnames.<sup>38</sup>

Second, and more particularly, the Jewish military experience in the War of 1948 was a crucial factor in the Finnish framing of news from Israel. Whatever the current scholarly wisdom on the mythology of that war in terms of a David versus Goliath fight may be, contemporary Finnish opinion certainly viewed it that way.<sup>39</sup> In Finland, the David and Goliath narrative was particularly powerful because it resembled its own course during the Second World War, particularly its war against the Soviet Union in the winter of 1939–40.<sup>40</sup> Small Finland resisted the uncivilised Russian bear, just like the small and civilised Jews were now resisting the uncivilised Arab hordes. Yrjö J. Alanen wrote in a religious newspaper, *Kotimaa* (Homeland), that during the hard days of the Winter War the nation had found entirely new meanings to the Old Testament. The Psalms, Prophecies and the events in ancient Israel, he argued, had been a real source of encouragement and strength for the Finnish people.<sup>41</sup> Now, the Jews – the true claimants of the Holy Land – were facing a situation similar to Finland less than ten years later, and as a consequence there was a considerable degree of sympathy and goodwill and understanding.

Third, throughout the Cold War era, the Finnish press was typically timid in its reporting when it came to sensitive international issues.<sup>42</sup>

The main reason was the Cold War that loomed large over Finland. The epitome of Finnish foreign policy was not to upset its eastern neighbour – the USSR – by unconsidered foreign news reporting.<sup>43</sup> Yet in 1948 both superpowers recognised Israel swiftly, and for whatever the reasons behind this, they both supported its existence. Thus, as far as Israel was concerned, the careful avoidance of East–West animosity in the Finnish press rhetoric did not apply in the same manner as in other topics, such as the reporting of the first Berlin crisis which was ongoing at the same time. If anything, referring to Jews’ Second World War experience meant that attention was diverted from possible Cold War clashes in the Palestine region, whether these were Western oil interests or Soviet strategic interests in the Eastern Mediterranean and in Persia.

### 9.3 The 1948 War, its legacy and the shadows of the Holocaust

After the ceasefire was proclaimed in Palestine, and the new state of Israel prevailed, the European press was certainly interested in finding out what everyday life in the new state was like. In various reports from Israel the Holocaust’s shadows were more visible than in previous reports, which grappled with the politics of partition and the war. This rhetoric was also in some ways congruent with the new emerging discourse in Israel, where the Holocaust was linked to the War of Independence (viewed from the Israeli perspective) in that it served as a source of inspiration and courage for the Jewish troops.<sup>44</sup> According to Ben-Zion Dinur, the War of Independence ‘was “a direct continuation” of the war of the partisans and the underground fighters, as well as ... “more than a million and a half of our soldiers” who fought the Nazis during World War II’.<sup>45</sup>

In Britain, Arthur Koestler contributed reportage on Israel to *The Manchester Guardian* that was serialised between June and November 1948.<sup>46</sup> The Swedish liberal paper *GHT* also serialised his writing (as did the *New York Herald-Tribune*). While Koestler’s examination of life in Israel makes very few direct links to the Holocaust, it is nevertheless suffused with ‘Holocaust talk’. In the second instalment of his report his justification for the Jews’ illegal immigration and arms trade was conducted from the perspective of the Holocaust: if the Jews had followed the rule of law, there would have been no survivors. According to Koestler, such a tragic situation was now ingrained in the country’s foundations, which outsiders could not easily understand.<sup>47</sup> In a later instalment, Koestler used the same reasoning, if not to justify Jewish terrorism against the Arabs, at least to understand it. Koestler argued

that the Jews had the same right to defend themselves as any nation in the time of peril. Otherwise, the Arabs would have finished Hitler's process of extermination.<sup>48</sup> On examining the cultural life of Israel, Koestler found that its form in 1948 was characterised by 'cultural claustrophilia'. The reason was to be found in the 'lost generation of the Jews'. He goes on to tell how

Each war and revolution produces its lost generation. ... They are people who have spent years – sometimes as many as ten – in concentration and displaced persons' camps, and who only survived by becoming conditioned to circumventing the law, for the law for the Jew on the continent of Europe was deportation and death. Few can survive such pressure without some deformation of character, and a large number of the immigrants of recent years are psychological problem-cases. Some of them with a marked asocial tendency.<sup>49</sup>

*The Daily Herald's* correspondent in Palestine, Maurice Fagence, also caught on to the new Israel's 'claustrophilic' and Holocaust-suffused culture. According to him, non-conformism and disrespect of collectivism seemed to quickly lead to disapproval in which Nazi terminology was commonly used.<sup>50</sup>

Similarly, in Finland, Max Jakobson wrote to *Uusi Suomi* and Leo Gumpler to *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti*. All these pieces, written from a more analytical frame of mind than usual news items, delineate the birth of Israel as a result of the Holocaust, although it should be mentioned that it is not quite as central an issue as it became in later decades when analysing life in Israel.<sup>51</sup> Jakobson observed how in the new Israel there is no returning to the old Europe:

on the beaches of Tel Aviv one sees so many concentration camp tattoos on people's bare arms, that it feels like one of the foundational characteristics of the Israeli citizens. In a sense, that's what they are. *The destruction which the European Jewry faced is a horrific prelude to the birth of Israel.* The scale of destruction of six million people extinguishes the feelings of outsiders: it is statistics. Here it is a constant memory of a child vanishing into the gas-oven and old father's death in slave labour. It is impossible to return to the world of those memories. The past suffering has created new spirit. The account of a worker, who escaped from Poland, is descriptive: 'we have here plenty of problems and hardship. But at least, for once, they are our own problems which we can solve by ourselves.'<sup>52</sup>

One of the major problems for the new Israeli state was, as a British MP and columnist, Walter Elliot, noted in early February 1949: Israel had unexpectedly achieved a great military victory for now, but it could not necessarily repeat it.<sup>53</sup> Part of that problem was rapidly growing anti-Semitism outside the new state's borders, as Swedish journalist Gunhild Bergh reported: 'Hitler is not dead in Amman.' Her conclusion to a conversation with a German officer (in her words, there were plenty in the Middle East) raises the question of hostile, even exterminationist anti-Semitism surrounding Israel. According to the Nazi officer:

The Arabs had a disadvantage because they had not received any help. But the Arabs have the skill and they can wait. And as time goes by they wait for the next round with hardened fighting spirit. We will see that. We will keep their hatred burning. We will train their minds more than their bodies. Hitler is not dead and he had the right.<sup>54</sup>

The article leaves no doubt that Hitler's (and Nazi Germany's) anti-Semitic impulse had found a new geographical locus as a result of the establishment of Israel. The generally positive and understanding outlook on Israel, which the liberal Western press maintained, found a real test in September 1948, when the Stern Gang assassinated the UN's mediator, Swedish Count Folke Bernadotte.

## 9.4 The assassination of Count Folke Bernadotte

According to Henrik Bachner's thesis on the resurgence of anti-Semitism after the Holocaust, Folke Bernadotte's murder was a major event, sowing the seeds for latter-day anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism in Swedish society.<sup>55</sup> Bachner has unearthed a great deal of press material relating to Bernadotte's murder and consequently has been able to reconstruct a number of themes relating not only to anti-Semitism but also to the status of the Holocaust in Sweden in the first decade after the Nazi genocide. He has shown that although anti-Semitism became discredited in postwar Sweden, a number of deep-rooted anti-Jewish prejudices survived the Holocaust.<sup>56</sup> However, the work, despite its thought-provoking qualities, is not without problems. As one reviewer of the book commented, it had 'altogether too much description and too little analysis'.<sup>57</sup> Surprisingly, too, his work has, by and large, omitted the reporting of and the debate surrounding Bernadotte's murder in the major Swedish daily press. Moreover, as will be discussed below, the major daily press certainly did not subscribe to the kind of vengeful, anti-Israel rhetoric found in

most of his samples. On the whole, Bachner's work is valuable because he shows how hostility towards the state of Israel and anti-Zionism was conceptually linked to the accepted Western tradition of low-level Christian anti-Semitism. Yet, it is worth bearing in mind that overall the Swedish press's opinion – often centred on the social-democratic and liberal press – was overwhelmingly pro-Israel.<sup>58</sup> On the other hand, there is no denying that some of the most popular newspapers offered ambivalent responses to the murder, thereby enabling a multitude of ways in which a reader could interpret the news.

Folke Bernadotte was involved in rescuing over 15,000 victims of the Nazis – Jews and non-Jews – in the final weeks of the war in Europe. He had come to personify everything that was morally commendable in 1940s Sweden: he was the head of the Swedish Red Cross, involved in the Scouts movement, was King Gustaf V's (1858–1950) nephew, thus having a royal blood line, and he was seen as a good, devout Christian, committed to the betterment of many of the world's ills. Internationally, he also commanded respect for his achievements. It was no wonder, then, that his murder shocked the world – and outraged many in Sweden, who responded with outbursts of anti-Semitic rhetoric. Overall, as *Dagens Nyheter* put it, the murder caused 'sorrow and indignation in whole of the civilised world'.<sup>59</sup>

On the morning of 18 September 1948 his assassination (of the day before) by the Stern Gang was the main news topic in Britain, Sweden and Finland. The news headlines in the British press were similar to those in the press of other countries in noting the assassination, the Stern Gang's responsibility for it as well as reactions in Israel.<sup>60</sup> In the days that followed, news about his murder dominated the front pages of the British press, surpassing the Cold War rhetoric on Soviet ambitions.

The overarching frame of the assassination news was one that considered it as yet another illustration of the state of mankind. *The Daily Mirror* argued in its editorial that the murder should be a general wake-up call to see the depravation of humanity in the postwar world.<sup>61</sup> Initially, the frame of the news was not very conducive to any particular recognition of the 'Holocaust legacy', which, in a sense, Bernadotte carried with him. The news headlines accounted for breaking stories such as the arrest of the Stern Gang leader, named 'the Leopard'.<sup>62</sup> Yet, beyond the surface, the leader articles on the assassination (an event that all the examined British papers wrote about) and letters to the editor sections reveal a mixture of feelings of how the British viewed the situation in Palestine. Most importantly, as we will see, the legacy of the Holocaust can be encountered too.



If there was a degree of unanimity insofar as the murder proved a wider point of the world's moral decay, there was much more ambivalence in the responses when it came to placing the event into a particular Palestinian context – where it truly belonged. In essence, the assassination brought back memories of killed British soldiers in the area. Britain's recent memories largely explain why the British press's and public's response to the assassination can be characterised as personal – something that is not normal in the reporting of foreign matters.

The strong anti-Zionist and anti-Israel tendency that existed in Britain was quick to put the assassination into a continuum of Jewish terrorism – most of which was directed against Britain. A case in point is *The Daily Telegraph's* leading article on the topic, published a few days after the assassination:

The Stern Gang has a long record of acts of violence, directed for the most part against British subjects, which were, if not applauded, at any rate condoned by ostensibly more moderate Zionists in both Palestine and the United States. That this terrorist organisation has remained in active existence after the British withdrawal from Palestine is a grave reflection on the Provisional Government of Israel. ... Stern Gang activity ... scarcely suggests either that the State of Israel deserved the recognition so hastily awarded by President Truman or that other governments would be well advised to follow his example.<sup>63</sup>

*The Daily Telegraph's* framing of the assassination news was clearly anti-Israel. In the same manner, an editorial in *The Daily Express* argued that the Palestinian Jewish population were the Stern Gang's accomplices in the assassination. Making a wider point, the article carried on from anti-Jewish to anti-Israel rhetoric, asking if Israel could even be accepted into the family of nations.<sup>64</sup> It is not hard to imagine that this kind of rhetoric was hardly encouraging to any discussion on the Holocaust and the role of the Jewish survivors in the postwar world. Whatever sympathy there was for the survivors was often overshadowed by the retraction to anti-Zionism. After all, a great number of Jewish survivors were Zionists.<sup>65</sup> The most arresting letter, revealing a mixture of nationalism – or 'Englishness' – anti-Israelism and anti-Zionism, coupled with a recognition of Jewish suffering, came from R. A. Hewins, a member of the conservative Junior Carlton Club. It was published on *The Times's* editorial page. For the breadth of issues this letter dealt with, it is necessary to quote it at some length:

Sir – in common with most Englishmen I have had a number of Jewish friends. I have visited Auschwitz, the liquidation camp, which

will ever stand as one of the supreme infamies in world history. I have wondered aghast over the flat wastes of what was once the Warsaw ghetto. ... I have seen and interviewed trainloads of the Jewish wrecks whom Count Folke Bernadotte as vice-chairman of the Swedish Red Cross rescued by his own exertions at the end of the war. ... I have seen the pioneer work done by Jews in Palestine. ... I hope, therefore, that nobody will accuse me of being anti-Semitic. Yet in this hour of Jewish shame it is hard to remain objective and to fight the virus of anti-Semitism, which vitiates the whole world.

The Jews have vilified the British, their best friends, who fought Hitler one year alone and made the very idea of the National Home feasible. The Jews have turned much of the great American republic, on whom we lean for our very bread and butter, against us. The Jews have embroiled us with our teeming Arab friends, who substantially paved the way for the Hohenzollern confederation against us in the first world war. ... This, and much more, is a lot for the most tolerant Englishman to bear. It is almost enough to turn a saint anti-Semitic.

Now the Jews have murdered Folke Bernadotte. No more infamous (nor more unjustified) a crime was, in my opinion, committed throughout the war. The Germans could argue that the shooting of innocent hostages and the razing of defenceless town and villages was 'war', and that these measures were 'necessary politically'. No such vestige of excuse can be offered for this, the supreme Jewish atrocity of modern times.

It makes one almost despair of the human race. But in this woe-begotten hour one must look for some compensation and hope, rather than give way to rage and grief. That has been the British way during the thankless discharge of our mandate. That was Bernadotte's fearless way, too. Surely this shocking moment is the one for Jewry to set its house in order by deeds instead of words. The various Jewish factions must surely realize that they cannot for ever go on 'passing the buck'. One can believe verbal Jewish protestations of horror, sympathy, regret, and disownment for a time, but surely the hour has struck when the Jews' most ardent well-wishers must shed their ingeniousness, measure their sympathy for Jewish suffering, and cease making allowances for the ignorant excesses of American Zionists – yet without taking the easy, self-destructive course of anti-Semitism.

The prerequisite of Israel's recognition as a sovereign State and its admission to the Uno [sic] is that the Jewish provisional Government should prove itself capable of preserving law, order, and discipline among its potential subjects. If Uno [sic] demands anything less, its authority as a civilizing force is dead.<sup>66</sup>

Before reiterating the main point of the article it is useful to bear in mind Teun A. Van Dijk's observations regarding racist discourse and the press. According to him, 'precisely the more racist discourse tends to have disclaimers and other denials. This suggests that language users who say negative things about minorities are well aware of the fact that they may be understood as breaking the social norm of tolerance and acceptance.'<sup>67</sup> To this end, it is interesting to note Hewins's forms of denials, both social and individual. First, the writer presupposes that 'most Englishmen have had a number of Jewish friends'. Second, and significantly, he displays a good knowledge of the basics of the Holocaust. Yet, it is more troubling to recall that this knowledge was used as a cloak against anti-Semitism; if one knows about the Jewish suffering and brings it up in writing, surely one cannot be anti-Semitic. Third, the piece represents the Jews in a negative way. The assassination has been collectivised, 'the Jews have embroiled us with our teeming Arab friends', 'the Jews have murdered Folke Bernadotte'. Fourth, the use of the phrase 'The Germans could argue that the shooting of innocent hostages and the razing of defenceless town and villages was "war"' suggests that the Holocaust is understood as an ordinary war crime. This seems to make his earlier point on Auschwitz as one of 'the supreme infamies in world history' mere lip service. Furthermore, Jewish terrorism, which founds 'no such vestige of excuse' as the German crimes, implies that Jewish crimes are above and beyond anything the world has seen before. On the whole, the text exemplifies the strategy of anti-Jewish discourse in Britain. On the one hand, it is obvious that from the beginning the writer sought to mitigate his negative characterisation of the Jews by making apparent concessions about 'Auschwitz' and 'trainloads of Jewish wrecks', while on the other hand he supports his negative discourse by arguments, stories and other supporting 'facts'.<sup>68</sup>

To what extent Hewins's letter was intended to be interpreted as 'respectfully' anti-Semitic is difficult to say. However, the response to it indicates that the readers of *The Times* viewed it as, at least, potentially anti-Semitic. The day following the letter's publication, a reader of the paper agreed with Hewins about the Israeli Government and its need to prove its capabilities as a sovereign state. However, it was

regrettable that Mr. Hewins' letter is open to the construction, which I am sure he did not intend, that all the Jews are to be blamed for the criminal acts of a Jew. This surely is as unjust as holding all American citizens responsible for the activities of Chicago gangsters.<sup>69</sup>

Further replies followed – also published on the paper's editorial page. Israel Brodie, the Chief Rabbi of Great Britain after the death of J. H. Hertz in 1947, shared many misgivings of the significant British minority, who were pro-Israel, but detested terrorism: 'it is to be feared that some people, whose emotions have been thus aroused, have themselves succumbed to the fatal temptations of condemning a community for the crimes of an individual'. The dangers of Anti-Semitism, as Brodie's letter was titled, 'has been responsible for some of the greatest tragedies in history: its Nazi application to the Jewish people is, or should be, fresh in every memory'.<sup>70</sup> In similar tones, Victor Gollancz criticised the collectivisation of the crime: 'Time after time Mr. Hewins harps on "the Jews" – "the Jews" did this, "the Jews" did that, "the Jews" did the other. The indictment culminates in the statement that "the Jews" have murdered the great and very good man, Count Bernadotte.' His piece goes on to tell that such personalisation of a nation or a race ought to be condemned as the talk on 'the Jews', 'the Germans' and 'the Russians' has poisoned international relations. But, above all, he goes on to say, 'the Jews' are in a category of their own for

no one of the evil passions is easier to arouse ... than anti-Semitism, which a very few years ago sent not tens or hundreds but millions of Jewish men, women, and children to the gas chambers and crematoria of Auschwitz. ... I would humbly urge that we should take special care not to do in the case of Jewry what is always deplorable but in their case doubly so – attribute to a whole people the sins of a minority.<sup>71</sup>

In Sweden, the murder let to outbursts of anti-Semitic rhetoric. For example, Johan Hansson's article in *Samtid och Framtid* (the present and the future) was in many ways similar to R. A. Hewins's letter. Above all, he urged, it was Jews collectively who shared the burden of the crime.<sup>72</sup> Yet the mainstream Swedish press tried to maintain neutrality towards the Jews in face of the news. The concern as to how Sweden would react to the murder can be gauged by looking at the interviews with leading figures that appeared on the pages of the major Swedish press. *Dagens Nyheter* placed the Jewish opinion prominently, indicating the worry that the non-Jewish Swedes might view Jews under a different light as a result of the murder. Thus, in order to give the Swedish Jewish community a fair hearing their comments were placed prominently side by side with the Swedish political elite. For example, Chief Rabbi Marcus Ehrenpreis

and Gunnar Josephson from Stockholm's Jewish Congregation reminded readers that the Jews condemned the deed and that 'the Swedish Jews feel the deepest thankfulness for his [Bernadotte's] input in saving thousands of Jewish refugees in our land'.<sup>73</sup> According to Hugo Valentin, the murder was 'the worst thing that could have happened to the Zionist point of view'.<sup>74</sup> It is worth noting here that in the aftermath of the assassination, Jewish shops, enterprises or cemeteries were not attacked, as was the case in Britain after the murder of two sergeants in August 1947. Further, the space that the Swedish press gave for its Jews to condemn the act stands in sharp contrast to the situation in the British press a year before, when it was negligent in publicising Jewish attempts to fight and resist terrorism.<sup>75</sup>

However, as in Britain, there was a degree of ambivalence in the Swedish press too. The absence of anti-Semitism was replaced by anti-Zionism. *Stockholms-Tidningen* wrote in its leader that Stern Gang's crime was 'its hardest crime against Jewishness itself'. The commentary continues to make a point on the possible repercussions on Zionism and anti-Semitism:

nobody believes that the government in Tel Aviv has a share of the responsibility. But what happened creates the greatest setback for the cause of Zionism, even amongst those who never could fall into decay of disgusting hate-lessons of antisemitism. ... Many will ask themselves if a nation, which does not possess the powers to protect the UN's trusted representative, will have the stability, the system of justice, which are the subject for recognition.<sup>76</sup>

While anti-Semitism is discredited in the piece, Henrik Bachner's assertion that anti-Semitism was often funnelled into anti-Zionism is implicitly present in this work. Similarly, the paper did not publish any Jewish comments on the news, whereas other large dailies did. On the other hand, further highlighting the 'fundamental ambivalence' as to how the news ought to be interpreted, another article in the paper's foreign news section argued that Bernadotte was murdered 'by a crowd of fanatics out of their blood-lusting and injured sense of nationalism. ... Do not judge the Jewish people according to this act of violence. Stray nationalism exists in every nation. To fight against such circumstances was ... his aim in life.'<sup>77</sup> Another piece of reporting in *Svenska Dagbladet* also took an ambivalent, anti-Israel stance, arguing in a piece labelled as 'Jewish propaganda against UN personnel' that the 'Jewish newspaper the *Palestine Post* carried an article shortly before the murder in which

Folke Bernadotte and General Lundström were accused of having taken the Arab's side [in the conflict]'.<sup>78</sup> Finally, as was the case in Britain, the conservative Swedish press, spearheaded by *Svenska Dagbladet* and *Stokholms-Tidningen*, were also arguing that the Swedish Government should not recognise the new state.

As mentioned above, papers other than *Stokholms-Tidningen* offered Jewish voices on the incident too. *Dagens Nyheter's* foreign news page contained comments from Jews and non-Jews alike. Leading Swedish Jews recalled Bernadotte's role in saving thousands of Jewish lives in the final months of the war – something that British and Finnish papers seldom did. They also expressed concern for a possible Swedish counter-reaction to Zionism. However, it was the voice of 'a Jewish girl' who reminded readers of the Holocaust's legacy:

Deep sorrow and gloom reign amongst the thousands who Bernadotte rescued from the German concentration camps and who now give their work input in Swedish factories and workshops. They have Count Bernadotte to thank for their lives and their sorrow is so much greater because the young nation upon which so many of them place their hopes was the scene of action of this horrific death. The reaction amongst those whom the Red Cross rescued [from the concentration camps] has been immediate. A Jewish woman from Siebenbürgen, Aranka Roth, said the following:

Count Bernadotte was the first Swede I saw. He visited the temporary hospital in Lübeck, where we were brought from Bergen-Belsen for further transportation to Sweden. We were alone, homeless and without our parents. He was our supporter and our hope for the future. We find no words to express the gratitude we feel for him and Sweden. Folke Bernadotte shall always remind us of a real example of sane humankind.<sup>79</sup>

If the news on Bernadotte's murder stirred the whole of Sweden and caused widespread indignation in Britain, which had suffered from Jewish violence too, the response in Finland was considerably more aloof. As we have seen in Part I, Finland's response to the liberation of the concentration camps was characterised by detachment, spurred by physical as well as emotional detachment from the event. The murder of Folke Bernadotte was framed in a similar way. Essentially the news was foreign news without direct bearing on Finland, despite the close proximity between the two countries. What is more, especially from the perspective of this study, the Finnish commentary mentioned Bernadotte's

rescue mission to Germany only on few occasions and the fact that his actions saved thousands of Jews from the Nazis was not heeded.

The first reaction to the news in Finland was, as elsewhere, one of shock and indignation: the murder of Bernadotte shocked the whole world.<sup>80</sup> The news that followed concentrated on describing how the murder had happened and who the murderers were, on Israeli reactions, on Swedish sorrow and, finally, on the life of Bernadotte himself. If Bernadotte's murder created a reference point that could be used in favour of Swedish anti-Zionism and anti-Israel rhetoric in the early postwar years, there is no evidence of such attitudes in Finland. In contrast, Finland and the Finnish press viewed Israel and the Jews in a very positive light.<sup>81</sup>

The Finnish press's reaction to the news follows this logic. The causes for the murder lie somewhere else than in the mindset of Jews, and at any rate, it was argued that the Israeli Government was doing its utmost to uproot the terrorism that curtailed its sovereign authority. In the wake of the murder, the front page of the leftist *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti*, a paper that on the whole was pro-Jewish and pro-Israel, noted that 'the government of Israel has started actions against the terrorist'.<sup>82</sup> The following day the headline held that 150 terrorists had been arrested.<sup>83</sup> The most telling of the paper's frame of reporting came on 21 September when the paper asked if 'the leader of the Stern-gang is Communist?' Adhering to the pro-Israel rhetoric the paper carried on to tell that 'it is suggestive that the only paper in Palestine which has not condemned the murder is the Communist *Kol Haam* – "the Voice of the People"'.<sup>84</sup> The afternoon paper *Ilta-Sanomat* cited a Swedish Communist paper, *Ny Dag*, which argued that Britain's Secret Service was behind the murder, in order to discredit the Jewish ambition of the national home, and that the Jewish people had nothing to do with the murder. Another piece, on the paper's front page, argued that the Israeli Government had condemned the deed and that there were only 300 members in the Stern Gang.<sup>85</sup> In other words, the article implicitly argued that the Stern Gang was hardly representative of Jewish opinion as a whole. Overall, then, the rhetoric in Finland, whether Communist-oriented, which blamed the West's imperialist tendencies in Palestine as the ultimate cause for the murder, or the more mainstream press, vindicated the Jewish people and the Israeli Government from responsibility.

However, there were some voices that pondered on the possibility of an anti-Jewish backlash. A leader article in *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* noted that

the event is a serious blow to the Jewish cause as a whole. The bloody terror which the Stern-gang in particular has used and practised as a political fighting method in Palestine could lead to a situation where the empathy which the afflicted Jewish people has received in recent years could swing easily in the opposite direction. That is something which the state of Israel and the Jews as a whole cannot afford.<sup>86</sup>

*Helsingin Sanomat* quoted Chief Rabbi Ehrenpreis, the leading figure in the Stockholm Jewish Congregation, noting, with a worried undertone: 'Count Bernadotte's murder cannot be allowed to lead to any new wave of anti-Semitism. Count Bernadotte would have been the first one to worry that the whole people would suffer because of deeds of a few individuals.'<sup>87</sup>

Bernadotte's rescue mission to Germany received some, albeit tainted, publicity. The most telling piece of news as regards the mission came from the conservative *Uusi Suomi*. On page 6 the paper carried an article about Bernadotte and his life. The last paragraph discussed his rescue mission: 'especially his grand and successful mission at the end of the World War to rescue *political prisoners* from the German concentration camps drew international attention to him'.<sup>88</sup> The paper's rhetoric on political prisoners is a testimony to the ongoing understanding of the liberation of the camps in political, not racial terms. Further, it seems that disclosures from the Nuremberg Trial in particular and other post-war trials in general had not yet permeated deeply enough into public consciousness to consider the camps as particular symbols of Jewish suffering. Another theme, which emerged in the wake of the liberation, was (as we have seen in Part II) that of considering the victims of Nazi genocide in national terms. As was the case with the contextualisation of victims as political prisoners, it seems that national characterisation of victims enjoyed a similar potency. According to *Aamulehti*, 'at the end of the war he [Bernadotte] energetically worked for the Norwegians who were in German concentration camps'.<sup>89</sup> Again, the silence about the Jewish suffering stands out in this piece, especially when it is juxtaposed against Swedish and British commentary.

On the whole, Bernadotte's murder was much more prominently linked with the day's political problems than to his past. Leader articles in the Finnish press bear a testimony to the tangled problem of Palestine and the world at large. *Ilta-Sanomat's* leader article wrote with pessimism that the attempts to create peace in the area seem to be 'an insurmountable, even hopeless task. There seems to be no end to bloodshed.' Similarly



the paper concluded that the murder undermined the UN's authority to resolve the situation in Palestine.<sup>90</sup> In similar tones, *Aamulehti's* leader 'violence and unrest' wrote that Folke Bernadotte's murder laid open the unrest in which mankind 'sighs after the Second World War'.<sup>91</sup> With the same despondent tone the paper also carried another piece observing that 'The murder makes one almost automatically think that the Second World War seemingly did not mature nations' appreciation of peace since they cannot even tolerate men of peace.'<sup>92</sup>

## 9.5 Conclusion

The way in which the Holocaust was discussed in relation to the creation of Israel has fascinated scholars for a long time now. As we have seen, the assumption, held by a number of first-generation scholars on the topic, that there was a straightforward link sits uneasily with the assessments made in the second half of the 1940s. This is particularly true in the case of the British press, which showed a remarkable tenacity in anti-Zionist thinking. As long as the British troops were carrying out the Mandate, there were very few sympathetic evaluations of the Jews and their past. Instead, the increasingly nationalistic view of the situation pitted the Jews as a collective against the British Empire. The same frame, as well as Arab sympathies, also informed a large part of the press's reporting during and after the War of 1948. Only after the war did the British press reflect on the Holocaust in its reporting from the newly established Israel. Yet, it cannot be said that there was much breadth or depth to it. Moreover, as the reaction to the assassination of Bernadotte proved, anti-Jewish sentiments were deeply rooted in Britain.

In contrast, if there is a modicum of historical legitimacy in the assumption that 'the continuing conflicts between Israel and Arab states have been reminders of how precarious the life of this small state is, a fact that immediately calls to mind Hitler's effort to exterminate the Jews',<sup>93</sup> it comes from newspapers in Sweden and Finland. Unlike the case in Britain, both the Swedish and Finnish press showed much more readiness to reflect on the tragic Jewish past. The Swedish press, especially its liberal and leftist variant, noted the 'precariousness' of life in Israel, reminding readers of the connection between the Arab leadership and the Nazis during wartime as well as the presence of ex-German soldiers in Arabic countries. To a large degree, the Swedish press followed its established pattern of reporting, which (since the liberation of the camps and beyond) was mainly pro-Jewish. The Finnish press, too, noted the precarious situation of the Jews in their new National Home. However,

the reason for this did not stem from the Holocaust, but was a result of a particular kind of reading of Zionism that mirrored the image of Finland's own, ultimately successful, struggle for independence. To this end, positive understanding of Israel worked as psychological comfort for Finland; small states had a right to exist, but they often had to earn such a right by shedding their own blood.

# 10

## Forgetting to Remember: The Press Discourse, the Cold War and Conjunctures of Remembrance

### 10.1 Introduction

The first 'memory wave' of the Holocaust, largely based on the depictions of the liberation of the camps and the Nuremberg Trial, was coming to an end in the late 1940s.<sup>1</sup> This period, sometimes called the 'Nuremberg interregnum',<sup>2</sup> was also shaped by discussion relating to the Jewish DPs, the creation of Israel and its aftermath, as this book has shown. As the Palestine issue became less acute and faded from daily news, talk of the Holocaust also vanished from the public domain. Consequently, the disappearance of the Holocaust from the public eye marked the beginning of a cultural amnesia that lasted, as the dominant historical wisdom now has it, until the 1960s.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, it should be pointed out that more recent work on survivors takes a different view.<sup>4</sup> This is especially true in Israeli, Hebrew and Yiddish contexts where the tradition of chronicling the events in the ghettos continued in the DP camps and, a little later, in Israel and elsewhere among survivor circles. But how did the silence take root in the public domain?

Tom Lawson's study on the Anglican reading of the past has challenged the dominant view that a Cold War metanarrative, the West's need to rehabilitate (West) Germany and to vilify the Soviet Union, led to the marginalisation of the Holocaust.<sup>5</sup> He has shown that the Anglican Church's understanding of Nazism in the immediate postwar years had little to do with the Cold War ethos as such, but was the result of a particular reading of history that was not interrupted by 1945 and the revelations from the camps; instead, the Anglican understanding of history had important continuities across that divide. Importantly, Anglican conceptualisations of the past, present and the future were constructed in terms of Christian versus anti-Christian. The new anti-Christian totalitarian

enemy, the Soviet Union, rendered specificities of Nazism, such as the Holocaust, a secondary category, but it is significant that it was the continuity in the historical understanding of the past that led to the marginalisation of the Holocaust, not necessarily the break – *Die Stunde Null*. With an eye turned to a community wider than the Anglican one Lawson asks:

Might it be that that if we looked at the renderings of the Nazi past produced after 1945 within other communities [than the Anglican Church] closely concerned with Nazism during the war years, we would find yet more continuities of interpretation to add to those that have been uncovered, first in Germany and now in Britain?<sup>6</sup>

It is the purpose of this chapter to examine how the press interpreted the Nazi past in the closing years of the 1940s. To what extent did a Cold War metanarrative shift the focus away from the Nazi past and to what extent was it a result of other factors, such as continuities in the understanding of history, as the case of the Anglican Church in Britain would suggest? As has been shown throughout this study, the Holocaust was discussed in various postwar forums, in relation to a number of different contexts. However, as the decade's end came closer, news about the Holocaust became more sparse. On the whole, it is interesting to note that by the late 1940s, it seems, there was increasingly little written about the Second World War. Typical press writing about the war consisted of memoirs of wartime leaders like Winston Churchill and Dwight D. Eisenhower. The way these texts were written typically made a clear distinction between then and now – the act of writing, the historicising of the period, seemed to create a real distance between the events these texts described and the moment when they were being read.<sup>7</sup> The war had reached a (temporary) closure. However, it must be pointed out that, on the one hand, it was not within the realm of the immediate past in the sense that its presence was not felt urgently any more in countries like Britain, Sweden and Finland, yet, on the other hand, it was not in the realm of history either. Still, we must observe that what was written after the war's end and in the late 1940s, definitely tried to historicise the episode. A good example of this is Swedish journalists Bo Enander's and Franz Arnheim's book, *Så härskade herrefolket* (Thus ruled the Master race), which was published as early as 1945.<sup>8</sup> Its Finnish translation was marketed in the press from a definite historical point of view, as the 'dispassionate truth about Hitler's regime in Europe'.<sup>9</sup> The Nazi Genocide plays the most prominent theme in the survey, but as a topic

that belonged to another era; to the pages of history. How, then, did it happen that by the end of the 1940s, the Holocaust had disappeared from the public radar?

What follows is an attempt to move beyond the discussion on the Cold War metanarrative, for, to begin with, the term is much more problematic than the dominant interpretation holds. By adding nuance to the current scholarly consensus, this chapter will show how it not only worked in different, often contradictory ways, but also how it was always linked to more specific contexts than the term 'metanarrative' implies. Further, it will be shown how these specific contexts – often myriad influences from the early Cold War era, as well as the time that preceded it – shaped reporting on concrete matters, such as the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide, the discussion about anti-Semitism in Western Germany, the Warsaw Ghetto and the Remembrance of the liberation of the camps, up to the early 1950s.

## 10.2 The Cold War metanarrative in the press

It is not an exaggeration to say that the Cold War-oriented rhetoric, starting as early as 1945, was the most prominent overall discursive framework within Western press's international news sections. For example, suspicions of Soviet motives in Europe and elsewhere, its intrigue in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Italy, as well as in Iran, but most of all in Berlin and Germany, were common foreign news topics that also provided material for newspapers' leader articles – insofar as the leaders discussed matters of international relations.

Nevertheless, there is a problem with the label of 'Cold War metanarrative' for it imposes an easily identifiable and orderly view on how the Holocaust became obscured. Tom Lawson's argument that the paradigmatic interpretation of the Cold War metanarrative 'implicitly presents the formation of history and memory as an entirely top-down process' is to be taken seriously.<sup>10</sup> Yet, the problem is that the effect of the Cold War on Holocaust discourse is difficult to pinpoint. This can be exemplified with a reference to Jeffrey Herf, who in no uncertain terms goes on to tell us that '[t]he Cold War with its shifting alliances and emphases ended the Nuremberg interregnum'. Yet this claim is followed by an assertion that 'the impact of the Cold War on the willingness to confront the Nazi past can be exaggerated'.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, on looking at the Cold War effect on Holocaust discourse, one must bear in mind that there are a number of different narratives that relate to the Cold

War frame, where some of them worked towards marginalising – or at least failing to differentiate – Jewish suffering, and others continued to propose the ultimate suffering of the Jews at the hands of the Nazis. The formation of Cold War ethos and the process(es) that contributed to the Holocaust's marginalisation, when viewed from a contemporaneous perspective, are much more complicated than the dominant metanarrative suggests.

As will be shown below, we will do well to resist 'totalising' schemas, *pace* Lyotard,<sup>12</sup> that offer convenient explanations of complex historical episodes. The need for the 'incredulity towards metanarratives' becomes even more clear in a cross-cultural perspective where we move away from an Anglo-American view to the sphere where the Cold War had different meanings. Writing from an American perspective, Peter Novick is a case in point in advocating the totalising grand narrative, where the label of Cold War metanarrative tends to concentrate only on the theme of how the new totalitarianism of Stalin's USSR came to surpass Hitler's Germany:

The apotheosis of evil ... had been relocated ... symbols that reinforced the old view were no longer functional. Indeed, they were now seriously dysfunctional. ... On both a theoretical and rhetorical level, the transition from one set of alignments to another was smoothed by invoking the category of totalitarianism ... the term pointed to features of Nazi and Communist regimes that were said to make them 'essentially alike'.<sup>13</sup>

Peter Novick is not incorrect in his analysis, but it must be remembered that the common juxtaposition of the two totalitarian regimes in Cold War rhetoric was usually linked to specific events. As Dominick LaCapra has noted, this type of metanarrative 'runs the risk of inviting under-specified, if not distorted, views of the past'.<sup>14</sup> Thus, a careful 'specification' of the context(s) where Cold War discourse was constructed is needed. This will also be discussed below.

Quoting Averill Harriman, the former US Ambassador to the Soviet Union and the Secretary of Commerce, *The Daily Herald* expressed the new Cold War rhetoric explicitly on its front page, arguing that the Soviet Union was more ruthless than Hitler had been. The story continues to note that Harriman had recently told the US Congress that the Soviet Union was more dangerous to the American and to the whole world's way of life than Hitler.<sup>15</sup> Like *The Daily Herald*, *The Daily Telegraph* carried an editorial headed 'New Hitlerism', which took its cue

from speeches by Lord Pakenham and Lord Salisbury speeches in the House of Lords. The latter was quoted thus:

... after six years of bitter conflict to overcome the German threat we are faced with a similar threat from another great country. Russia, from being our ally, has become our enemy, and is employing all the same devices which HITLER used to enslave Europe.<sup>16</sup>

Even if 'New Hitlerism' of this type corresponds neatly with Novick's explanatory scheme, it is worth bearing in mind that what is at stake here is a far more explicit framing of 'New Hitlerism' than the theme of two dictatorships being 'essentially alike' or that they work purely on a 'theoretical and rhetorical level'. In fact, both the *Herald's* article and the *Telegraph's* leader, while appearing to be typical examples of the Cold War metanarrative, had very specific and timely contexts in which they must be considered. For example, the *Telegraph's* choice of words 'employing all the same devices which HITLER used to enslave Europe' does not refer to Hitler's overarching vision, encompassing totalitarianism, or genocide, but to his aggressive methods of treating smaller nations. What is more, the fact that Czechoslovakia in this case is under discussion has particularly strong connotations for the British press, for Hitler's invasion of the country was the ultimate proof of his thirst for expansion (and the wake-up call for appeasers). Thus, what looks like a typical representation of Cold War metanarrative in fact has a sound contextual basis, relating to a specific problem. Further, people were not prepared to accept everything the papers printed about the Soviet Union. Indeed, for many, the quick transformation of world alignments (such a prominent theme in a top-down approach to history) hardly made a difference. A Mass-Observation survey from May 1947 found that

beneath the surface of an increasingly unfavourable verbal attitude, the solid base of respect for Russian achievement and coherence remains. ... The high antagonism [towards the USSR] of ... those who control the press, has tended to over-abuse the Russians.<sup>17</sup>

Considering the strength of the assumed Cold War metanarrative, it is rather surprising that the same survey found that, on the whole, people's attitudes were slightly more favourable towards Russians than towards Americans. What follows, then, is the question: 'to what extent is it feasible to link the marginalisation of the Holocaust with Cold War rhetoric only?'

Seldom did Cold War rhetoric, of any sort, discuss the Jewish genocide, as could be anticipated if the idea of the 'essentially alike' totalitarianism is followed to its logical conclusion. That is, if the two regimes were so similar, it could be assumed that the Nazi crimes would have been projected directly on to Soviet totalitarianism. However, this was not always the case.

In 1946, Sefton Delmer, *The Daily Express* Chief European Reporter, wrote a three-article series (published on the paper's editorial page) that estimated the forces at work in the future Europe. The first one dealt with Germany and the second with the USSR. The last one dealt with Yugoslav communism and falls outside the scope of this study. Surprisingly, and against the typical Cold War logic, Delmer was more worried about a renewed German menace than about Germany slipping under Soviet control. According to him, there were already German propagandists preparing the ground for the new German totalitarianism. One of these, the reporter stated, was Dr Wurm, Bishop of Würtemberg, who blamed the Allies – especially the Russians – for treating the Germans in a more criminal fashion than Hitler had ever done to anyone. According to the bishop, the current occupation policies of the Allies were like the Nazis' extermination policy directed against the Jews.<sup>18</sup>

It is striking to note that this kind of view of Germany goes against the grain of received wisdom. The emphasis was not put on German rehabilitation and Soviet militarism, but on traditional German militarism and the danger of renewed German totalitarianism. The extermination of the Jews, as represented by Dr Wurm, still looked like a very German project. In a similar manner (although without any reference to the Holocaust), *Stockholms-Tidningen's* editorial problematised the future of Germany. It mused how it was dangerous to have West Germany without arms and unable to defend itself, but the alternative, an armed Germany with an uneasy and fragile democracy nearing militarism was an equally worrying prospect. 'Is there a third way?' the paper asked. Walter Lippman's idea of a neutral Germany sounded a good idea to the paper, but the problem was that 'neutrality must be defended' and '[w]ho shall bear arms?'<sup>19</sup> Not much faith was put on Germans on that account.

However, by ignoring these kind of themes with which Europe still struggled, the consensus view has made us believe that the two totalitarian regimes seemed 'essentially alike', and that it was this juxtaposition that had a monopoly in the creation of the Cold War metanarrative, with a consequence that there was no possibility of 'continuities in the interpretation of Nazism and the Holocaust which survived the anti-Nazi alliance in 1945'.<sup>20</sup> Here the context(s) in which the Holocaust was



discussed becomes vital. It seems that the Cold War metanarrative has truly managed to disregard the importance of specific contexts in which the Holocaust was represented, with a result that the impact of the Cold War on the willingness to confront the Nazi past has been exaggerated.<sup>21</sup> As has been argued in the previous two chapters, the press discussion on the Holocaust was mainly waged in relation to Jewish immigration to Palestine/Israel, not in the context of 'new Germany'. If the Cold War had never occurred – or had taken longer to occur – the need to keep talking about the Holocaust would have petered out just the same. The fact that Israel was established in 1948 was far more instrumental in bringing a (temporary) closure to the Holocaust than the beginning of the Cold War. To a large extent, the Israeli government and its official institution for Holocaust remembrance, *Yad Vashem*, established in 1953, also wanted the Holocaust to be remembered in the context of Israel. For example, in 1952 when Yitzhak Shneurson, a French Jew and the founder of the Centre for Contemporary Jewish Documentation in Paris (*Centre de documentation juive contemporaine*), proposed that a world centre for the memorialisation and research of the Holocaust be built to Paris, the Israeli government became concerned. Ben-Zion Dinur argued that such a move would question Israel's pre-eminence to interpret the Holocaust, and 'give Paris the place of Jerusalem'.<sup>22</sup> The Israeli context prevailed over Diaspora, as the Paris project was given '\$500,000 to build a monument in return for relinquishing its original plan to establish a world center for the commemoration of the Holocaust'.<sup>23</sup>

Additionally, it must be observed that the Cold War metanarrative did not necessarily work towards marginalising the Holocaust. Like various national narratives examined in this book, Cold War rhetoric chose to borrow whatever themes happened to be relevant for articles' or writers' envisioned goals and viewpoints. The result was a profound confusion where the theme of Jewishness could be used as a tool of political smearing by both camps, the anti-communist and anti-fascist.<sup>24</sup>

A striking example of this was published in the Finnish conservative trade and economy newspaper *Kauppalhti* in early February 1948. Borrowing from the statement of the Arab High Committee (showing the importance of the Palestinian context), the Finnish paper reiterated in its column that the

Russian intention is to infiltrate one and half million communist spies to Western Europe and the Middle East. Some of these spies are Jews, some of them are Russians. In addition, we know that after a Zionist office was recently opened in Moscow, the Zionists have

made a secret deal with Russia. Zionism is now the secret ally of Communism.

*Kauppalehti* then goes on to claim, mistakenly, that the Soviets' traditional anti-Zionist attitude changed during 1946, when Moscow realised that Palestinian Jews' anti-British terrorism could be used to achieve their own goals (Soviet infiltration of Palestine). The article then draws a logical conclusion about Soviet goals – framed in the Cold War narrative. According to the paper, the Soviet-Jewish partnership was manifested in the following:

1) Zionism is a secret ally of communism. 2) 45 per cent of Palestinian Jewish settlements are communist. 3) Histadrut [Jewish Federation of Labour or Jewish Trade Union Congress], the fortress of communism in the Middle-East is the deciding organisation for the Palestinian Jews. 4) With the help of illegal Jewish immigration, Russia is able to send its communist spies to reinforce communism in Palestine and all over the Middle-East. 5) Due to the partition of Palestine, Russia is able to send its troops, or troops of another country within the Soviet bloc to the Middle-East and thus jump over the iron wall, which Britain and the USA have built in Greece and Turkey.<sup>25</sup>

The explicit utilisation of this type of Cold War rhetoric, then, gave a new impetus for the old (pre-Holocaust) association between Jews and Bolsheviks, which in turn added yet another frame in which traditional anti-Judaism could be utilised. Consequently, the association between the Jews and communism certainly did not help in the process of understanding the Jewish tragedy.

In the same way, the Finnish far left discussed themes relating to the Holocaust in the late 1940s and early 1950s. These discussions were shaped by (blatant) communist rhetoric, especially a desire to attribute Nazism directly to capitalism. However, the point is that Holocaust histories were debated within Cold War rhetoric, rather than Cold War rhetoric silencing them altogether. This was because in Finland the early Cold War phase and 'Finnish neutrality' vis-à-vis the Cold War battle also meant that the far left had, for the first time since 1918, confidence and support to voice its opinion. For example, *Vapaa Sana's* editorial 'hatred of Jews rising again' in August 1952 wrote how 'Jew murderers are being released in Germany at an urgent pace', and 'Western capitalism has not only inherited Hitler's violent outlook, but also ... hatred of Jews.' Yet, the Jews themselves did not necessarily understand that

their own actions in service of 'reactionary forces' were leading towards their new demise. 'For example, Jewish capitalists like the Bonniers in Sweden, whose capital serves international decline [*taantumus*] and thus are helping the agitators of Jew hatred.'<sup>26</sup> Once again, one traditional anti-Jewish view (Jews in service of cosmopolitan capitalism) was placed into a Cold War political context.

In spring 1951, the same paper had told what had happened in the Warsaw Ghetto. Based on Marie Syrkin's *Blessed is the Match. The Story of Jewish Resistance*,<sup>27</sup> the paper reiterated the story from a Communist perspective, already clear in the article's subheading: 'The inner history of the Warsaw Ghetto – Jewish bourgeois' co-operation with the Nazis.' The paper then went to considerable lengths to describe how it was the ghetto's communists who organised the resistance against the Nazis and the *Judenrat* – their bourgeois-capitalist collaborators. The article concludes thus:

With the final loss of confidence as regards the nationalist dreams, and the ghetto's policy as directed by the 'Judenrat', its 40,000 soldiers, on a solid proletarian base, and united front, showed the world in the battle which raged for 42 days how Jews can fight. The heroic finale of the Warsaw ghetto is also a lesson how the Jews together with the rest of their kin can hold steadfast and remain as an independent nation against the new Nazi threat which is now rising in the capitalist world, especially in the USA and re-arming West-Germany.<sup>28</sup>

The effect of the Cold War metanarrative on Holocaust discourse is most accurately described as ambiguous. The likening of the USSR to Nazi Germany did not always mean that Nazi crimes were swept aside and directly projected on to the new totalitarianism of the Soviet Union, or ignored altogether at the expense of the rehabilitation of Germany, as these Finnish examples above show. The Holocaust, then, was discussed as part of Cold War rhetoric, but it is significant to note that even though the Cold War coloured the rhetoric, conceptually it was related to older tensions between communism and capitalism. As a consequence, both parties, communist and anti-communist, brought already firmly rooted ideas like 'reactionary forces', 'capitalism' and 'Bolshevik intrusion' into Holocaust discourse. In the Finnish case, it seems then that Cold War rhetoric did not necessarily contribute to the Holocaust's marginalisation *per se*, but it certainly obscured most specificities of the Nazi Genocide, which were crammed into political contexts in which the press constructed the Cold War struggle.

At this point we must turn our attention to the ways in which the Nazi past was historicised, that is, rendered into the recesses of the past, in the Cold War political context, which, in essence, was primarily concerned with the future.

### 10.3 Discussing genocide and the Cold War, 1948

When both the United Nations and the press were debating the meaning of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide, the Cold War struggle (especially in Berlin) was in full swing. As a result, reporting from Paris, where the UN had assembled, was conflated with Cold War animosity and pushed the news relating to the Genocide Convention and the Convention on Human Rights into second place.

Two and half years before the Genocide Convention, the Nuremberg Trial had taken a bold step in its attempt to define 'crimes against humanity'. As has been shown in previous chapters, the press used the Holocaust as an illustration of what 'crimes against humanity' entailed in practice. The International Military Tribunal's definition in Nuremberg influenced the UN Convention on Genocide, which was now setting a legal framework in an international forum to outlaw the act of Genocide. The link between the two attempts to grapple with genocide was clear, since this new definition clearly stemmed from the legacy of the Nuremberg Trial.<sup>29</sup> As Arthur K. Kuhn, one of the founders of the American Society of International Law and advocate of the Permanent Court of International Justice, stated in 1949: 'The crime of genocide comes within the category of offenses described in Article 6 (c) of the Charter of International Military Tribunal as "crimes against humanity..."'.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, Sir Hartley Shawcross argued in the Sixth Committee, which was drawing up a draft convention in 1947, that the Nuremberg Principles already encompassed genocide.<sup>31</sup> *The Times* further demonstrated the link between the IMT and the Genocide Convention when it discussed the British point of view, which had been that the Convention remains naïve since the crime of genocide was committed by states, and the charges for the crime could only be made in connection with war.<sup>32</sup> As has been discussed in relation to the Nuremberg Trial, one of its shortcomings was that the crime of genocide was explicitly linked to war, and to this end the persecution of the German Jews between 1933 and 1939 never came under IMT's jurisdiction.<sup>33</sup> Even if the persecution of the Jews in Germany did not constitute genocide as such, the point is that its omission helped to sustain the view in which war appeared to be a prerequisite for genocide and crimes against humanity.

At this point it seems plausible to investigate how the link between the two events, the IMT and the Convention on Genocide, with an undertone that stemmed from the Holocaust, was realised in the press discourse on the Genocide Convention with a reference to the press in Britain, Sweden and Finland.

*The Manchester Guardian* and *The Times* were among the few papers that made a reference to Nazism in the reporting of the Convention. For example, the *Guardian* wrote about the UN plenary session that had adopted the resolution of genocide:

In the debate on genocide five amendments were moved by the Soviet delegate, designed to relate the crime specifically to 'Fascism, Nazism and other race theories', to extend the convention to the cultural and moral destruction of national groups, to make it apply to all colonial territories, and to remove from it reference to the creation of some international penal tribunal. All were defeated.<sup>34</sup>

The relation between genocide and Nazism, it seems, was only discussed since the Soviet delegation kept the matter alive. Further, the fact that the Soviet Union was defeated on the matter made the news more worthy of reporting as it underlined the West's dominance over the interpretation of genocide, especially with relation to colonialism. However, it is important to bear in mind that the Soviet delegation's framing of genocide was clearly based on a view that Fascism was still alive and a potential perpetrator of genocide in the future. The Soviet understanding of the living Fascism was further illustrated in relation to the debate on human rights. According to Vyshinsky, the Soviet delegate at the UN, the declaration on human rights 'lacked "blood and flesh" [sic], was full of "lame" articles', and it 'left a loophole for the "poisonous fires of Fascism"'.<sup>35</sup>

What was at the stake for the West was the view that seemed to be more concerned with the future of genocidal practices rather than those of the past. The anti-communist camp treated the (uneasy) link with Fascism (and Nazism) as a historical episode – it was a closed chapter, which also meant that the Jewish genocide had served its purpose, and did not need to be referred to all the time. The feeling that the Jewish experience gave an impetus for the Convention underscored the discussion, but it did not feature there. To that end *The Times* argued that the Soviets had accepted the draft convention because, as a whole, it was 'a step forwards'.<sup>36</sup> In other words, *The Times* stipulated that the Soviet Union was, for once, moving in the right direction, towards the West's

view that Nazism was a past matter. In addition, encouraging the 'step forwards' can also be interpreted as an indication of Western uneasiness with the (communist-advocated) idea that Nazism and capitalism were two different yet connected parts of Western tradition. The Cold War animosity helped to repudiate this line of thought, but beneath the surface the uneasy connection still existed.<sup>37</sup> In this sense, the Cold War rhetoric helped in the process of the marginalisation of the Holocaust – not necessarily because of its reliance on the Cold War metanarrative as such, but rather because the Cold War metanarrative was effectively made into a workhorse for a repudiation of anything that the Eastern bloc advocated.

Reporting that drew a connection between the Holocaust and the Genocide Convention formed only a fraction of the news. The most common press reporting had to do with East–West animosity. *The Daily Telegraph's* Paris correspondent lamented that although in theory the new declaration of Human Rights and the Genocide Convention were historic and worthy attempts to make the world a better place, these accomplishments were buried under the friction between the Soviet Union and the West.<sup>38</sup>

The declaration of the Human Rights and the Genocide Convention were considered within the Russia–West dialogue. As a consequence, the view that saw Soviet totalitarianism as the existing offender on human rights and freedoms thus offered a bleak view on genocide and human rights, for whatever was achieved seemed to be mere lip service. *Uusi Suomi* editorialised the end of the UN's year from a negative viewpoint: 'tiredness and boredom characterised the latest meetings', and it argued further that the UN's chances of maintaining peace seemed 'slight'. In paragraphs three and four the Genocide Convention was discussed:

It will remain to be seen if the unanimous adoption of an agreement which outlaws a genocide of nations and national groups will have any relevance ... it was not according to everyone's taste, judged by the amendments which were submitted.<sup>39</sup>

On human rights the paper lamented that the declaration was approved after two years of negotiations and had no legal force, but was 'morally binding'.<sup>40</sup> Since morality in world politics seemed to have reached a nadir, issues like the Genocide Convention hardly seemed encouraging.

*Aamulehti* framed the news in a similar manner, carrying a front-page headline that argued that the division of the world into two camps was a clear fact.<sup>41</sup> A few days later, under a title 'Failed Session', the paper's

columnist cited the French paper *Aube* that the world 'had split into two hostile camps'. The essence of the article dealt with the situation in Palestine, criticising the inability of the three powers to agree on the matter despite its urgent nature. Finally, the columnist complained that 'the Western powers are more interested in drafting a North Atlantic defence treaty than in the work of the UN'.<sup>42</sup> There was no mention of the Genocide Convention.

The Swedish press was not dissimilar in its reporting. The *Dagens Nyheter's* Paris correspondent, Victor Vinde, who had also covered much of the Nuremberg Trial (also for *GHT*) and had published a book on it, did not even mention the Genocide Convention. Instead, the general ineffectiveness of the UN formed the hub of his reporting: 'The Security Council has gone around and around (*stått och stampat*) on the questions of Hyderabad, Kashmir and Palestine and the whole spectacle around the Berlin-crisis has been a shadow play.'<sup>43</sup>

*Svenska Dagbladet* also referred to the UN's problems in its leader article, aptly titled 'the shadow theatre of high politics'. 'In reality', the paper argued,

the UN has now existed for three years but unfortunately the world has become more and more assured that the organisation is not capable of fulfilling its purpose of defending and securing peace. ... The two world powers which should be the UN's source of power, have instead become the factor which limits its power, as, for the present, ongoing Cold War frustrates agreements between the two big [powers], without which the UN has no living chances.<sup>44</sup>

*GHT's* framing of its editorial was no different, but it was even more explicit about the Cold War. Writing on the declaration of human rights, the paper opined that '[o]nly time will tell for how long the Iron Curtain will exclude the Russian masses from it [the Declaration of Human Rights]'.<sup>45</sup> The meaning was clear: the agreement on human rights was agreed upon, but it was stillborn for it excluded actions carried out in the Communist bloc.

On occasion, then, the Genocide Convention and the Declaration on Human Rights were discussed, but without obvious connections to the Holocaust. More generally, the press in 1948 hardly considered the tripartite nexus between the IMT, the Convention of Genocide and the Holocaust. Instead, what was on offer was an elliptical approach to the role of the United Nations, embodied in a Cold War rhetoric that viewed the Soviet Union in highly suspicious terms. As has been repeatedly

shown, the power struggle between the USA and the Soviet Union overshadowed any other topic that was reported in the press. To this end, it is true that the Cold War shifted the balance of reporting, just as it shifted, as Lagrou has noted, the balance of remembering.<sup>46</sup>

However, regarding the Convention on Genocide, we must also look beyond the Cold War metanarrative and bear in mind that the legal framework, which the Convention was primarily concerned with, hardly looked back to the Holocaust, and therefore offered few anchors to the press on how to link the two. Thus it was not surprising that the connection between the Holocaust and the Convention was inconsequential in the public discussions in Britain and in the Nordic countries examined here. The main issue of interest lay in the area of international law and jurisprudence. Furthermore, other news, such as the Exodus affair or establishment of Israel, offered that link much more explicitly, resulting in the fact that the Holocaust was remembered.

Despite what has been argued here, Binoy Kampmark has noted that at least in American domestic politics the Convention and the Holocaust had a close relationship. According to him the anti-Communist lobby that pushed for the US Congress to ratify the Convention's resolution habitually invoked the Holocaust. 'The Final Solution enables a discourse to be shaped where the Convention can be aimed at punishing the crimes of totalitarian regimes; the victims of Nazism are metaphorically related as victims of Eastern Bloc oppression.'<sup>47</sup> What transpires, then, is that the Cold War rhetoric that juxtaposed the two totalitarian systems kept a circumscribed discourse on the Holocaust alive, for in order to make a case against Eastern Bloc oppression, the Holocaust had to be used as an exemplifier of the meaning of oppression. On the other hand, this also meant that the Jewish victims of Nazism were universalised – a factor that hindered the understanding of the Holocaust for decades to come. As has been shown above, this strategy, with the invocation of the Cold War metanarrative, also helped in distancing Nazism from Western democracy.

## **10.4 Forgetting to remember, the war and the Holocaust**

Five years after the concentration camps were liberated there was very little written about them in the public sphere. Reasons for this were manifold, mainly contextual, partly for reasons of Cold War logic and also partly because of the unease that the Holocaust created in the West. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the way in which the press, especially in Britain, discussed most historical matters relating to



the Second World War hardly advanced understanding of any of these events. In this sense the Holocaust was no exception.

For all that we now know, it may not sound surprising that the fifth anniversary of the liberation of the camps was not celebrated or officially remembered in Europe. By the same token, however, it is telling that neither was VE day. *The Manchester Guardian's* editorial celebrated the VE day anniversary in 1950 by announcing how the Cold War would be won. The article was all about the future of the 'Atlantic defence'.<sup>48</sup> *The Daily Express* saw Europe and European defence as muddled, and as a consequence proposed that Britain should keep out of the doubtful project. Instead, as was typical of the *Express*, its opinion was inward-looking and future-oriented when it argued that the best protection against any threat was to concentrate on the defence of the Empire, not wasting time and resources in any shared European project.<sup>49</sup>

*Dagens Nyheter* in Sweden wrote about 'collapse' in its editorial on 7 April 1950. The collapse not only referred to the downfall of the Third Reich five years earlier but primarily to the collapse of trust between the great powers and a new menace that democracy was facing:

After the years followed by Hitler's downfall, democratic nations have come to face a new totalitarian threat growing ever stronger. It is not in tunes of victory that Hitler's defeat is now remembered. It happens in a spirit of firm resoluteness to hold back Russian tyranny and to prevent a new catastrophe.<sup>50</sup>

Naturally, this cannot be used to explain why there was no news of the liberation of the camps or of VE day in a sense of remembering the event, but it is indicative of the mood that prevailed in the press. As Eva Hoffman has written, the shift from the initial recognition of the Holocaust was driven by 'a natural, or at least understandable, impulse to turn away from the spectacle of carnage and towards the future'.<sup>51</sup> For many, as the *Dagens Nyheter* editorial indicates, the future, as it held the key for saving possibly millions of lives, seemed more important than the past.

Further, the discourse on German victimhood had also begun to take shape, as the press in Europe reported the story of the missing German POWs. For example, the *Guardian* editorialised the issue. The paper criticised the Soviet Government for not having recognised the main Hague Conventions and for treating the International Red Cross with great suspicion. Yet, the paper reminded the reader that the Germans did not have an impartial view of the issue of POWs either since there still

existed such deep anti-Russian feeling in Germany.<sup>52</sup> *Helsingin Sanomat* reported how the Germans were shocked by the Russian announcement that there were no more German POWs in Russia. Where were, then, the hundreds of thousands of German soldiers presumed to be POWs, whose return the Germans had been awaiting?<sup>53</sup> Reflecting the Cold War mood, Lord Vansittart wrote in *The Times* that on two points Germany would receive sympathy. The first one was on the count of the brave Berliners who were surrounded by 'barbarians' [Communists]. The second issue was the missing POWs. According to Vansittart, it was important to condemn the actions of the Russians in the same manner as Britain had condemned the Nazis' brutalities at the end of the war. Almost as an afterthought, Vansittart added that the Russian actions now surpassed the criminality of the Third Reich.<sup>54</sup>

All of this is not to say that the Holocaust or Jewish themes were not discussed at all for they were when there were reasons for it (the Holocaust as an event was not a reason in its own right at this point). Since the end of the war the press accounted for many type of stories that explicitly or implicitly related to the Holocaust, although the framing of the stories was not always favourable or sympathetic to Jews. In February 1949, considerable comment arose in the British and Swedish (not so much in Finnish) press as a result of an incident in Berlin where Jewish DPs stopped the showing of British director David Lean's film *Oliver Twist* because Alec Guinness's portrayal of Fagin was considered anti-Semitic by the Jews.<sup>55</sup> A year later, when the fifth anniversary of the liberation of the camps and the end of the war in Europe was approaching, anti-Semitism was discussed again, together with fears of growing German nationalistic feeling.

Andrew Sharf has given an accurate picture of the British press commentary about the *Oliver Twist* incident when he notes that it was largely insensitive towards Jewish suffering.<sup>56</sup> A case in point – as far as large dailies are concerned – is *The Daily Telegraph*, which lamented that

[f]ewer than 100 Polish Jews, many who are known as black market operators, again stopped the showing of ...*Oliver Twist*. ... British prestige has suffered by allowing the film to be twice forced off the screen by an organised demonstration of a handful of foreigners.<sup>57</sup>

*The Daily Telegraph's* irritation and hostile – as well as stereotypical – statement about the Jews as black marketeers crops up from the nationalistic frame. The cause of concern was the loss of prestige suffered. While this can explain some of the adverse comment it also gives pause for

thought. Why was it indeed the case that the press did not find Fagin's character repulsive and worthy of comment? Were British national sensibilities so high on the agenda that everything else overshadowed it? It seems to be the case. *The Times*, usually sensitive towards Jewish suffering in postwar Europe, resorted to old anti-Semitic strategies where the Jews themselves were accused of creating it. By so doing, it also actively downplayed the existence of anti-Semitism in Germany. In the paper's view the DP Jews in Berlin were the preponderant force in the black market, which had caused the existing anti-Semitism, as if it were something new in Germany.<sup>58</sup> Nowhere was it considered why these Jews were DPs, or even more strikingly that anti-Semitism had indeed existed in Berlin, the administrative centre of the Holocaust, before these DPs had arrived there.

The lack of acknowledgment of anti-Semitism is even more striking when the British press is contrasted with the Swedish one. In Sweden, *Dagens Nyheter* did not consider these British insensitivities or the loss of prestige, but instead was critical of the British authorities' lack of foresight. The paper argued that 'it was hardly clever to show the film in Germany where National Socialism's anti-Semitic fervour is still anything but dead'.<sup>59</sup> *Expressen* carried a long report about the incident, although it did not go so far as to editorialise it. According to the paper, the scenes in Berlin were like those of the 1930s, as one of the report's subheadings suggested. In the same manner a photo next to the story depicted a Jew being arrested, and it told how 'disturbances on Kurfürstendamm reminded dauntingly about the persecution of the Jews in the 30s, and several Berliners [felt that they] had a welcome opportunity for the first time in five years to openly show their hatred of Jews'. The same point was also reiterated in the text, under a subheading 'alarming mentality'. Jewish suffering was also on the surface when the paper reported how the Jews stormed into a cinema and shouted 'we do not wish for the third world war, already too many Jews have been killed in Hitler's concentration camps' and 'down with the Fascists'.<sup>60</sup> However, there was some divergence in the Swedish press's opinion as *Svenska Dagbladet*, for example, chose to portray the affair very differently, concentrating less on anti-Semitism and more on how many German police were hurt in the riots, following Polish Jewish DPs' violence.<sup>61</sup>

Around Hitler's birthday in April 1950, the press carried more news about anti-Semitism in Germany, which – it seemed – was resurgent after an immediate postwar hiatus. *Helsingin Sanomat*, among other papers, reported on the front page how Veit Harlan film corporation was standing trial for 'crimes against humanity' because its film *Jud Süß*

incited anti-Semitism. Another case the paper noted happened outside a courtroom where a 'half-Jew' was subjected to anti-Semitic remarks such as 'Jewish pig'.<sup>62</sup> *Uusi Suomi* quoted the World Jewish Congress's (WJC) statement, again on the front page, according to which 'German publishers who once were members of the Nazi party, have started to publish papers which are ... anti-Semitic, and targeted against non-repatriable people'.<sup>63</sup>

*The Manchester Guardian* also noted the growing anti-Semitism in Germany, and how 'authorities turn a blind eye'. It wrote how a Düsseldorf-based newspaper, *Allgemeine*, had received a leaflet that warned 'all the Jews to get out of Germany' and how 'individual Jews have been receiving similar leaflets ... and Jewish houses are frequently disfigured'. So were, the paper told, Jewish cemeteries, and 'in no case had the German police made arrests, their invariable explanation was that tombstones and memorials had been "overturned by children playing"'. The Veit Harlan case was also noted, but the heart of the matter was the government's unwillingness to do anything.

It is useful to quote the following passage from the *Guardian* at some length for it goes against the current scholarly wisdom according to which the need to rehabilitate Germany and its government evidently led to downplaying anything that had to do with the German crimes.

Herr Marx [the editor of *Allgemeine*] pointed out that the German Government had made no spontaneous gesture of recognition of the enormity of the Nazi crimes against world Jewry. The only gesture in the Federal Parliament had come from the leader of the Opposition, Dr. Schumacher, who had himself been persecuted by the Nazis. 'For us Jews', said Herr Marx, 'this is naturally not quite the same thing. We would like to hear a single truthful expression of sorrow from a German who condoned these crimes, not from one who fought against them.'

No single German community had offered to rebuild Jewish synagogues which had been ruthlessly destroyed by the Nazis. The threat of the new anti-Semitic campaign was a threat against the possibilities of German youth growing up in the idea of tolerance of all races and creeds.<sup>64</sup>

The same paper took up the theme of German youth a few weeks later on its editorial page, headed 'Young Germans and politics – Scepticism Rather than Guilt.' Under a subtitle 'amnesia' the paper captures much of the contemporaneous mood: '[d]enying guilt is not same as justifying

the misdeeds of the Nazis; rather it is like drawing a curtain over the years before 1945 as if to say, "I knew nothing about it". However, the result was clearly visible, as was told some lines below: 'A boy once assured me that the prisoners in the concentration camps were all homicidal maniacs; he had seen some of them shortly after they had been released and could tell by their faces.' However, an overall assessment of the stories of this kind was provided too: 'by now most people here [in Germany] have heard quite enough about the war and want to forget it'.<sup>65</sup>

## 10.5 Conclusion

Some historians have argued that the strength of the Cold War metanarrative created a culture in which the Nazi Genocide was forgotten and attention was given to the new totalitarian threat represented by the new enemy: the Soviet Union. Part of the same package is the argument that the need to rehabilitate West Germany as a bulwark against Soviet expansion further advanced the need to forget the German past. As has been shown in this chapter, there are many different ways in which the Holocaust was framed in the context of escalating Cold War. It is true, as most commentators argue, that the Cold War shifted the terms in which the Holocaust was portrayed and consequently understood. This also applies to the press in Britain, Sweden and Finland. Yet, it is crucial to pause here, and recognise that many discursive frameworks in which the Holocaust was debated often had a much longer historical pedigree than the Cold War metanarrative would make us believe. For example, national sensitivities rather than the strength of the Cold War metanarrative actively obscured the record of Jewish suffering. This was the case when the British press responded to the withdrawal of the film *Oliver Twist* from cinemas in Germany, or when the Finnish press grappled with what had happened to the Jews. The Finnish press domesticated the Holocaust in the sense that it was typically collapsed into strong themes working in domestic politics, such as Bolshevism, Jewish-Bolshevik co-operation or the putative Jewish-capitalist aim to dominate the world. Significantly, all of these themes were drawn from the past but used to explain the present and the future. Indeed, the main impulse behind the marginalisation of Holocaust discourse was a desire to look for the future, and the Cold War metanarrative was effectively utilised to portray what the future might hold. For example, the Convention on Genocide in 1948 and the press's limited number of references to the Holocaust was as much the result of a legal context

that was almost exclusively interested in the future as it was the result of Cold War logic. Further, viewed in 1948, the future seemed puzzling and dangerous enough without in-depth remembrance of the past.

The need to rehabilitate Germany did not automatically lead to the marginalisation of the Holocaust in Europe either. For example, the way in which the Swedish press discussed the *Oliver Twist* incident certainly reintroduced the fears of ongoing anti-Semitism that the downfall of the Third Reich had not totally exhausted. In the same way, the press was alarmist on the danger of rising anti-Semitism in Germany in 1950. Thus, by the late 1940s and early 1950s, the Holocaust was discussed whenever there was contextual reason to do so, but most often it was simply forgotten under a mass of other current news – some relating directly to everyday Cold War struggles, some not. Finally, the question of context was a crucial one for from 1947 onwards the Holocaust was represented in connection with Jewish immigration to Palestine and as part of Israel's struggle for nationhood more often than in relation to any other issues, such as the rebuilding of West Germany. When the situation in Israel was becoming more stable it gradually disappeared from the pages of the European press, also meaning that the press was forgetting to remember the suffering of the Jews.

# Conclusions

There have been a number of gaps in historical literature on the understanding of the Holocaust after the war, although an increasing number of scholars in Germany, Britain, Israel, the USA and other places have begun to pay attention to the years following the (assumed) end of the Holocaust in 1945. On the whole, the dominant picture holds that the Holocaust was not seen as an event of major significance, certainly in the Anglo-American context. Moreover, a typical argument holds that it was an embarrassing topic for the British and Americans and that factor, coupled with the emerging Cold War, meant that the Holocaust was purposefully marginalised. It has been the aim of this book to examine to what extent, from the perspective of the press, such arguments can be sustained, and if so, why. Further, hitherto the press as a tool in shaping the representation of the Holocaust has not been subjected to systematic analysis in our attempts to grapple with the early understanding of this tragic event. What is more, what has been written about the press has often failed to take into account the wider context in which the press operated, with a result of 'retroactive indignation', which, while illuminating and descriptive, has not been conducive to advancing understanding of the forces that shaped the press's decisions. In general, no small part of the literature on bystanders suffers from the same *modus operandi*: increasingly more about the topic is known but not with the benefit of broader understanding. To this end, this book has attempted to be an important corrective.

Moreover, Sweden and Finland have rarely featured in Holocaust studies, despite the fact that for over a decade now interest in the topic has been growing in both of these countries. As has been shown throughout, with reference to each of these three nations and in a number of different contexts, the way in which the Holocaust was represented and

understood was, in the first instance, dependent on how it could be fitted into each country's nationalistic narratives. Consequently, the idea that the Holocaust was deliberately marginalised is far too simplistic. In some cases it was not marginalised at all, as Chapters 3 and 7 particularly have shown, while in some other cases the Holocaust was seen as an event in the past, with little to offer for the future, as has been shown in reference to the Swedish press and the Nuremberg Trial, and throughout Chapter 10.

In the first five postwar years the representation of the Holocaust, then, took a number of avenues in the British, Swedish and Finnish press. As shown in Chapters 2, 3 and 4, the liberation of the camps had multiple, yet relatively straightforward (nationalistic) meanings for each of the countries in question. It is unreasonable to assume that the press would have been able to grasp the real complexities of the Holocaust as the events were still unfolding. Even today, well over 60 years later we are still trying to come to terms with the event.

The most perplexing question for historians to fathom has been the lack of acknowledgment of Jewish suffering. As the dominant interpretation holds, the focus on the Western camps was an important factor in obscuring the Jewish aspect, for, as is well known, the locus of Jewish tragedy lay further east. To some extent that was the case, since the framing of the stories that came from Soviet sources did not differentiate various types of victims; all were victims of fascism, while at the same time, the press in the West was inclined to mistrust the Soviet findings. However, that explanation is not entirely satisfactory. In essence, the unwillingness to believe in the Soviet sources and their depictions of extermination camps cannot be seen as the main factor for the sporadic coverage on Auschwitz and the 'Aktion Reinhardt' camps, for both British and Swedish journalists visited Buchenwald, for example, and interviewed survivors. The Swedish journalists, as reading liberation stories makes it clear, came away with a definite argument: 'Buchenwald [was] a pure recreation camp [when] compared with the death factory Auschwitz.'<sup>1</sup> The British press missed the same story. This leads to the crux of the issue.

As mentioned at the beginning of Chapter 2, Kushner has argued that the first factor hindering the understanding of the Holocaust as a predominantly Jewish tragedy was that the scale and immediacy of the catastrophe contributed to a shrouding of the reality. In fact, the scale of the tragedy did not mean that Jewish suffering was not recognised at all. As we have seen, the suffering of the Jews was a central theme in the Swedish press, and it was also noted in the Finnish press insofar as it discussed the victims at all.



Beyond the scale of the horror and the realisation that the camps were much worse than had been imagined, it is not useful to talk of a universal response to the liberation news, but national ones. In Britain and Sweden, the initial shock soon gave way to more persistent lines of arguments, which focused on very different matters. The British placed the perpetrator in the centre: the revelations from the camps provided conclusive proof of Nazi bestiality – something that they had argued for years, but for which they had not had empirical first-hand evidence apart from the press reporting of the concentration camps before the war. The British public was certainly receptive to dominant, black-and-white, portrayals of ‘us versus them’ – conditioned by the years of anti-German propaganda. Thus, it was not surprising that the focus was on the perpetrator – or on a nation of perpetrators. In contrast, when the concentration camps were liberated the Swedish press was more receptive towards the stories of the survivors – especially Scandinavian survivors. It is worth remembering that in late 1943 the Swedish government declared its willingness to offer a haven for the persecuted,<sup>2</sup> thereby officially recognising the plight of the Jews. In spring 1945, then, Nazi brutality was not the incredible story, but the survival of victims of Nazism, especially Norwegians and Danes (including the Jews), followed by other survival stories was. Indeed, the point was easy to bring home by telling the story through the concept of ‘Nordic Victimhood’; the Jews of Norway and Denmark were just like other people in Scandinavia, well assimilated and part of the commonly shared idea of a Scandinavian national home. Thus, it has been argued that Tony Kushner’s influential explanatory scheme of ‘liberal imagination’ cannot fully explain all the nuances that shaped much of the newspaper discourses in each country examined here, especially since the same factors that led to obfuscating the Jewish tragedy in Britain led to the opposite direction in Sweden. Instead, the depictions of Nazi Germany, and its crimes was a key component. The assertion may seem self-evident, but it is, nevertheless, crucial and therefore deserves full attention.

The importance of nationalistic narratives of the press – Anglo-centrism, Svea-centrism and Finno-centrism – becomes even more clear when the Finnish (non)response is taken into consideration. In Finland, the public attitude was totally unprepared for the excesses of their former brother-in-arms as the fate of those who were judged inferior in Nazi racial thinking was not publicised during Finland’s co-belligerency with the Nazis. Overall, Finland had not suffered too badly from the German presence and its repercussions, and the experiences of other nations as well as the Germans under Hitler’s rule were depicted through the lenses

of Finnish experience.<sup>3</sup> When the news from the liberated camps began to flow into Finland the press framed the story as part of a wider story that accounted for the collapse of the Nazi enterprise. Importantly, the ordinary Germans were seen as unwilling partners of utopian Nazi dreams – something that the vast majority of Finns had never believed in the first place. Therefore, there was considerably more sympathy for the ordinary Germans.

It is also noteworthy that the Finnish press had to rely on second-hand accounts from the camps, for they were not invited to visit the camps, and they tended to have considerably smaller resources. No doubt, this affected the way in which the episode was portrayed in Finland. Initially, when Finnish and Swedish newspapers both relied on second-hand accounts their opinions were not widely different. However, the Swedish rhetoric changed almost overnight when Swedish correspondents began to file their reports from Buchenwald, and later from southern Sweden where they were witnessing the arrival of the liberated survivors. Finnish reportage remained physically untouched by the tragedy and could not muster similar moral outrage against Nazi Germany. The physical aloofness from the real situation greatly contributed to the mental detachment too. Interestingly, the only Finnish Holocaust story that managed to introduce a modicum of reality of the Nazi camps, as seen through the prism of 'Finnishness', was a story of interned Finnish sailors – and by any standards that was hardly representative of a 'Holocaust story'.

The importance of the nationalistic narratives in contextualising the Holocaust was also manifested in 'the trial of the major war criminals' – Herman Goering et al. – more commonly known as the Nuremberg Trial. According to Donald Bloxham, 'British liberalism did not permit the murder of the Jews to be given any specific considerations even within those legal constraints.'<sup>4</sup> Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of this book have examined how the murder of the Jews was considered outside the legal terrain of the trial. As has been illustrated, that is an important component in the story of the Nuremberg Trial, especially if we are to gain a more nuanced understanding of the Holocaust's representation. As has been argued, contemporaries endorsed the trial as a large-scale history lesson rather than a watershed in international law. It has emerged in this study that newspapers in Sweden and Finland – especially in Finland – gave much more attention to the extermination of the Jews than one would think possible by using Anglo-American history-writing as a guiding light. This factor, again, points to the usefulness of a comparative approach.

Yet, it is notable that in all cases the nationalistic press narrative and the wartime relationship with Germany carried on being the most important factor in contributing to how the Nuremberg Trial was portrayed. In Britain, the focus was almost obsessively fixed on Goering: his looks, his behaviour, his words, his reactions to the prosecutors' claims and his relationships with the other defendants. Goering-centred coverage was followed by the wider debate on German collective guilt of the war. Insofar as war crimes were reported, the examination of murdered Allied airmen and the bombings of British cities was a *cause célèbre*.<sup>5</sup> All this entailed, unsurprisingly, that Jewish suffering was not given similar treatment. On the other hand, the Holocaust was discussed throughout the trial, and whenever it fitted neatly with the other categories of the trial's representation it was given some consideration.

However, it was the press in Finland and Sweden that responded to the news about the Holocaust with much more liveliness and compassion than the British press. Indeed, whatever arguments the prosecution took, however sparingly they used witnesses of the horror (especially Jewish), and however fixated they were on the conspiracy charge,<sup>6</sup> the press in Sweden and Finland showed, nevertheless, a more emotional response to the plight of the Jews than one would believe likely if an Anglo-American interpretive framework were applied in the Nordic context. Indeed, it was the Holocaust in the first place that gave meaning to the jurisprudential neologism of 'crimes against humanity'.<sup>7</sup> Often, the news about the extermination of Jews was put in bold type and placed prominently on the main news pages, even on the front page, although this was more common in Finland. Undeniably, it is the Finnish reporting of the Nuremberg Trial that stands out – especially given the minimalist attention to the news of the liberation process. As has been shown in Chapter 7, the reasons were, in the first instance, nationalistic. The Nuremberg Trial acted as a screen memory for the Finnish War-guilt trial, which coincided with the Nuremberg proceedings. The mainstream Finnish argument, including the press, the public and political elite, ran that Helsinki was not Nuremberg's side office, meaning that the Nuremberg law cannot be applied to the Finnish case at all.<sup>8</sup> Such a nationalistic argument was only possible to sustain by highlighting the differences between the two trials. The most radical difference, and therefore the most useful for the Finns, was the Nazi Genocide; the Finnish trial truly looked like a political farce aimed at the humiliation of the small nation and its leaders when Finland's imagined (and real) misdemeanours were compared with and contrasted to the overarching criminality of the Nazi regime.

In a sense, the Swedish press exercised a much greater level of 'neutrality' in its reporting of Nuremberg than the Finnish and British press. On the one hand, it may at first seem odd that the press's fixation on the perpetrators ran such a strong course, given the fact that so much was written about the Jews during the liberation process. On the other hand, this was not perhaps surprising because the fact that the Jews had suffered enormously had already been established. Therefore, interest in German guilt, or moreover, the analysis of the 'sickness' of Germany was a natural one, for the German crimes against Eastern Europeans in general and the Jews in particular could only be understood with reference to German behaviour or 'German illness'. Finally it should be remembered that the discussion of the Germans took priority as the Germans and their re-education held the key to Europe's peaceful future. Such deliberations were the overall concern of the press reporting from Nuremberg, and in such formulation the Holocaust hardly played the main role. The Holocaust, as far as the Nuremberg view of it was concerned, was a tragic event in the past and therefore it seemed to offer little in the way of tangible building-blocks for the future. But, it must be pointed out, at the same time, there was a strong call to remember and honour the victims as it was they, in the demoralised world, who stood for the goodness of humanity. Notably, it was the Warsaw ghetto fighters who illustrated the point. Nowhere was this as clearly argued as in the closing chapter of Victor Vinde's *Nürnberg i blyttljus* (Nuremberg in the Spotlight).

If the Nazi Genocide was considered a thing of the past at Nuremberg, the simultaneous problem of the Jewish DPs highlighted the fact that the ramifications of the Holocaust were still being sharply felt. In this sense, as this book has illustrated, it is historically questionable whether fixing the dateline to 1945 as the 'end of the Holocaust' is correct. Not only did liberated victims of the Nazis keep dying at a staggering rate after Germany's defeat but, as the months and years passed, the occupation authorities in Germany, as well as UNRRA and the British in Palestine were inundated with tasks directly relating to the Final Solution.

As shown in Chapter 8, the plight of the Jewish DPs was frequently reported in the press. The Harrison Report made a powerful case for considering the Jews as a separate case. While the Swedish and Finnish press reported the incident without much further comment, yet with much sympathy for the Jews, the British press, understandably, considered the report in some depth. While the liberal press, such as *The Manchester Guardian* and *The News Chronicle*, was hopeful that the British occupation authorities would take the report into account in their treatment

of the Jews, the conservative papers, while reporting the plight of Jews, accused Harrison of creating a situation that would hinder the finding of an acceptable solution for Palestine.<sup>9</sup> Increasingly since early 1946, the plight of the Jewish DPs, their mass movement from Eastern Europe and their desire to carry on to Palestine was noted. Essentially, the Morgan incident brought the issue into a focus. Again, the British press showed a great deal of ambivalence towards the issue, while dominantly portraying the Jews in a negative light. However, with what we have already learned about the importance of nationalistic themes in shaping Holocaust discourse, that should not come as a surprise. Finally, the saga of *Exodus 1947* showed the level of sympathy that the Jewish DPs enjoyed in the European press. Even the British press almost unanimously condemned the British Government's move to force the illegal immigrant Jews to land in Hamburg. Such a move might have been disgusting, as *The Daily Telegraph's* editorial argued,<sup>10</sup> but, still, no small part of the blame was put on unscrupulous Zionist agitation, backed up by powerful and rich American Zionists.

With regard to the liberation of the camps and the Nuremberg Trial, the crucial component in shaping the press's framing of their stories was the way in which Germany and the Germans were considered, as shown in Parts II and III above (Chapters 2–7). In contrast, as the geographical locus on the Holocaust debate was shifting from Germany to Palestine, the discourse on DPs and Palestine was fundamentally decided by the press's reading(s) of Zionism. As has been shown in Chapter 9, nowhere was that as clear as in the stories that accounted for the birth of Israel. Once more, the tenacity of British nationalism – intensified by the fact that the British troops, 'our boys' or 'the British Lion', were the main target of Jewish extremists – meant that the press found very little positive to write about the Jews as a whole. To this end, the Holocaust made no difference, but even sometimes made the whole issue even worse: a sizeable minority believed that Hitler's treatment of the Jews was justified. On the one hand, that may reflect how little was known about the extreme and prolonged suffering of the Jews and centrality of anti-Semitic ideology in Nazi Germany, while, on the other, such a line of argument certainly proves the importance of the nationalistic frame of thinking: when 'the Germans' had tortured and killed British soldiers many thought that the Germans ought to be exterminated. In a similar manner, when 'the Jews' had killed British soldiers, they, too, ought to be exterminated.

The Swedish and Finnish framing of the Jewish/Israel's struggle broadens the case for the nationalistic motives at play. For the Swedish press, the reporting of the Jewish plight had been a consistent theme since the liberation of the camps, and in a sense, it followed an established

pro-Jewish course. Powerful, yet dispassionate reporting in the Swedish press aligned with Sweden's 'neutral' position in world affairs, something that was seen as an inherent part of Swedish character. Covering the facts of the Palestine issue, Jewish suffering, Anglo-American schism as well as rising Arab anti-Semitism reflected Sweden's place in the world – a 'cool' temper, dealing with all sides concerned and observation of events was very Swedish, something that had enabled the country's long-established tradition of neutrality. The Finnish press, in contrast, understood Jewish suffering as a reflection of its own struggle for independence. Rather than 'cool temper', proactive engagement with the forces of nationalism was the very issue that could lead to a National Home. Zionist activity with its determination was admired for that very reason. The Zionists were seen in the same light as Finnish activists before them, and knowing how difficult the struggle for independence could be for small nations, all support was needed, and the Finnish press certainly did its share in supporting the Zionist endeavour.

If the crude outlines of the Holocaust were established in the post-liberation press discourse, why did the process stop short of grappling with the real breadth and depth of the Final Solution? The need to rehabilitate Germany in the new political constellation has been offered as the main reason. The dominant view has it that the Cold War led to convenient amnesia. However, as has been shown in Chapter 10, such an explanation is far too one-sided, especially if the press as an agent in sustaining Holocaust discourse is taken into account. Fundamentally, when the Cold War issue was becoming increasingly vital in Europe between 1947 and 1950, the Holocaust was not discussed in relation to Germany and the German re-education programme as much as it was in relation to Palestine/Israel. To be sure, the fading discussions on the Holocaust in the press were far more closely linked to what seemed like a settled issue of Israel's independence than to the Cold War metanarrative. Granted, there were still DPs in Germany, the last of the camps, Foehrenwald, closing as late as 1957, but they did not constitute a problem, certainly not a problem worthy of international news coverage, since Israel's doors were (at least in theory) open for them. Thus at the same time as the Cold War context was emerging, the main context in which the Holocaust had been debated, the DP/Palestinian issue, vanished.

Naturally, it would be imprudent to claim that Cold War rhetoric did not have a share in helping to create an atmosphere where German crimes were forgotten. For one, the press was full of anti-Soviet talk, which habitually made the point that Soviet totalitarianism was 'new Hitlerism'. Similarly, especially in Britain, there were influential public protests against the trials of Kesselring, von Manstein and von Falkenhorst, for

example.<sup>11</sup> Yet, at the same time, the public, as has been shown, did not share the press's anti-Soviet barrage at face value, but it was far more hesitant in accepting Cold War logic. Instead, the common reasoning ran that the Kremlin had its own reasons for behaving in an aggressive manner, which did not necessarily constitute an overarching threat.

Yet, most importantly, as Chapter 10 has shown, the main factor contributing to the marginalisation of the Holocaust was a need to look to the future. For example, the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide was almost exclusively concerned about the future of genocide, not the genocidal past. Not dissimilarly, the early literature examined here that grappled with the Holocaust aimed at historicising the episode, in order to have closure on it. Again, the public, already in 1947, thought along similar lines. As mentioned, the Mass-Observation file report found that 'people are evidently rather tired of the subject of Jewish suffering and persecution under Nazi rule, (*just as they are tired of war stories generally*)'.<sup>12</sup> It took over a decade, almost two, before the Holocaust, and importantly the wartime in general, seemed to have a need for re-examination – a process that is still going on. Finally, inclusion of the Norwegian and Danish press and the ways in which the press in these Nordic countries began to build their post-Holocaust identity would naturally offer a different dimension to Scandinavian (including Finland) memories of the Holocaust.<sup>13</sup>

This study has attempted to show how the importance of national contexts and salient issues relating to national identity shaped the way in which the Holocaust was framed in the years following Nazi Germany's downfall. The main focus has been to move beyond Tony Kushner's 'liberal imagination'. Although his thesis has been criticised here, it should also be pointed out that in many ways the two ideas, nationalism and liberalism, can be read as supporting one another. Whereas Kushner's argument shows the limits of liberalism, this book, concentrating on the press, has shown the strength of nationalism in postwar Europe, which in turn limited liberalism's force. To a degree, it can be said that another side of the same coin has been examined here. As Kushner has recognised, 'national and ideological factors combined to provide obstacles of varying size' in acknowledging the Holocaust; this book has shown the great extent to which such an argument can be pushed, and how important it truly is.<sup>14</sup> Yet, by examining the ways in which the press responded to the Holocaust, it has also emerged, paradoxically, that a strong sense of nationalism did not necessarily lead to the marginalisation of the Holocaust, as has been previously thought. This in turn, means that where we stand now in terms of our

knowledge of the tragedy, even more emphasis should be put on appreciating the highly complex contexts in which historical events such as the Holocaust are contested. It thus stands that there is even more need to re-examine the silences before, during and after the war, within a framework that does not build on the retroactive indignation but takes into account multiple, often contradictory ways in which the Holocaust was viewed. Such examination would, no doubt, benefit from a careful analysis of the press, and where appropriate, other forms of mass media, as well as other 'unofficial' records like school books, periodicals of numerous professional bodies and institutions, soldiers' private letters from occupied Germany and Palestine and travel literature relating to Palestine/Israel's early years.

There are a number of individual themes that would help to further our comprehension of how the Holocaust was contextualised immediately after the war. For example, the theme of enemy images in shaping the American press's response to the liberation process as well as the Nuremberg Trial might tell us more about the strength (or weakness) of nationalistic thinking, especially given the fact that the Japanese were seen through atavistic perceptions much more frequently than the Germans. Similarly, to obtain a wider appreciation of the representation of past tragedies, the responses to the Holocaust would benefit from comparisons to other genocides and mass violence too – not least the Gulag. In addition, comparison between the Swiss and Swedish press might tell us more about the way in which the most important non-belligerents chose to depict their role in the war in general and the rescuers of the Jews in particular. To what extent did the press construct self-serving narratives that established the long-held myths of neutrality in these countries?

Finally, this work has attempted to bridge the divide that has existed between Anglo-American, Swedish and Finnish histories of Holocaust interpretation(s), with the hope that a wider-based understanding of the topic will emerge. Essentially, as this book has tried to point out, grappling with the Holocaust's legacy only within the Anglo-American frame runs a risk of succumbing to a teleological view of history in general and the wartime in particular, where the victorious Western Allies' narratives define the parameters for perceiving the Holocaust's meanings in Western culture. Ultimately, such an approach will do disservice to the historian's craft, to the complexities of the period and to those who lived through it. The Holocaust is far too important an event to be relegated to such a category.



# Appendixes

## Appendix A: Selected newspapers, their circulation and political views

Newspaper	Circulation in 1945 in thousands (market position)	Political leaning
<b>British papers<sup>1</sup></b>		
<i>The Daily Express</i>	3,239 (1)	Conservative
<i>The Daily Herald</i>	2,000 (2)	Labour
<i>The Daily Mirror</i>	2,000 (2)	Labour
<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	822 (6)	Conservative
<i>The Times</i>	195 (7)	Liberal/Conservative
<i>The Manchester Guardian</i>	80 (9)	Liberal/Left
<b>Swedish papers<sup>2</sup></b>		
<i>Dagens Nyheter</i>	207 (1)	Liberal/Centre
<i>Stockholms-Tidningen</i>	164 (2)	Conservative
<i>Svenska Dagbladet</i>	83 (4)	Conservative
<i>Expressen</i>	57 (5)	Left/Liberal
<i>Göteborgs handels- och sjöfartstidning</i>	49 (in 1947)	Left/Liberal
<b>Finnish papers</b> (circulation in 1948) <sup>3</sup>		
<i>Helsingin Sanomat</i>	160 (1)	Liberal/Centre
<i>Uusi Suomi</i>	104,7 (2)	Conservative
<i>Aamulehti</i>	70,7 (4)	Conservative
<i>Suomen Sosialidemokraatti</i>	42,5 (8)	Left
<i>Ilta-Sanomat</i>	38,1 (9)	Liberal/Centre
<b>Total circulation of examined papers</b>	<b>9,312</b>	

Table A.1

<b>Britain</b>	<b>Number of papers</b>	<b>Total circulation</b>	<b>Per cent of sample</b>
Conservative	2	4,061,000	48.7%
Liberal	2	275,000	3.3%
Left/Labour	2	4,000,000	48.0%
Total	6	8,336,000	100%

Table A.2

<b>Sweden</b>	<b>Number of papers</b>	<b>Total circulation</b>	<b>Per cent of sample</b>
Conservative	2	247,000	44.1%
Liberal	1	207,000	37.0%
Left/Labour	2	106,000	18.9%
Total	5	560,000	100%

Table A.3

<b>Finland</b>	<b>Number of papers</b>	<b>Total circulation</b>	<b>Per cent of sample</b>
Conservative	2	175,400	42.2%
Liberal	2	198,100	47.6%
Left/Labour	1	42,500	10.2%
Total	5	416,000	100%

## Appendix B: Timeframe within which different papers were examined

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<i>The Daily Express,</i> <i>The Daily Herald,</i> <i>The Daily Mirror,</i> <i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	10.4.1945–1.6.1945; 6.9.1945–30.10.1946; 1.1.1947–30.6.1947 <sup>4</sup> ; 1.7.1947–31.12.1947; 1.1.1948–15.7.1948; 18.9.1948–30.9.1948; 10.12.1948–28.2.1949; 15.4.1950–12.5.1950
<i>The Times</i>	10.4.1945–31.12.1945; 1.1.1946–30.10.1946; 1.2.1947–28.2.1947; 1.5.1948–30.5.1948; 14.9.1948–27.9.1948; 10.12.1948–28.2.1949; 15.4.1950–12.5.1950
<i>The Manchester Guardian</i>	29.9.1945–30.10.1946; 1.1.1947–30.6.1947; <sup>5</sup> 1.7.1947–31.12.1947; 1.1.1948–15.7.1948; 18.9.1948–30.9.1948; 10.12.1948–28.2.1949; 15.4.1950–12.5.1950
<i>Dagens Nyheter,</i> <i>Stockhoms-Tidningen,</i> <i>Svenska Dagbladet</i>	10.4.1945–1.6.1945; 30.9.1945–31.10.1946; 1.1.1947–30.6.1947 <sup>6</sup> ; 1.7.1947–10.9.1947; 28.11.1947–5.8.1948; 18.9.1948–30.9.1948; 10.12.1948–28.2.1949; 15.4.1950–12.5.1950
<i>Expressen</i>	10.4.1945–1.6.1945; 29.9.1945–31.10.1946; 4.1.1947–31.12.1947; 1.2.1948–30.5.1948; 18.9.1948–31.10.1948; 10.12.1948–28.2.1949; 14.4.1950–10.5.1950
<i>GHT</i>	21.4.1945–4.5.1945; 1.10.1945–2.10.1946; 1.8.1947–12.9.1947; 28.11.1947–16.10.1948; 12.12.1948–15.12.1948; 14.5.1948–14.6.1948
<i>Helsingin Sanomat</i>	10.4.1945–10.9.1947; 14.5.1948–14.6.1948; 10.2.1950–10.5.1950
<i>Uusi Suomi</i>	10.4.1945–1.6.1945; 9.9.1945–30.7.1946; 1.9.1946–5.10.1946; 1.1.1947–29.7.1947; <sup>7</sup> 30.7.1947–10.9.1947; 4.2.1948–15.12.1948; 1.7.1949–30.7.1949; 15.4.–12.5.1950
<i>Aamulehti</i>	10.4.1945–1.6.1945; 9.9.1945–30.7.1946; 1.9.1946–5.10.1946; 1.1.1947–29.7.1947; <sup>8</sup> 30.7.1947–10.9.1947; 1.5.1948–30.5.1948; 10.12.1948–15.12.1948; 15.4.1950–12.5.1950
<i>Suomen Sosialidemokraatti</i>	10.4.1945–1.6.1945; 9.9.1945–30.7.1946; 1.9.1946–5.10.1946; 1.1.1947–29.7.1947; <sup>9</sup> 19.7.1947–11.9.1947; 4.1.1948–30.4.1948; <sup>10</sup> 1.5.1948–30.7.1948; 18.9.1948–15.12.1948; 1.7.1949–30.7.1949; 15.4.1950–12.5.1950
<i>Ilta-Sanomat</i>	10.4.1945–1.6.1945; 1.10.1945–16.4.1946; 15.6.1946–17.10.1946; 1.1.1947–20.7.1947; <sup>11</sup> 21.7.1947–11.9.1947; 1.11.1947–30.4.1948; <sup>12</sup> 1.5.1948–30.7.1948; 18.9.1948–15.12.1948

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## Appendix C: Surveyed articles and editorials

	Articles/editorials	% editorials from the surveyed content
<b>British papers</b>		
<i>The Daily Express</i>	181/20	11.0%
<i>The Daily Herald</i>	112/19	17.0%
<i>The Daily Mirror</i>	102/9	8.8%
<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	238/17	7.1%
<i>The Times</i>	104/13	12.5%
<i>The Manchester Guardian</i>	167/33	19.8%
<b>British papers subtotal</b>	<b>904/111</b>	<b>12.3%</b>
<b>Average per paper</b>	<b>150.7/18.5</b>	<b>12.3%</b>
<b>Swedish papers</b>		
<i>Dagens Nyheter</i>	203/18	8.9%
<i>Stockholms-Tidningen</i>	158/12	7.6%
<i>Svenska Dagbladet</i>	160/11	6.9%
<i>Expressen</i>	146/30	20.5%
<i>GHT</i>	81/16	19.8%
<b>Swedish papers subtotal</b>	<b>748/87</b>	<b>11.6%</b>
<b>Average per paper</b>	<b>149.6/17.4</b>	<b>11.6%</b>
<b>Finnish papers</b>		
<i>Helsingin Sanomat</i>	259/20	7.7%
<i>Uusi Suomi</i>	110/9	8.2%
<i>Aamulehti</i>	51/4	7.8%
<i>Suomen Sosialidemokraatti</i>	107/11	10.3%
<i>Ilta-Sanomat</i>	80/9	11.3%
<b>Finnish papers subtotal</b>	<b>607/53</b>	<b>8.7%</b>
<b>Average per paper</b>	<b>121.4/10.6</b>	<b>8.7%</b>
<b>All papers total</b>	<b>2,259/251</b>	<b>11.1%</b>

**Appendix D: Distribution of editorials per year**

Per year	
1945	66
1946	50
1947	45
1948	78
1949	9
1950	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>251</b>

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>1945</b>	<b>1946</b>	<b>1947</b>	<b>1948</b>	<b>1949</b>	<b>1950</b>	<b>Total</b>
<i>The Daily Express</i>	3	2	6	8	–	1	20
<i>The Daily Herald</i>	4	2	3	8	2	–	19
<i>The Daily Mirror</i>	7	1	–	1	–	–	9
<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	4	1	5	6	1	–	17
<i>The Times</i>	5	3	1	3	1	–	13
<i>The Manchester Guardian</i>	2	9	9	9	4	–	33
<b>British papers</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>111</b>
<i>Dagens Nyheter</i>	6	1	3	7	–	1	18
<i>Stockhoms-Tidningen</i>	4	3	2	2	–	1	12
<i>Svenska Dagbladet</i>	3	3	1	3	1	–	11
<i>Expressen</i>	4	12	9	5	–	–	30
<i>GHT</i>	4	2	2	8	–	–	16
<b>Swedish papers</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>87</b>
<i>Helsingin Sanomat</i>	11	3	4	2	–	–	20
<i>Uusi Suomi</i>	3	1	–	5	–	–	9
<i>Aamulehti</i>	1	2	–	1	–	–	4
<i>Suomen Sosialidemokraatti</i>	2	1	–	8	–	–	11
<i>Ilta-Sanomat</i>	3	4	–	2	–	–	9
<b>Finnish papers</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>All papers total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>251</b>

## Appendix E: Distribution of editorials per topic<sup>13</sup>

Table E.1

Topic 1 (t.1) Liberation of the camps	22
Topic 2 (t.2) Nuremberg and Finnish War-guilt trials	56
Topic 3 (t.3) Refugee problem	14
Topic 4 (t.4) Palestine problem	103
Topic 5 (t.5) Others <sup>14</sup>	56
<b>Total</b>	<b>251</b>

Table E.2

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>t.1</b>	<b>t.2</b>	<b>t.3</b>	<b>t.4</b>	<b>t.5</b>
<i>The Daily Express</i>	1	4	1	11	3
<i>The Daily Herald</i>	1	1	4	10	3
<i>The Daily Mirror</i>	4	1	–	1	3
<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	2	4	–	8	3
<i>The Times</i>	2	5	1	2	3
<i>The Manchester Guardian</i>	–	6	3	17	7
<i>Dagens Nyheter</i>	4	2	–	9	3
<i>Stockhoms-Tidningen</i>	2	2	1	6	1
<i>Svenska Dagbladet</i>	2	1	–	4	4
<i>Expressen</i>	3	7	2	9	9
<i>GHT</i>	1	4	1	8	2
<i>Helsingin Sanomat</i>	–	7	1	2	10
<i>Uusi Suomi</i>	–	4	–	5	–
<i>Aamulehti</i>	–	2	–	2	–
<i>Suomen Sosialidemokraatti</i>	–	3	–	7	1
<i>Ilta-Sanomat</i>	–	3	–	2	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>56</b>

In Table E.2, it is noteworthy that not a single Finnish paper examined ran an editorial about the liberation of the camps. All other papers did – with the exception of *The Manchester Guardian*, which is examined from September 1945 onwards. Although it would seem that the Finnish press also did not editorialise the refugee issues, in fact Finnish papers were full of articles about refugees – specifically Karelian refugees who moved from Karelia to new Finland in late 1944. As Finland had to resettle about 500,000 Karelians at the end of the Second World War, it is perhaps understandable that the country was less preoccupied with Europe's refugees.

## Appendix F: List of editorial articles

### *The Daily Express*

19.04.1945	Vileness
19.10.1945	Opinion: The reckoning
20.10.1945	Opinion: Nuremberg's ghost
01.10.1946	Opinion: The law of nations makes a majestic advance
02.11.1946	Opinion: 'The Nuremberg trial has said the last word that need be uttered'
01.08.1947	Opinion: Defiled Holy Land
05.08.1947	No More!
14.08.1947	Get Out!
09.09.1947	Opinion: They have no voice
27.09.1947	Speed them home
03.10.1947	Mr. Laski's attack
01.03.1948	Not one day more
15.05.1948	Opinion: 'Good luck Palestine'
24.05.1948	How many more?
28.05.1948	Palestine*
09.06.1948	Opinion: Jews in Britain
17.06.1948	<i>Daily Express</i> & Jews
18.09.1948	Israel's disgrace
20.09.1948	Opinion: Killers on top
08.05.1950	European defence*

### *The Daily Herald*

28.04.1945	'Buchenwald'
18.09.1945	Europe in distress
15.11.1945	Patience
22.11.1945	Nuremberg
08.02.1946	Comparisons in Europe
02.05.1946	Palestine
02.08.1947	Palestine
29.09.1947	Palestine
01.12.1947	Refugees
22.04.1948	Help them!
24.04.1948	Children in need
15.05.1948	Palestine
24.05.1948	Palestine
26.05.1948	Palestine
09.08.1948	Refugees
18.09.1948	Bernadotte
10.11.1948	New Europe
10.01.1949	Opinion: It was ill done
13.01.1949	Opinion: Clear all doubts

***The Daily Mirror***

17.04.1945	Didn't everybody know?
20.04.1945	Monuments of shame
24.04.1945	Recording the Hun infamy
25.04.1945	At the Golden Gate
22.05.1945	Think again my Lord!
01.06.1945	Enter Jew-baiter
17.11.1945	The Jews
02.10.1946	Lesson of the trial
18.09.1948	Will this shock the world?

***The Daily Telegraph***

15.05.1945	Justice
17.05.1945	Germany now pays for the price of aggression
01.10.1945	In Germany + Palestine
05.12.1945	Rule of Law
01.10.1946	Judgment day
01.08.1947	Too Much
03.09.1947	Necessary trial [Stalag luft III trial]
09.09.1947	To what end?
27.09.1947	Giving notice
04.12.1947	Palestine
24.02.1948	Palestine
25.02.1948	Slander exposed
04.03.1948	New Hitlerism
15.05.1948	Withdrawal
20.09.1948	Terrorism
25.09.1948	The cold war
10.01.1949	Act of Madness

***The Times***

20.04.1945	The Victims
28.04.1945	Crime without limit
04.06.1945	'The Russians, while yielding to none of the other allies...'
08.06.1945	Unity in Europe <sup>+</sup>
27.06.1945	'The Charter'
29.07.1946	Last words at Nuremberg
01.10.1946	Judgment at Nuremberg
02.10.1946	Justice
01.02.1947	Public order in Palestine
14.09.1948	Fate of the refugees
28.09.1948	A world divided
13.12.1948	Too many words
07.01.1949	Britain and Israel



***The Manchester Guardian***

01.10.1945	In Germany
24.11.1945	'Comment on Nuremberg'
04.01.1946	'World Force'
07.01.1946	U.N.N.R.A
12.03.1946	Germany
14.03.1946	The end of appeasement
01.10.1946	Judgment
02.10.1946	The Sentences
03.10.1946	Aftermath
16.10.1946	Executions
17.10.1946	Germany
19.07.1947	Palestine
23.07.1947	The President Warfield
05.08.1947	The disgrace of anti-Jewish riots
02.09.1947	Palestine
10.09.1947	The Hamburg landings
06.11.1947	Palestine
18.11.1947	Mr. Caunt
01.12.1947	Partition
10.12.1947	Hostages
16.02.1948	Palestine
21.02.1948	Palestine
15.05.1948	Summing-up
22.05.1948	The Arab war
27.05.1948	'Still waiting'
18.09.1948	Count Bernadotte
20.09.1948	Israel
21.09.1948	Israel exists
22.09.1948	The German generals
13.01.1949	Mr. Eden in Palestine
27.01.1949	Palestine
28.01.1949	Palestine
31.01.1949	At last

***Dagens Nyheter***

21.04.1945	Den anglosachsiska opinionen reagerar oerhört starkt
22.04.1945	Omskolningen
26.04.1945	Tyska upptäcker
03.05.1945	Hitlers eftermäle
05.05.1945	När tysk legationsfolk talar om samvetskonflikter
16.12.1945	Mästerskjorna i Nürnberg
02.10.1946	Domen
31.07.1947	Antisemitisk propaganda i London
05.09.1947	Palestina under debatt

30.11.1947	Palestina inför avgörandet
02.05.1948	Palestina
16.05.1948	Israel och Araberna
28.05.1948	'Palestina'
10.06.1948	Vapenvila i Palestina
08.07.1948	Palestina
18.09.1948	Ogärningen i Jerusalem
13.12.1948	Final i Paris
07.05.1950	Sammanbrottet

### ***Stockholms-Tidningen***

19.04.1945	Tyska folket och nazismens ogärningar
27.04.1945	'Ett annat Tyskland'
25.11.1945	Processerna i Nürnberg och H:fors [= Helsingfors-Helsinki]
27.11.1945	Opionen mot utlämningen av balterna
02.05.1946	Nytt grepp på Palestinas problem
24.07.1946	Bomben i Jerusalem
02.10.1946	Domarna i Nürnberg
02.09.1947	FN:s Palestina plan
02.12.1947	Beslutet om Palestina
15.05.1948	Israel åter ett rike
18.09.1948	Folke Bernadottes död
15.04.1950	Det tyska dilemma

### ***Svenska Dagbladet***

28.04.1945	Buchenwald viktig faktor för nya Tyskland (tarkista)
29.04.1945	Tysklands sammanbrott
30.04.1945	Danskar och norrmän vänta på befrielse (tarkista)
14.07.1946	Det tyska problemet
11.08.1946	Kampen om Tyskland
02.10.1946	Domarna i Nürnberg
11.09.1947	Den tragiska exodusaffären
19.09.1948	Skuldfrågan och följderna
26.09.1948	Hur länge skall man dröja?
17.12.1948	Storpolitikens skuggteater
19.02.1949	Israel och Bernadottes mördare

### ***Expressen***

15.04.1945	Upplösningstendenserna inom den tyska krigsmakten
25.04.1945	Ohyggligheterna i Buchenwald
28.04.1945	Buchenwald och det 'andra' Tyskland
29.09.1945	Flyktningsproblem
04.01.1946	En 'hemlig' judisk organisation

05.01.1946	Tyska generalstaben
08.01.1946	Hjälper till Tyskland
10.01.1946	Vi Diskuterar: Nazismens rättuppfattning
20.01.1946	I Nürnbergprocessen
27.01.1946	Biskop Cullberg och Nürnbergprocessen
06.02.1946	Vi Diskuterar: Kritik mot Nürnberg
10.06.1946	Öst och väst
26.06.1946	Dimbildning kring Tyskland
02.10.1946	Varje tillfälle
02.10.1946	Vi Diskuterar: Nürnberg i svensk debatt
03.10.1946	Hermann Göring
07.01.1947	Palestina problemets nya fas
16.06.1947	Politiska kalorier
16.06.1947	Vi Diskuterar: Nazismen i Sverige
22.07.1947	Vi Diskuterar: Antisemitisk tryckfrihet
26.07.1947	Vi Diskuterar: Nazismen, konservatismen och lektor Höjer
03.08.1947	Antisemitiska excesserna
08.09.1947	Operation 'Oasis'
30.11.1947	Det Heliga kriget
03.12.1947	Vi Diskuterar: Palestina
15.05.1948	Vi Diskuterar: Landet Israel
17.05.1948	I Hitlers fotspår
25.05.1948	Vi Diskuterar: Palestina kriget
09.07.1948	Vi Diskuterar: Rikard Lindström och sionismen
18.09.1948	Folke Bernadotte

***Göteborgs handels- och sjöfartstidning***

27.04.1945	Buchenwald
20.11.1945	Processen i Nürnberg skall bli en hörnsten i fredsbyggnaden
21.11.1945	Nürnberg
10.12.1945	Vad Nürnberg lär oss
27.07.1946	Palestina och judarna
02.10.1946	Nürnberg
01.09.1947	Palestinas framtid
04.12.1947	Europas Parias
15.05.1948	En ny stat
20.05.1948	Israels öde
07.08.1948	Israel och Ismael
25.08.1948	Den långa förhandlingen
25.09.1948	Stern-ligan
25.09.1948	Tyska tragedier
29.09.1948	Bernadottes minne och judarnas sak
13.12.1948	Magna Charta

***Helsingin Sanomat***

03.05.1945	Saksa ilman Hitleriä
05.05.1945	Tanska jälleen vapaa
26.06.1945	Kuollut Saksa
30.09.1945	Trumanin puhe**
28.10.1945	Hetkenkohtaisia oikeusnäkökohtia
08.11.1945	Syytteet
15.11.1945	Sotasyyllisyysoikeudenkäynti
17.11.1945	Ensimmäisen vaiheen loppu
30.11.1945	Suomi ja Nürnbergin oikeudenkäynti
06.12.1945	Pienet ja suuret kansat
31.12.1945	Tapahtumarikas vuosi
03.10.1946	Nürnbergin tuomiot
01.11.1946	'Uusi Saksa'
03.12.1946	'Saksan tilanne'
21.01.1947	Saksan rauhansopimus
07.02.1947	'Palestiina'
23.07.1947	Saksan pakolaiskysymys
08.09.1947	'Italian rauha'
16.05.1948	Palestiina ja YK-järjestö
20.05.1948	Sota sittenkin

***Uusi Suomi***

15.11.1945	Oikeudenkäynti alkaa
17.11.1945	Ensimmäinen vaihe
13.12.1945	Uusi vaihe
02.10.1946	'Tuomio'
16.05.1948	Israel ja Islam
16.07.1948	Palestiinan sota
05.10.1948	Palestiinan pulma YK:ssa
02.12.1948	Palestiinan pulma
14.12.1948	Pariisin yleiskokous

***Aamulehti***

07.09.1945	Ns. sotasyyllisyysskysymys eduskunnassa
18.06.1946	Palestiinan ongelma
02.10.1946	Nürnbergin tuomiot
19.09.1948	Väkivaltaa ja sekasortoa

***Suomen Sosialidemokraatti***

16.11.1945	Oikeudenkäynti on alkanut
01.12.1945	Natsien johtajat oikeudessa
03.10.1946	Nürnbergin tuomiot
28.03.1948	Nykyaikainen pääsiäinen
10.05.1948	Palestiinan tilanne
21.05.1948	Palestiina ja YK

13.06.1948	Palestiinan aselepo
13.07.1948	Palestiinan tilanne
19.09.1948	Bernadotte
28.11.1948	Palestiinan ongelma
15.12.1948	Berliinin kriisi

### ***Ilta-Sanomat***

05.05.1945	Vapaa Tanska
08.05.1945	Vapaa Norja
21.11.1945	Nürnbergin oikeudenkäynti
13.02.1946	Kaksi todistajaa
15.03.1946	Poliittinen muisti
25.07.1946	Pyhästä maasta
29.07.1946	Nürnbergin prosessi
18.09.1948	Rauhan sotilas
13.12.1948	Tulokset

### **Miscellaneous editorials**

#### ***Vapaa Sana***

11.01.1946	Juutalaiset
10.08.1952	Juutalaisviha nousee jälleen

#### ***Työkansan Sanomat***

02.12.1952	Israel ja juutalaiset
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#### ***The Observer***

30.01.1949	New start
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\*Original editorial title missing in my notes.

+Original editorial title missing in my notes.

\*\*Original editorial title missing in my notes.

# Notes

## 1 Introduction

1. Although I use the term Holocaust in this book, it must be remembered that during the period that this book examines (1945–50), the term was not used. The multitude of the issues that the term encompasses, such as discrimination, ghettoisation, slave labour and, above all, the systematic murder of Jews, featured in the press between 1945 and 1950, but in different terms, tones and points of emphasis than they do today. The press in Britain, simply, talked about the extermination of the Jews or mass murder of Jews. The Swedish press commonly used terms such as *judeförföljelser* (Jewish persecution), *massmorden på judar* (mass murder of the Jews) or more general designations such as *utrotning* (extermination, eradication) or *likvidering* (liquidation). The most commonly used term today, *förintelsen*, which literally means ‘annihilation’ or ‘destruction’, was not in popular usage in the early postwar years. In Finland, the term ‘Holocaust’ (*holokausti* – without the capital H) has arrived within the last 15 or so years and still remains unknown to many. After 1945, the Finnish press used the terms such as ‘the mass destruction of the Jews’, ‘extermination’ or ‘eradication’ of Jews. Finally, on occasion all countries used Nazi euphemisms, especially ‘the final solution’ and ‘Jewish question’ – usually in inverted commas, however.
2. *The Daily Telegraph*, 30 June 1942. See, for example, Richard Bolchover, *British Jewry and the Holocaust* (Oxford and Portland, OR: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2003), p. 8.
3. *Dagens Nyheter*, 13 September 1942.
4. For example, *Uusi Suomi*, 5 October 1943; *Arbetsbladet*, 5 October 1943. See also Taimi Torvinen, *Pakolaiset Suomesta Hitlerin Valtakaudella* (Helsinki: Otava, 1984), pp. 247–9.
5. For a problem of knowing and believing the news, see, for example, Bolchover, *British Jewry*, pp. 7–20; Laurel Leff, *Buried by the Times: The Holocaust and America's Most Important Newspaper* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 330–40.
6. Tony Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination: A Social and Cultural History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), p. 3. For the USA, Peter Novick remarks: ‘By the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s, talk of the Holocaust was something of an embarrassment in American public life.’ See Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (New York: Mariner Books, 2000), p. 85.
7. Michael Marrus, *The Holocaust in History* (London: Penguin, 1993), p. 157.
8. Michael Marrus, ‘The Holocaust at Nuremberg’, *Yad Vashem Studies*, 26 (1998), pp. 40–1. See also Lawrence Baron, ‘The Holocaust and American Public Memory’, *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 17:1 (2003), p. 66.
9. The category of ‘bystander’ in itself is highly problematic. According to Deborah Lipstadt, it includes ‘neutral governments and agencies, Jews living in relative safety, occupied countries, ordinary Germans, and above all,

- the Allied governments'. See Deborah Lipstadt, 'The Failure to Rescue and Contemporary American Jewish Historiography of the Holocaust: Judging from a Distance', in Michael J. Neufeld and Michael Berenbaum (eds), *The Bombing of Auschwitz* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2000), p. 228. This definition is highly unsatisfactory as it fails to recognise the huge differences between various types of bystanders as Tony Kushner, among others, have noted. Most importantly, by talking about bystanders, perspective is crucial. For bystanders in countries like Great Britain, Sweden or Finland taking action on behalf of Europe's Jewry was unlikely to make any real difference to the lives of persecuted. What is more, the price to pay was low, 'a postage stamp or an hour of leisure'. When one considers this vis-à-vis a Polish non-Jewish 'bystander' and his options in helping a Jew with risking the lives of them both, the problem of bystanders begins to emerge in a different light. See Tony Kushner, 'The Bystanders: Towards a More Sophisticated Historiography', in Donald Bloxham and Tony Kushner, *The Holocaust: Critical Historical Approaches* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), p. 177.
10. These standard works in this period include Andrew Sharf, *The British Press and Jews under Nazi Rule* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964); A. J. Sherman, *Island Refuge: Britain and refugees from the Third Reich* (London: Elek, 1973); Bernard Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe 1939–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979); Martin Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies* (London: Michael Joseph, 1981). For Sweden, see Hans Lindberg, *Svensk flyktningpolitik under internationellt tryck 1936–1941* (Stockholm: Allmänna förl, 1973); Steven Koblik, *The Stones Cry Out: Sweden's Response to the Persecution of Jews 1933–1945* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1988); Paul A. Levine, *From Indifference to Activism: Swedish Diplomacy and the Holocaust, 1938–1945*, 2nd revised edition (Uppsala: Studia Historica Uppsaliensia 178, 1998). For Finland, see Elina Suominen, *Kuolemanlaiva S/S Hohenhorn. Juutalaispakolaisten Kohtalo Suomessa* (Porvoo: WSOY, 1979); Torvinen, *Pakolaiset Suomessa Hitlerin Valtakaudella*; and Hannu Rautkallio, *Finland and the Holocaust. The Rescue of Finland's Jews* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1987).
  11. Robert Cherry, 'Holocaust Historiography: The Role of the Cold War', *Science & Society*, 63: 4 (1999–2000), pp. 459–77.
  12. Marrus, *The Holocaust in History*, pp. 156–7.
  13. Kushner, *Liberal Imagination*, p. ix.
  14. Robert G. Moeller, 'War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany', *The American Historical Review*, 101: 4 (1996), pp. 1012–13. See also Dan Stone, 'Making Memory Work, or *Gedächtnis macht frei*', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 37:1 (2003), pp. 87–98.
  15. Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), particularly Chapter 7.
  16. Pieter Lagrou, 'Victims of Genocide and National Memory: Belgium, France and the Netherlands 1945–1965', *Past and Present*, 154 (1997), pp. 181–222. See also his *The Legacy of Nazi Occupation: Patriotic Memory and National Recovery in Western Europe, 1945–1965* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
  17. Lagrou, 'Victims of Genocide', p. 183.
  18. *Ibid.*, p. 186.

19. For example, Dan Stone has argued that 'in the creation of collective memory, the most extreme and challenging events are likely to be filtered out ... [w]hat is more surprising is that this "writing-out" of extremity [in Great Britain] took place in spite of considerable awareness of the real situation'. See, Dan Stone, 'The Domestication of Violence: Forging a Collective Memory of the Holocaust in Britain, 1945–6', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 33: 2 (1999), p. 19.
20. Baron, 'The Holocaust and American Public Memory', p. 63.
21. Tom Lawson, 'Constructing a Christian History of Nazism. Anglicanism and the Memory of the Holocaust', *History and Memory*, 16: 1 (2004), p. 165. For a full-length development of his argument, see his *The Church of England and the Holocaust: Christianity, Memory and Nazism* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006).
22. Dan Stone, *Histories of the Holocaust* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 3.
23. For collective memory and the past, see, for example, Richard Ned Lebow, Wulf Kansteiner and Claudio Fogu (eds), *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2006); Alon Confino, *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance: Promises and Limits of Writing History* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Idith Zertal, *Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Tom Segev, *The Seventh Million: The Israelis and the Holocaust* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994); Lagrou, *The Legacy of Nazi Occupation*.
24. Novick, *The Holocaust*, p. 85. See also Jon Bridgman, *The End of the Holocaust: The Liberation of the Camps* (London: Batsford, 1990). On p. 34 he argues that '[i]n all the contemporary accounts of the Bergen-Belsen liberation there are remarkably few references to the Jews', thereby postulating a view that has long dominated our historical understanding of the topic – the extreme fate of the Jews remained obscure and hidden.
25. For a critical examination of Novick's argument, see Baron, 'The Holocaust and American Public Memory'; Rona Sheramy, '"Resistance and War": The Holocaust in American Jewish Education, 1945–1960', *American Jewish History*, 91: 2 (2003), pp. 287–313.
26. See, for example, Baron, 'The Holocaust and American Public Memory', pp. 65–6.
27. Donald Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial: War Crimes Trials and the Formation of Holocaust History and Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Lawrence Douglas, *The Memory of Judgment: Making Law and History in the Trials of the Holocaust* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2001); Michael Marrus, *The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial 1945–46. A Documentary History* (Boston and New York: Bedford/St Martins Press, 1997); Erich Haberer, 'History and Justice: Paradigms of the Prosecution of Nazi Crimes', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 19:3 (2005), pp. 487–519; Michael Salter, *US Intelligence, the Holocaust and the Nuremberg Trials: Seeking Accountability for Genocide and Cultural Plunder* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).
28. Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial*. For example, Bloxham, a student of Kushner's, argues that 'British liberalism did not permit the murder of the Jews to be given any specific consideration even within ... legal constraints'. *Genocide on Trial*, p. 225. See also Dan Stone, *Constructing the Holocaust: A Study in*



- Historiography* (London and Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 2003). For a 'middle road account', see Douglas, *The Memory of Judgment*.
29. Jürgen Wilke et al., *Holocaust und NS-Prozesse* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1995).
  30. For example, David Wyman (ed.), *The World Reacts to the Holocaust* (Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996) is a collection of 21 essays on different countries and the United Nations, yet no Nordic countries are included. Similarly, R. M. Shapiro (ed.), *Why Didn't the Press Shout? ? American and International Journalism during the Holocaust* (Jersey City, NJ: Yeshiva University Press, 2003) examines the silence of international journalism during Hitler's rule. It includes, for example, seven articles on the USA and the Holocaust, two on Britain, three on Germany and Italy, one about the Hebrew/Jewish press and numerous articles concerning East European countries, their newspaper media and the Holocaust. In contrast, no Scandinavian countries have been included.
  31. Harald Runblom, 'Sweden and the Holocaust from an International Perspective', in Stig Ekman and Clas Åmark (eds), *Sweden's Relations with Nazism, Nazi Germany and the Holocaust* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 2003), p. 218. Currently, the Department of Journalism, Media and Communication at Stockholm University is conducting a research programme about Swedish freedom of the press and the Holocaust before, during and after the Second World War. In addition, the Uppsala Programme for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, in cooperation with the Department of Holocaust and Genocide Studies in Copenhagen and the Center for Studies of Holocaust and Religious Minorities in Oslo held a conference in Uppsala in June 2008, addressing various aspects of the Holocaust in postwar Scandinavia.
  32. Allan Bell, 'News Stories as Narratives', in Adam Jaworski and Nikolas Coupland (eds), *The Discourse Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 236.
  33. Shapiro, *Why Didn't the Press Shout?*; Sharf, *The British Press*; Deborah E. Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief: The American Press and the Coming of the Holocaust, 1933–1945* (New York: Free Press, 1986).
  34. Alon Confino, 'Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method', *The American Historical Review*, 102: 5 (1997), pp. 1386–403, esp. 1389–91. See also Robert S. C. Gordon, 'Holocaust Writing in Context: Italy 1945–47', in Andrew Leak and George Paizis (eds), *The Holocaust and the Text: Speaking the Unspeakable* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 2000), p. 32.
  35. Adrian Bingham, *Gender, Modernity and the Popular Press in Inter-War Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), p. 12.
  36. See Gordon, 'Holocaust Writing in Context', p. 32.
  37. Eoin Devereux, *Understanding the Media* (London: Sage, 2003), p. 116.
  38. David Deacon et al. (eds), *Researching Communications* (London: Arnold, 1999), p. 150.
  39. Teun van Dijk, *Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach* (London: Sage, 1988), p. 6. Emphasis in original.
  40. For a good example of discourse analysis approach, see Teun van Dijk, *Racism and the Press* (London: Sage, 1991).
  41. See, for example, Mary Hilson, *Political Change and the Rise of Labour in Comparative Perspective: Britain and Sweden 1890–1920* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2006), p. 18.

42. Susan R. Grayzel, 'Across Battle Fronts: Gender and the Comparative Cultural History of Modern European War', in Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor (eds), *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective* (New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 72 and 81.
43. Hilson, *Political Change*, p. 14. Emphasis added.
44. Wyman (ed.), *The World Reacts to the Holocaust*. See also note 30 above.
45. Paul Levine, 'Attitudes and Action: Comparing the Responses of Mid-level Bureaucrats to the Holocaust', in David Cesarani and Paul A. Levine (eds), *Bystanders to the Holocaust: A Re-evaluation* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), p. 215.
46. For the Swedish case, Karin Kvist Geverts' recent work is an excellent example of this. See Karin Kvist Geverts, *Ett Främmande Element i Nationen. Svensk Flyktingpolitik och de Judiska Flyktingarna 1938–1944* (Uppsala: Studia Historica Uppsaliensia 233, 2008).
47. Louise London, *Whitehall and the Jews, 1933–1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 11–12.
48. Kvist Geverts, *Ett Främmande Element*, p. 116.
49. Hannu Rautkallio, *Holokaustilta pelastetut* (Helsinki: WSOY, 2004), p. 453.
50. For example, London, *Whitehall and the Jews*, pp. 4–5 and Torvinen, *Pakolaiset Suomessa*, pp. 77–125.
51. Torvinen, *Pakolaiset Suomessa*, p. 88.
52. For Great Britain, see, for example, Todd M. Endelman, *The Jews of Britain, 1656 to 2000* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 183–228; for Sweden, for example, Joseph Zitomersky, 'Ambiguous Integration: The Historical Position of the Jews in Swedish Society, 1780s–1980s', in Kerstin Nyström (ed.), *Ingår i: Judarna i det Svenska Samhället* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1991), pp. 79–112.
53. Swedish 'neutrality' is a contested area and in many ways a misleading approach to Sweden's involvement in the Second World War. Swedish policy was flexible and intimately connected to the course of the war. For example, in the beginning of the war Sweden's main concern was to remain neutral at any cost. Yet towards the end of the war, when German power and influence was waning, Sweden saw itself as a humanitarian rescuer of persecuted people (including the Jews), actively engaging itself in anti-Nazi policy. See Levine, *From Indifference to Activism*, esp. pp. 229–78. See also Paul Levine, 'Swedish Neutrality During the Second World War: Tactical Success or Moral Compromise?', in Neville Wylie (ed.), *European Neutrals and Non-belligerents during the Second World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 304–30.
54. In recent years, this has caused a heated debate in Finland. For a re-evaluation of Finland's participation in the Holocaust, see Antero Holmila, 'Finland and the Holocaust: a Reassessment', in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 23:3 (2009), pp. 413–40.
55. For example, see Madeleine Bunting, *The Model Occupation. The Channel Islands under German Rule 1940–1945* (London: HarperCollins, 1995) and Fredrick E. Cohen, *The Jews in the Channel Islands during the German Occupation* (London: The Institute of Contemporary History and Wiener Library in association with the Jersey Jewish Congregation, 1998).
56. For example, see Mary Luckhurst's article 'The Case of Theresa: Guernsey, The Holocaust and Theatre Censorship in the 1990s', *European Studies: A Journal of European Culture, History and Politics*, 17 (2001), pp. 255–67.

57. Hilson, *Political Change*, p. 23.
58. Taimi Torvinen, *Kadimah: Suomen juutalaisten historia* (Helsinki: Otava, 1989), pp. 170–1.
59. For the discussion on 'emancipation contract', see Bolchover, *British Jewry*, passim.
60. The *Front Karolina* magazine, cited in Rony Smolar, *Setä Stiller: Valpon ja Gestapon Välissä* (Helsinki: Tammi, 2003), p. 322.
61. Hannu Rautkallio, 'Cast into the Lion's Den: Finnish Jewish Soldiers in the Second World War', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 29:1 (1994), p. 53.
62. Finnish censorship, which was political by nature, avoided making any virulent comments about foreign countries (read Germany and the USSR) that might have endangered its political situation. Thus after the Winter War (1939–40), and even before Finland aligned itself with Germany, the talk about the persecution of the Jews had become a topic under censorship limitations. See Esko Salminen, *Aselevosta kaappaushankkeeseen: sensuuri ja itsesensuuri Suomen lehdistössä 1944–1948* (Helsinki: Otava, 1979), p. 19.
63. Touko Perko, *Aseveljen Kuva. Suhtautuminen Saksaan jatkosodan Suomessa 1941–1944* (Porvoo: WSOY, 1971), p. 32.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
65. For 'atrocities' propaganda and its enduring legacy in the Allied countries, see, for example Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief*, pp. 8–9 and Sharf, *The British Press*, p. 28 and pp. 73–83.
66. See Mark Mazower, *The Dark Continent, Europe's Twentieth Century* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1998). Additionally, Dan Stone has shown the uneasiness with which the West has treated Nazism. See his *Constructing the Holocaust*, esp. Chapters 2 and 3, pp. 52–130.
67. Colin-Seymour-Ure, *The British Press and Broadcasting since 1945* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), pp. 28–9, table 3.2. The circulation of the top ten national papers was 12,575,000. My selection covers 8,336,000, which is 66 per cent.
68. For example, see Bo Prántare et al., *Lehdistö Pohjoismaissa* (Porvoo: WSOY, 1982), p. 137.
69. For more details, see Appendix A. For figures of circulation in Britain, see Seymour-Ure, *British Press and Broadcasting since 1945*; for Sweden, Lars-Åke Engblom et al. (eds), *Svenska Pressens Historia IV* (Stockholm: Ekerlids Förlag, 2002), pp. 45–109; for Finland, Päiviö Tommila et al. (eds), *Suomen Lehdistön Historia 3* (Kuopio: Kustannuskiila, 1988), pp. 78–9.
70. For example, Donald Bloxham, 'From Streicher to Sawoniuk: the Holocaust in the courtroom', in Dan Stone (ed.), *The Historiography of the Holocaust* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 410.
71. Olli Vehviläinen, *Finland in the Second World War. Between Germany and Russia* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 157.

## 2 The British Press Responds to the Liberation of the Concentration Camps

1. Kushner, *Liberal Imagination*, passim; Joanne Reilly, *Belsen: The Liberation of a Concentration Camp* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 50–1 and passim.

2. Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial*, notes that 'interpretations of the camp system have been as varied as national experiences of the Hitler era' (p. 93). Yet, beyond the initial acknowledgment, there is little evidence of how, in practice, this manifested itself. Predominantly, the focus is on Anglo-American perspectives.
3. Kushner, *Liberal Imagination*, p. 214; Bolchover 'Knowing and believing', in his *British Jewry*, pp. 7–20. See also Leff, *Buried by the Times*, p. 312.
4. Kushner, *Liberal Imagination*, esp. pp. 214–17.
5. For criticism of Kushner's 'liberal imagination', see Todd M. Endelman, 'Jews, Aliens and Other Outsiders in British History', *Historical Journal*, 37 (1994), pp. 959–69, at p. 964, and Lagrou, 'Victims of Genocide', pp. 184–5.
6. Kushner, *Liberal Imagination*, pp. 18–20.
7. Lagrou, 'Victims of Genocide', pp. 184–5.
8. For example, see W. J. Stankiewicz (ed.), *Political Thought since World War II* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1964), p. 418; Brian Jenkins and Spyros A. Sofos, *National Identity in Contemporary Europe* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 13–14 and 19.
9. Umut Özkirimli, *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), p. 3.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 2–3.
11. Barbie Zelizer, 'Gender and Atrocity: Women in Holocaust Photographs', in Zelizer (ed.), *Visual Culture and the Holocaust* (London: Athlone, 2001), p. 247.
12. Rune Ottosen, 'Enemy Images and the Journalistic Process', *Journal of Peace Research*, 32: 1 (1995), p. 98.
13. Harold Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique in the World War* (New York: Knopf, 1927), pp. 200–4.
14. For example, Lord Vansittart's popular 'Black Record' of the German people had been available since 1941. Tom Lawson writes that this black record was given 'a new resonance by the Allied discoveries in Belsen and Buchenwald'. Tom Lawson, *The Anglican Understanding of the Third Reich and its Influence on the History and Memory of the Holocaust* (PhD thesis, University of Southampton, 2001), p. 158.
15. For Lord Vansittart's views on Germany, see, for example, his *Lessons of My Life* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1943) and *Black Record: Germans, Past and Present* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1941).
16. See Leff, *Buried by the Times*, p. 312.
17. Mass-Observation Archive [hereafter MO], D 5098, 18 April 1945.
18. For example, see Kushner, *Liberal Imagination*, p. 218; Lawson, *The Anglican Understanding of the Third Reich*, p. 191; Stone, 'Domestication of Violence', p. 17; Reilly, *Belsen*, passim; Bridgman, *The End of the Holocaust*, passim.
19. Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief*, p. 254.
20. For a classic example, see the case of Sidney Bernstein's film about the camp liberations, where British government favoured non-Jewish victims. See Kushner, *Liberal Imagination*, pp. 215–16.
21. *The Daily Telegraph*, 24 April 1945.
22. Baron, 'The Holocaust and American Public Memory', p. 63. Also, various commentators have made a point that the unprecedented cruelty of the Nazi racial policy ensured that Jews and non-Jews alike had no previous mental categories of how to respond to the news. See, for example, Bolchover, *British*

- Jewry, pp. 14–16. For a similar case in America, see Yehuda Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust: The American Joint Distribution Committee, 1939–1945* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1981), p. 190. With regard to victims it has also been noted that even in the death camps and the ghettos, victims viewed their situation ‘through the lens of their upbringing and their commitments’. Alan Mintz, *Popular Culture and the Shaping of Holocaust Memory in America* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2001), p. 48. If even the victims viewed their situation through the existing conceptual frames while subjected to annihilation, it surely applies to ‘the bystanders’ who were far removed from the actual sites of suffering and extermination.
23. *The Daily Mirror*, 17 April 1945.
  24. *The Daily Express*, 19 April 1945; see also *The Times*, 1 May 1945.
  25. MO, unidentified diarist, 19 April 1945.
  26. For Germany as an enemy image, see Margaret Kertesz, *The Enemy: British images of the German people during the Second World War* (PhD thesis, University of Sussex, 1992), p. 172.
  27. *The Daily Mirror*, 17 April 1945. Emphasis in the original.
  28. *The Times*, 21 April 1945. A letter to the editor by V. H. Galbraith. Also see *The Times*, 23 April 1945. See also MO, D1364, 21 April 1945.
  29. For an American perspective, see Leff, *Buried by the Times*, esp. p. 317.
  30. See also Leff, *Buried by the Times*. On p. 305 she notes that the absence of the Jews in news stories from ‘Buchenwald and Dachau was also more a matter of emphasis than ignorance’. Emphasis was firstly on the Germans and secondly on the liberators.
  31. Novick, *The Holocaust*, p. 66.
  32. *The Times*, 24 April 1945.
  33. *The Daily Mirror*, 21 April 1945.
  34. *The Daily Mirror*, 24 April 1945.
  35. *The Daily Telegraph*, 1 May 1945.
  36. *The Daily Express*, 20 April 1945.
  37. Sharf, *The British Press*, p. 140; Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial*, p. 129.
  38. *The Daily Telegraph*, 19 April 1945.
  39. *The Daily Express*, 19 April 1945.
  40. MO, D5261, 18 April 1945.
  41. *The Daily Mirror*, 20 April 1945.
  42. *The Daily Telegraph*, 26 April 1945.
  43. *The Times*, 23 April 1945. See also *The Times*, 26 April 1945. For the question of German ‘callousness and cowardice’, see Sharf, *The British Press*, pp. 140–2. See also Victor Gollancz, *What Buchenwald Really Means* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1945), passim.
  44. *The Daily Express*, 14 May 1945.
  45. See also Kushner, *Liberal Imagination*, passim.
  46. See, for example, *The Daily Express*, 19 April 1945; Kushner, *Liberal Imagination*, p. 218.
  47. See also Janina Struk, *Photographing the Holocaust: Interpretations of the Evidence* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004), p. 137.
  48. Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), p. 120.
  49. *The Times*, 21 April 1945. Emphasis in original.

50. *The Daily Mirror*, 18 May 1945.
51. See *Buchenwald Camp: The Report of a Parliamentary Delegation* (London: HMSO, 1945, Cmd. 6626).
52. Sharf, *The British Press*, p. 142.
53. See *Buchenwald Camp: The Report of a Parliamentary Delegation*.
54. For a similar point in the American press, see Novick, *The Holocaust*, p. 65.
55. *The Daily Mirror*, 20 April 1945.
56. *The Daily Telegraph*, 19 April 1945.
57. Leff, *Buried by the Times*, p. 314.
58. See, for example, *The Daily Express*, 14 April 1945.
59. *The Times*, 16 April 1945.
60. *The Times*, 20 April 1945. See also Aneurin Bevan in *The Daily Telegraph*, 20 April 1945.
61. Margaret Bourke-White, *Portrait of Myself* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1963), p. 258.
62. As early as 1942, Herbert Marcuse mused that the 'reality' of the Final Solution – then at the full blow – had 'passed beyond the reaches of adequate "aesthetic" representation'. Reproduced in Herbert Marcuse, *Technology, War and Fascism: Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse*, vol. 1, ed., Douglas Kellner (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 169. After the war he wrote to Heidegger that Auschwitz was 'outside the dimension of logic'. See Marcuse, *Technology, War and Fascism*, p. 267.
63. Leff, *Buried by the Times*, p. 312.
64. *The Daily Mirror*, 2 May 1945.
65. *The Daily Mirror*, 7 May 1945.
66. *The Daily Mirror*, 15 May 1945.
67. *The Daily Telegraph*, 8 May 1945.
68. This point is also made by Andrew Sharf, although his argument is much more direct in this point: 'Yet it is difficult to avoid the feeling that here, too, one is up against that same uncomfortable factor so often misunderstood – the uniqueness of the Jewish tragedy.' *The British Press*, p. 142.
69. *The Times*, 24 April 1945.
70. See *The Times*, 21 and 23 April 1945.
71. *The Daily Telegraph*, 23 April 1945.
72. *The Daily Telegraph*, 25 May 1945.
73. *The Times*, 28 May 1945.
74. On the surface, Tony Kushner has acknowledged that the framework of nationalism shaped the representation of the liberation of the camps in Britain, but he has not, nevertheless, examined the problem through the lenses of nationalism. He writes: 'The western representation of Belsen was shaped by the ideologies of liberalism and nationalism.' 'Belsen in History and Memory', in Reilly, *Belsen*, p. 184.

### 3 The Swedish Press and the Liberation of the Camps

1. Leff, *Buried by the Times*, p. 136.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 136.
3. Koblik, *The Stones Cry Out*, p. 24.

4. Ingar Svanberg and Mattias Tyden, *Sverige och förintelsen. Debatt och dokument om Europas judar 1933–1945* (Stockholm: Arena, 1997) pp. 39–52, esp. p. 44.
5. For a good introduction to Swedish historiography of the Second World War and the changes since the 1990s, see Ekman, 'Introduction', in Stig Ekman and Klas Åmark (eds), *Sweden's Relations with Nazism, Nazi Germany and the Holocaust* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 2003), pp. 11–30. A classic example of the condemnation is Maria-Pia Boëthius, *Heder och samvete. Sverige under andra världskriget* (Stockholm: Nordstedts, 1991).
6. Boëthius, *Heder och samvete*, passim. For a more analytical perspective, see Levine, 'Swedish Neutrality during the Second World War', pp. 304–30. For the Swedish economy during the Second World War, see Martin Fritz, 'Swedish Adaptation to German Domination in the Second World War', in Joachim Lund (ed.), *Working for the New Order: European Business under German Domination, 1939–1945* (Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press, 2006), pp. 129–56.
7. For example, see Rundblom, 'Sweden and the Holocaust', pp. 213–21, esp. pp. 217–18; Svanberg and Tyden, *Sverige och förintelsen*; Levine, *From Indifference to Activism*, pp. 120–33.
8. Levine, *From Indifference to Activism*, p. 120.
9. Svanberg and Tyden, *Sverige och förintelsen*, p. 39.
10. For example, *Svenska Dagbladet* [hereafter SvD], 15, 18 and 19 April 1945; *Dagens Nyheter* [hereafter DN], 19, 20 and 21 April 1945. See also Max Liljefors, *Bilder av Förintelsen: Mening, Minne, Kompromettering* (Lund: Palmkrons, 2002), pp. 22–3.
11. *Göteborgs handels – och sjöfartstidning* [hereafter GHT], 21 April 1945.
12. SvD, 18 April 1945.
13. DN, 20 April 1945.
14. DN, 21 April 1945. See also SvD, 20 April 1945.
15. I wish to thank Göran Leth for pointing this out to me.
16. *Expressen*, 26 April 1945. For a lengthier account of *Expressen's* photo display as well as the role of photographs in Sweden's Holocaust memory, see Liljefors, *Bilder av Förintelsen*, pp. 22–33.
17. *Expressen*, 29 April 1945.
18. *Stockholms-Tidningen* [hereafter StT], 14 April 1945.
19. Göran Leth, 'The Construction of Indifference: The Swedish Press and Kristallnacht', *Yad Vashem Studies*, 36: 2 (2008); Sven Hedin et al., *Det kämpande Tyskland* (Lund: Dagens Böcker, 1941).
20. StT, 19 April 1945.
21. *Expressen*, 23 April 1945.
22. Koblik, *The Stones Cry Out*, pp. 134–5.
23. For the polemics of the Swedish rescue mission to Germany the literature is abundant – and contentious. See, for example, Ingrid Lomfors, *Blind Fläck. Minne och glömska kring Svenska röda korsets hjälpsats i Nazityskland 1945* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2005); Koblik, *The Stones Cry Out*, Chapter 4; Sune Persson, 'Folke Bernadotte and the White Busses', in David Cesarani and Paul Levine (eds), *Bystanders to the Holocaust, A Re-evaluation* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), pp. 237–71; Folke Bernadotte, *Slutet: Mina humanitära förhandlingar i Tyskland våren 1945 och deras politiska följder* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1945);

- Felix Kersten, *The Kersten Memoirs, 1940–1945*, with an introduction by H. R. Trevor-Roper (London: Hutchinson, 1956); Norbert Masur, *En Jude talar med Himmler* (Stockholm: Bonniers, 1945).
24. One of the earliest collections of survivor testimonies from the camps was conducted in Sweden in 1945. See Gunhild and Einar Tegen, *De dödsdömda vittna. Enquetesvar och intervjuer* (Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 1945).
  25. *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19.
  26. *DN*, 25 April 1945.
  27. Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief*, p. 255.
  28. Barbie Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 126.
  29. Alf W. Johansson, *Den nazistiska utmaningen. Aspekter på andra världskriget*, 5th edn (Stockholm: Prisma, 2000), p. 256.
  30. *StT*, 25 April 1945.
  31. *StT*, 26 April 1945.
  32. *Dagposten*, 2 May 1945. *Dagposten* was the main Swedish paper supporting German Nazism and the Swedish National Socialist Party, *SNF* (*Sveriges Nationella Förbund*). See, for example, Stephane Bruchfeld, 'Grusade drömmar. Svenska "nationella" och det tyska nederlaget 1945'. Online Publication Documentation System for Uppsala University. [http://www.hist.uu.se/historikermote05/program/Politik2/P27\\_Bruchfeld.pdf](http://www.hist.uu.se/historikermote05/program/Politik2/P27_Bruchfeld.pdf) [last accessed 29 July 2007].
  33. *DN*, 3 May 1945. Emphasis in original.
  34. *DN*, 3 May 1945. Emphasis added. See also *SvD*, 27 April 1945 'Sample card of circumstances in Jew camp' (Provkarta på förhållandena i judelägren). Under this subheading of the article, the reporter tells how the conditions in Buchenwald can be used to imagine what conditions in 'Jew camps' like Auschwitz and Grossrosen might have been. On the whole, the reporter believes that Buchenwald is only a small part of network of German camps.
  35. For example, see *SvD*, 2 May 1945; *DN*, 3 May 1945.
  36. For example, *DN* headline on 3 May 1945 reads 'New clothes for 16,000 prisoners'.
  37. *DN*, 3 May 1945.
  38. *DN*, 4 May 1945.
  39. *DN*, 22 April 1945.
  40. Ingrid Lomfors' recent book on the White busses is a scathing work on the expedition's effects on non-Scandinavians. For example, Neuengamme, because of its geographical location, was selected as the central collection point of all Scandinavian inmates, which meant that over 2,000 non-Scandinavians, mainly French, had to be relocated so as to make room for the Scandinavians. For the French, the relocation ended in a humanitarian catastrophe. See Lomfors, *Blind Fläck*, *passim*. For the French, see pp. 143–62.
  41. Stig Hjalmarsson, quoted in Lomfors, *Blind Fläck*, p. 52.
  42. Lomfors, *Blind Fläck*, p. 40. Emphasis in original.
  43. *SvD*, 4 May 1945.
  44. *DN*, 4 May 1945.
  45. For Sweden and the Winter War, see especially Alf Johansson, *Finlands sak. Svensk politik och opinion under vinterkriget 1939–1940* (Stockholm: Allmänna förlaget, 1973). For the 'Finnish question' in Swedish politics, see



- Krister Wahlbäck, *Finlandsfrågan i Svensk politik 1937–1940* (Stockholm: Nordstedt, 1964).
46. Mikael Byström, 'En talande tystnad? Ett antisemitisk bakgrundsbrus i riksdagsdebatterna 1942–1947', in Lars M. Andersson and Karin Kvist Geverts (eds), *En problematisk relation? Flyktingpolitik och judiska flyktingar i Sverige 1920–1950* (Uppsala: Historiska institutionen, Uppsala universitet, 2008), pp. 129–30.
  47. Svanberg and Tyden, *Sverige och förintelsen*, p. 251.
  48. *Ibid.*, pp. 312–25.
  49. SvD, 2 May 1945. See also DN, 3 May 1945. They account for 16,000 survivors, 'out of which more than 6,000 are Danish and Norwegians'.
  50. See, for example, the *Expressen* article '[My] most dreadful memory' on 5 May 1945. On pages 6 and 7 is a collection of survivors' memories. Most of them are recollections of Scandinavians.
  51. DN, 5 May 1945.
  52. *Ibid.*
  53. DN, 21 April 1945.
  54. DN, 22 April 1945.
  55. DN, 18 April 1945.
  56. DN, 22 April 1945.
  57. *Ibid.*
  58. StT, 27 April 1945.
  59. See *Expressen*, 25 and 28 April 1945.
  60. SvD, 28 April 1945.
  61. DN, 4 May 1945.
  62. DN, 27 April 1945.
  63. GHT, 24 November 1945. The analysis is analogous to Samuel Igra's account, which holds that 'homosexualism' explained an 'attitude towards human life which expresses itself in that seemingly ineluctable life-destroying urge manifested by the Germans towards helpless persons'. See Samuel Igra, *Germany's National Vice* (London: Quality Press, 1945), p. 10.
  64. StT, 28 April 1945.
  65. For the British representation of Josef Kramer and Irma Grese, see, for example, Kushner, 'Belsen in History and Memory', in Reilly et al. (eds), *Belsen in History and Memory*, pp. 181–205.
  66. DN, 27 April 1945.
  67. DN, 5 May 1945.
  68. DN, 27 April 1945.
  69. DN, 3 May 1945.

## 4 The Finnish Press and the Liberation of the Concentration Camps

1. For example, Markku Jokisipilä, 'Introduction', in Robert Alftan, *Aseveljet. Saksalais-Suomalainen Aseveljeys 1942–1944* (Juva: WSOY, 2005), p. 23. He writes that since Finland never came across 'Hitler's real Germany' it is understandable that many Finns viewed the information on German brutality

- as exaggerated Allied propaganda. See also Marianne Junila, *Kotirintaman aseveljeyttä. Suomalaisen siviiliväestön ja Saksalaisen sotaväen rinnakkaiselo Pohjois-Suomessa 1941–1944* (Helsinki: SKS, 2000), pp. 168–80.
2. Gunnar Åselius, 'Sweden and Nazi Germany', in Ekman and Åmark, *Sweden's Relations with Nazism*, p. 55.
  3. Michael Burleigh, *The Third Reich: A New History* (Basingstoke and Oxford: Pan Books, 2001), p. 429.
  4. Finnish–German relationship is one of the most researched – and debated – topics in modern Finnish history, meaning that the literature is also burgeoning. The most up-to-date examination of Finland in the Second World War in English is Tiina Kinnunen and Ville Kivimäki (eds), *Finland in WWII: History, Memory, Interpretations* (Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill, forthcoming).
  5. Markku Jokisipilä, *Aseveljiä vai liittolaisia? Suomi, Hitlerin Saksan liittosopimusvaatimukset ja Rytin-Ribbentropin sopimus* (Helsinki: SKS, 2004), p. 30; Junila, *Kotirintaman aseveljeyttä*, pp. 168–80, esp. p. 175. For a recent evaluation of Finland and the Holocaust, see Holmila, 'Finland and the Holocaust – A Reassessment'.
  6. See Antti Kujala, *Vankisurmat: Neuvostosotavankien laittomat ampumiset jatkosodassa* (Helsinki: WSOY, 2008); Oula Silvennoinen, *Salaiset aseveljet: Suomen ja Saksan turvallisuuspoliisiyhteistyö 1933–1944* (Helsinki: Otava, 2008); Lars Westerlund, *Saksan vankileirit Suomessa ja raja-alueilla 1941–1944* (Helsinki: Tammi, 2008) and Osmo Hyytiä, 'Helmi Suomen maakuntien joukossa': *Suomalainen Itä-Karjala 1941–1944* (Helsinki: Edita, 2008).
  7. Lars Westerlund, *Sotavankien ja siviili-internoitujen sodanaikainen kuolleisuus Suomessa: Muonahuolto, tautisuus ja Punaisen Ristin toimetomuuks 1939–44* (Helsinki: SKS, 2009), p. 12.
  8. Hyytiä, 'Helmi Suomen maakuntien joukossa', p. 67.
  9. Sinikka Wunsch argues that the modern image of Russia as Finland's nemesis has a long historical pedigree, deriving from 'the Great Wrath in 1714–1721, a period in Finland's history when it was occupied by Russia as a result of the Great Northern War'. See Sinikka Wunsch, 'Lupa vihata – propaganda ja viholliskuvat mielipiteen muokkaajina konfliktitilanteissa', *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja*, 2 (2003), pp. 170–1. See also Heikki Luostarinen, *Perivihollinen. Suomen oikeistolehdistön Neuvostoliittoa koskeva viholliskuva sodassa 1941–44: Tausta ja sisältö* (Tampere: Vastapaino, 1986).
  10. For example, see Heikki Luostarinen, 'Finnish Russophobia: The Story of an Enemy Image', *Journal of Peace Research*, 26: 2 (1989), pp. 123–37; Outi Karemaa, *Vihollisia, vainoojia, syöpäläisiä. Rasistinen venäläisviha Suomessa 1917–1923* (Helsinki: Suomen Historiallinen Seura, 1998). For a gender aspect, see Johanna Valenius, *Undressing the Maid. Gender, Sexuality and the Body in the Construction of the Finnish Nation* (Helsinki: SKS, 2004). Among other things, the book argues that the imaginary Finnish Maid (Suomineito) who was a symbol of Finnish nation, an eternal virgin, was raped by the Russians.
  11. Kari Immonen, *Ryssästä saa puhua ... Neuvostoliitto suomalaisessa julkisuudessa ja kirjat julkisuuden muotona 1918–1939* (Helsinki: Otava, 1987), passim.
  12. Eino Pietola, *Sotavangit Suomessa 1941–1944* (Jyväskylä: Gummerrus, 1987), pp. 246–7.

13. Cited in Vehviläinen, *Finland in the Second World War*, p. 89; see also Ohto Manninen, *Suomi Toisessa Maailmansodassa. Suomen Historia 7* (Espoo: Weilin-Göös, 1987), p. 341.
14. *Helsingin Sanomat*, 1 September 1941. Cited in Perko, *Aseveljen kuva*, p. 88.
15. Simo Muir, 'Anti-Semitism in the Finnish Academe. Rejection of Israel-Jakob Schur's PhD dissertation at the University of Helsinki (1937) and Åbo Akademi University', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 34: 2 (2009), pp. 142–3; Karmela Bélinki, 'Shylock in Finland: The Jew in the Literature of Finland 1900–1979', *Nordisk Judaistik*, 1–2 (2000), pp. 45–55.
16. Max Jakobson, *Väkivallan vuodet I. 20. Vuosisadan tilinpäätös* (Helsinki: Otava, 1999), p. 328.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 318–28.
18. Sakari Lappi-Seppälä, *Haudat Dnjeprin Varrella. SS-Miehen Päiväkirjan Lehtiä* (Helsinki: Kirjapaino AA, 1945), pp. 215–17.
19. For example, see Rautkallio, 'Cast into the Lion's Den', pp. 53–94; Jakobson, *Väkivallan Vuodet I*; and Petri Raivo, 'Oblivion without Guilt: The Holocaust and Memories of the Second World War in Finland', in Judith Tydor Baumel and Tova Cohen (eds), *Gender, Place and Memory in the Modern Jewish Experience: Re-Placing Ourselves* (London and Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 2003), pp. 108–25.
20. Rony Smolar, *Setä Stiller Valpon ja Gestapon välissä* (Helsinki: Tammi, 2003), p. 184.
21. It is important to remember that since late September 1940 there were *both* Soviet and German troops in Finland. The former were there as a result of the peace terms of the Winter War, which meant, among other things, that Finland had to lease the Hanko peninsula and allow Soviet troops to be transited through southern Finland. The latter had obtained the right to transit its troops on leave from Norway through Finland and from Finnish ports to Germany. The contract was ratified on 22 September 1940, and was in reality the first step in the Finnish–German military–political relationship.
22. Junila, *Kotirintaman aseveljeyttä*, pp. 175 and 180.
23. Jakobson, *Väkivallan Vuodet I*, p. 376.
24. Jakobson writes in his *Väkivallan Vuodet* that Finnish Jews during the Second World War (including himself) did not know about Hitler's war on Jews. This also testifies to the strength of anti-Bolshevik rhetoric in Finland. See Jakobson, *Väkivallan Vuodet I*, p. 373.
25. Perko, *Aseveljen Kuva*.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
27. *Ilta-Sanomat* [hereafter *IS*], 12 April 1945.
28. *Uusi Suomi* [hereafter *US*], 18 April 1945.
29. *IS*, 14 April 1945.
30. *IS*, 10 April 1945.
31. *Helsingin Sanomat* [hereafter *HS*], 20 April 1945.
32. *US*, 19 April 1945. See above the same quote from *Dagens Nyheter*, 18 April 1945. Cf. 51, p. 73.
33. *Ibid.*
34. *US*, 21 April 1945.
35. *HS*, 27 April 1945.
36. *Ibid.*

37. *US*, 21 April 1945.
38. For example, the diaries of Eino Kilpi (editor-in-chief of *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti*) and Sylvi-Kyllikki Kilpi (a Soc. Dem MP, and the wife of Eino Kilpi) are totally absent from any comments about the liberations – despite the fact that they were much better informed about the plight of the Jews than ordinary people. In contrast, their diaries, especially Mrs Kilpi's, are full of comments about the refugees' situation in Finland in late 1942. This fact, again, exemplifies the importance of personal contacts with the events. See Finnish National Archives, Kilpi Eino ja Sylvi-Kyllikki, Files 7 and 11.
39. *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* [hereafter *SSd*], 1 May 1945.
40. *US*, 22 April 1945.
41. For a good analysis of the situation in Germany in the later stages of war, see Robert Gellately, *Backing Hitler. Consent and Coercion in Nazi Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), Chapter 10.
42. See Lappi-Seppälä, *Haudat*, quoted here. Cf. 13, p. 84.
43. *SSd*, the leading social democratic paper in Finland, had as early as 4 January 1942 proposed in its editorial that Finland should seek a separate peace. However, the censorship would not have allowed the paper to write that Germany was likely to lose the war. See also Jakobson, *Väkivallan vuodet I*, p. 342; Väinö Tanner (Soc. Dem.), a Minister of Finance, had warned the members of the Foreign Policy Group (*Ulkoasiainvaliokunta*) in November 1942 that they should not count on German victory. See Ilkka Seppinen, 'Saksan sotaonni kääntyy', in Jorma Järventaus (ed.), *Suomi sodassa. Talvi- ja jatkosodan tärkeät päivät* (Helsinki: Valitut Palat, 1983), pp. 314–15.
44. Unofficially, the Finnish government had been gauging German opinion for the chance to conclude a separate peace treaty with the Soviet Union since spring 1943. See Seppinen 'Saksan sotaonni kääntyy', p. 315.
45. Although the Finnish military was well aware of the German brutality, this information was never publicly discussed. See Jokisipilä, 'Johdanto', in Alftan, *Aseveljet*, pp. 20–51.
46. Kansallisarkiso (the Finnish National Archives, hereafter KA), Valpo II/121. Tilannekatsaus No. 8.
47. Jokisipilä, 'Johdanto', in Alftan, *Aseveljet*, p. 45.
48. *HS*, 30 April 1945.
49. For example, see Sharf, *The British Press*, pp. 20 and 83; Roy Greenslade, *The Press Gang: How Newspapers Make Profit from Propaganda* (London: Macmillan, 2003), pp. 27–8.
50. *HS*, 3 May 1945.
51. *IS*, 25 April 1945. See also *SSd*, 12 May 1945, which refers to a 're-education propaganda' in the 'sick Germany'.
52. *Uusi Aika*, 26 April 1945.
53. The article can be found at KA, VTL Di19, Lehtikatsaus No. 88 & 87.
54. *IS*, 4 May 1945.
55. *Aamulehti* [hereafter *AL*], 4 May 1945.
56. Esko Salminen has noted that in the Finnish press the letters to the editor sections were 'colourless' between 1944 and 1948. 'Politics was almost an unknown topic', he writes. Instead, items that were lost and found and prices of household goods formed the majority of the discussion. See Salminen, *Aselevosta kaappaushankkeeseen*, p. 97.

57. *US*, 8 May 1945.
58. *Ibid.*
59. *HS*, 8 May 1945.
60. See *US* and *SSd*, 8 May 1945. The story of Auschwitz first appeared in *Pravda* in early February 1945, following the liberation by the Red Army, and was important in forming the future frame of reference with regard to Auschwitz. See Robert Jan Van Pelt, *The Case for Auschwitz: Evidence from the Irving Trial* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002), pp. 158–64.
61. See *US* and *SSd*, 8 May 1945.
62. These archives include KA (National Archives), Valpo II/121 (the State Police's monthly reports on public opinion 1945, and KA, VTL Db1 1.4.1945–30.6.1945 (the State Information Bureau's daily reports).

## 5 Responding to the Nazi Crimes: The British Press and the Nuremberg Trial

1. For example, see Bradley E. Smith, *Reaching Judgment at Nuremberg* (London: André Deutsch, 1977), pp. 46–73. Sidney Alderman, while meriting the negotiations as successful, commented that the Russians 'would agree to a matter one day and repudiate the agreement the next'. See Sidney S. Alderman, 'Negotiating on War Crimes Prosecutions, 1945', in Raymond Dennett and Joseph E. Johnson (eds), *Negotiating with the Russians* (Boston: World Peace Foundation, 1951), p. 53.
2. For the four-power negotiations that finally culminated in the Charter, see, for example, Ann and John Tusa, *The Nuremberg Trial* (New York: Atheneum, 1986), pp. 50–90; Smith, *Reaching Judgment*, esp. Chapters 2 and 3; Marrus, *The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial*, pp. 18–70; and Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial*, esp. pp. 17–28.
3. Comma substituted in place of semicolon by Protocol of 6 October 1945 [note in original]. Cited in Marrus, *The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial*, p. 52.
4. International Military Tribunal (hereafter IMT), *Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg 14 November 1945–1 October 1942*, 42 vols (Nuremberg: International Military Tribunal, 1947), 1, pp. 10–16.
5. *The Times*, 9 August 1945.
6. At the beginning of his opening speech, Jackson argued that 'civilization cannot tolerate their being ignored [crimes of the Nazis], because it cannot survive their being repeated'. IMT 2, p. 99. For a similar point made in the Nordic press, see Antero Holmila, 'Portraying Genocide: The Nuremberg Trial, the Press in Finland and Sweden and the Holocaust, 1945–46', *Acta Societatis Martensis*, 1 (2006), p. 209.
7. MO, D 3663, Directive Respondents [hereafter DR] for September 1946; MO, D 5124, DR for September 1946; MO, D 5090, DR for September 1946.
8. MO, D 3677, DR for September 1946. Emphasis in original.
9. Herf, *Divided Memory*, passim.
10. Marrus, 'The Holocaust at Nuremberg', pp. 5 and 41.
11. Leon Poliakov, *Le Procès de Nuremberg* (Paris: Julliard, 1971), p. 209 cited in Marrus, *The Nuremberg War Crimes Trials*, p. 192.

12. Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial*, p. 2 and passim.
13. Marrus, 'The Holocaust at Nuremberg', p. 5.
14. Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial*, p. 47.
15. *The Daily Express*, 1 October 1946.
16. For the role of legal processes as didactic and historical instrument, see Martti Koskenniemi, 'Between Impunity and Show Trials', *Max Planck Yearbook of United Nations Law, Yearbook*, 6 (2002), pp. 1–35.
17. MO, D 5447, 23 November 1945.
18. Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial*, esp. pp. 149–81.
19. The opening of the Nuremberg trial was reported by about 250 journalists from 11 different countries. See Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial*, p. 95 and Robert Siegel, *Im intresse der Gerechtigkeit. Die Dachauer Kriegsverbrecherprozesse 1945–1948* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 1992), p. 41.
20. *The Daily Telegraph*, 20 November 1945.
21. *The Daily Herald*, 20 November 1945.
22. *The Daily Express*, 20 November 1945.
23. MO, D5403, 20 November 1945.
24. *The Manchester Guardian*, 24 November 1945.
25. *The Manchester Guardian*, 22 November 1945.
26. *The Daily Mirror*, 21 November 1945.
27. Gustav M. Gilbert, *Nuremberg Diary* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1995), pp. 30–1.
28. *The Daily Herald*, 23 November 1945.
29. *The Daily Express*, 30 November 1945.
30. Douglas, *The Memory of Judgement*, pp. 26–7.
31. *The Daily Mirror*, 2 October 1946.
32. *The Daily Express*, 2 October 1946.
33. *The Manchester Guardian*, 1 October 1946.
34. R. W. Cooper, *The Nuremberg Trial* (Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1947), p. 175.
35. *The Daily Telegraph*, 15 March 1946; *The Daily Herald*, 27 July 1946 and *The Manchester Guardian*, 2 October 1946.
36. *The Daily Express*, 18 March 1946.
37. Richard Overy, *Interrogations. The Nazi Elite in Allied Hands, 1945* (London and New York: Allen Lane, the Penguin Press, 2001), p. 149. For an Allied interest in him, see esp. pp. 143–53.
38. MO, D 5403, 20 November 1945.
39. *The Daily Herald*, 22 March 1946.
40. For example, see *The Daily Telegraph*, 22 March 1946.
41. For example, see *The Daily Express*, 21 March 1946 and *The Daily Herald*, 27 March 1946.
42. For example, see *The Daily Telegraph*, 8 January and 21 March 1946; *The Daily Express*, 11 December 1945, 3 January and 22 March 1946; *The Manchester Guardian*, 3 January 1946.
43. *The Daily Mirror*, 19 March 1946.
44. *The Daily Herald*, 19 March 1946.
45. MO, D5372, 18 April 1945.
46. IMT 2, p. 118.
47. *The Times*, 21 November 1945.
48. *The Daily Herald*, 15 December 1945.

49. *The Daily Mirror*, 15 December 1945.
50. *The Daily Mirror*, 3 January 1946.
51. *The Manchester Guardian*, 4 January 1946. See also *The Times*, 4 January 1946.
52. *The Daily Express*, 5 January 1946.
53. *The Daily Telegraph*, 5 January 1946.
54. For example, Marrus, *The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial*, pp. 201–2.
55. *The Daily Express*, 5 January 1946.
56. See also Hilary Earl, 'Scales of Justice: History, Testimony and the *Einsatzgruppen* Trial at Nuremberg', in Jeffry Diefendorf (ed.), *Lessons and Legacies*, Vol. VI: *New Currents in Holocaust Research* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2005), pp. 325–51.
57. *The Manchester Guardian*, 14 December 1945. According to Marrus, Major William Walsh's presentation on the destruction of the Warsaw ghetto 'was almost certainly the most extensive publicity the world had yet received for the 1943 Jewish revolt'. Unfortunately, this does not apply to the British press, while Marrus's assertion is applicable to the Swedish and Finnish press. See Marrus, *The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial*, p. 193.
58. *The Daily Telegraph*, 15 December 1945.
59. IMT 4, pp. 194–252.
60. *The Daily Telegraph*, 21 December 1945. The document under discussion is Document 2273-PS, Exhibit USA 487. See IMT 4, pp. 245–7.
61. See Marrus, 'The Holocaust at Nuremberg' (online version, see note 342), p. 23.
62. See for example, Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial*, p. 110; Marrus, 'The Holocaust at Nuremberg' (online version), p. 11.
63. Trial against Josef Kramer and 44 others was conducted under the Royal Warrant, which meant that the court acted under British auspices, not under the IMT. For the Belsen Trial and Auschwitz, Anita Lasker's and Dr Bendel's testimonies are noteworthy and can be found in the press. See, for example, *The Manchester Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Daily Herald* and *The Daily Telegraph*, all 2 October 1945.
64. Kushner, 'The Memory of Belsen', in Reilly, *Belsen in History and Memory*, pp. 183–4.
65. *The Daily Express*, 29 April 1946.
66. See also Bloxham, 'The missing camps of Aktion Reinhard', in Peter Gray and Kendrick Oliver (eds), *The Memory of Catastrophe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 118–31.
67. *The Daily Telegraph*, 15 December 1945.
68. *The Daily Express*, 19 October 1945.
69. *The Daily Express*, 28 February 1946.
70. *The Daily Herald*, 5 December 1945.
71. For example, see *The Daily Mirror*, 2 October and 14 December 1945.
72. *The Daily Herald*, 8 February 1946.
73. *The Daily Telegraph*, 4 February 1946.
74. *The Daily Express*, 5 September 1946.
75. *The Manchester Guardian*, 7 March 1946.
76. *The Daily Express*, 28 February 1946.
77. Stig Dagerman, *Tysk Höst* (Stockholm: P.A. Nordstedt & Söners Förlag, 1947).

78. Quotations have been taken from the English translation, *German Autumn*.
79. Stig Dagerman, *German Autumn* (London: Quartet Books, 1988), p. 13.

## 6 Victors, Vanquished and Neutrals: The Swedish Press and the Nuremberg Trial

1. See Salminen, *Aselevosta Kaappaushankkeeseen*, pp. 79–88.
2. For a good discussion on international military trials, genocide and history, see Koskeniemi, 'Between Impunity and Show Trials', pp. 1–35.
3. Tom Bower, *Blind Eye to Murder: Britain, America and the Purging of Nazi Germany – A Pledge Betrayed* (London: Little, Brown, 1995).
4. Frank M. Buscher, *The U.S. War Crimes Trials Programme in Germany, 1946–1955* (New York and London: Greenwood, 1989), p. 22.
5. Gordon Dean to Justice Robert Jackson, 11 August 1945. Cited in Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial*, p. 17.
6. Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Viking, 1963), p. 233.
7. *StT*, 21 November 1945.
8. Victor Vinde, *Nürnberg i blytljus* (Stockholm: Bonniers, 1946), p. 28.
9. *DN*, 21 and 22 November 1945.
10. Douglas, *The Memory of Judgment*, pp. 26–7.
11. *Expressen*, 20 January 1946.
12. Ian Kershaw, cited in Neil Gregor (ed.), *Nazism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 207.
13. For example, Omer Bartov, *The Eastern Front, 1941–1945: German Troops and the Barbarization of Warfare* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1985); Theo J. Schulte, *The German Army and Nazi Policies in Occupied Russia, 1941–1945* (Oxford and New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989).
14. Gilbert, *Nuremberg Diary*, p. 48.
15. *StT*, 13 December 1945.
16. *SvD*, 30 April 1946.
17. Marrus, 'The Holocaust at Nuremberg' (online version, see note 57, Chapter 5), pp. 13–14.
18. Vinde, *Nürnberg*, p. 58.
19. *StT*, 15 March 1945.
20. *DN*, 23 June 1946.
21. *DN*, 27 July 1946.
22. See *SvD*, 15 May and 1 September 1946.
23. Vinde, *Nürnberg*, p. 42.
24. *StT*, 28 March 1946.
25. Koskeniemi, 'Between Impunity and Show Trials', p. 2.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 14. See also a special issue on Genocide and International law, *Journal of Genocide Research*, 9: 2 (2007).
27. *SvD*, 20 November 1945.
28. See Chapter 2, pp. 00–00. [73–5]
29. Douglas, *The Memory of Judgment*, p. 20; D. Bloxham, 'The Genocidal Past in Western Germany and the Experience of Occupation, 1945–6', *European History Quarterly*, 34: 3 (2004), p. 315; Haberer, 'History and Justice', p. 492 and passim.



30. *StT*, 25 November 1945.
31. *Expressen*, 10 January 1946.
32. *Expressen*, 16 February 1945.
33. *StT*, 28 March 1946.
34. *StT*, 18 April 1946.
35. Vinde, *Nürnberg*, p. 131.
36. *StT*, 3 April 1946.
37. *Expressen*, 6 April 1946.
38. Vinde, *Nürnberg*, p. 38.
39. *SvD*, 2 October 1946.
40. *DN*, 2 October 1946.
41. *Ibid.*
42. Dagerman, *German Autumn*, pp. 9–10.
43. *Expressen*, 9 March 1946.
44. Dagerman, *German Autumn*, p. 10.
45. On this point even Marrus and Bloxham agree. However, beyond that, it is a matter of interpretation whether the IMT did a plausible job in covering the Holocaust.
46. *StT*, 22 November 1945.
47. *SvD*, 14 December 1945.
48. *DN*, 14 December 1945.
49. *StT*, 14 December 1945.
50. The press published the figure of 2 million, while according to Gordon Horwitz around 100,000 people were killed in the camp. See Gordon J. Horwitz, 'Places Far Away, Places Very Near: Mauthausen, the Camps of the Shoah, and the Bystanders', in Omer Bartov (ed.), *The Holocaust: Origins, Implementation, Aftermath* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 208.
51. *Expressen*, 9 April 1946.
52. Vinde, *Nürnberg*, p. 185. Emphasis added. Vinde had already earlier discussed the destruction of the ghetto, arguing that the killing of innocent men, women and children by troops armed to the teeth, and then making it into a heroic tale, represented 'the deepest depravity to which any nation or tribe had ever sunken'. See, p. 57.
53. *StT*, 15 December 1945.
54. *DN*, 15 December 1945.
55. *DN*, 21 December 1945.
56. *SvD*, 4 January 1946.
57. *StT*, 4 January 1946. See also note 50, Chapter 5. It is significant to point out that this news was told, almost word for word, in Britain too, for it manifests the importance the press attached to this story.
58. For example, when Justice Francis Biddle, a senior member of the American prosecution team at Nuremberg, saw Eichmann's name in a draft of the Tribunal's judgment, he wrote in the margin 'who was he?' Cited in David Cesarani, *Eichmann: His Life and Crimes* (London: William Heinemann, 2004), p. 1.
59. Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. Arendt coined the term 'banality of evil' used in her subtitle to describe the frightening ordinariness with which genocide was perpetrated.
60. Marrus, 'The Holocaust at Nuremberg' (online version), pp. 22–3.

61. On the death toll, especially murdered Jews, of Auschwitz, see Franciszek Piper, 'The Number of Victims', in Yisrael Gutman and Michael Berenbaum (eds), *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), pp. 61ff.
62. For example, see *GHT*, 16 April 1946; *DN*, 16 April 1946.
63. *StT*, 2 October 1946.

## 7 The Nuremberg Trial in the Finnish Press Discourse

1. See for example, *HS*, 18 September; 2, 7, 8, 9, 16 and 30 October; 17 and 18 November 1945.
2. Jukka Tarkka, 13. *Artikla: Suomen sotasyllisyyskysymys ja liittoutuneiden sotarikospolitiikka vuosina 1944–1946* (Helsinki: WSOY, 1977), passim; also J. K. Paasikivi's diary, Yrjö Blomstedt and Matti Klinge (eds), *Paasikiven Päiväkirjat, 1944–1956, I Osa 28.6.1944–24.4.1949* (Helsinki: WSOY, 1985), pp. 248–9. Entries for 22 and 24 November 1945.
3. The group came into being in autumn 1943, and consisted of mainly Western sympathisers. The name derives from their view that the government was not interested in a process of concluding a separate peace. In contrast, they stood in opposition and for a quick peace.
4. These eight were: Risto Ryti (President of Finland, 1940–4), Prime Ministers J. W. Rangell and Edwin Linkomies, Ministers Henrik Ramsay, Väinö Tanner, Antti Kukkonen, and Tyko Reinikka, and Finland's Ambassador to Berlin, Toivo M. Kivimäki.
5. Salminen, *Aselevosta kaappaushankkeeseen*, p. 118.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
7. Tarkka, 13. *Artikla*, pp. 64–5.
8. For example, see Jukka Tarkka, 'Sotasyllisyyskysymys', in Järventaus (ed.), *Suomi sodassa*, pp. 488 and 490.
9. Veikko Huttunen, *Talvisodasta turvakokoukseen* (Porvoo: WSOY, 1974), p. 273; Salminen, *Aselevosta kaappaushankkeeseen*, p. 119.
10. *Vapaa Sana*, 8 December 1945. Insofar as Finland's relationship to the Holocaust is concerned, J. W. Rangell's actions are worth noting. When Himmler was visiting Finland in 1942, he asked about the situation with the Jews in Finland. Rangell replied his now often-cited words: 'In Finland there are roughly a couple of thousand Jews, decent families and individuals whose sons are fighting in our army like the rest of the Finns and who are respected citizens as all the rest. I concluded my statement with the words, "Wir haben keine Judenfrage."' After this episode the Jewish Question was not discussed again. On the other hand, it is worth bearing in mind that in this matter there is only Rangell's word of what had happened. Generally speaking, however, his word has been seen as trustworthy, and no evidence to the contrary has come to light. For a detailed examination, see Rautkallio, *The Holocaust*, pp. 159–79. In contrast, Bárdossy was intimately involved in enacting Hungary's anti-Jewish legislation as well as authorising the mass killing of Jews in Novi Sad, in Hungarian-occupied Serbia.
11. *US*, 17 November 1945.
12. *SSd*, 16 November 1945.

13. *Vapaa Sana*, 19 December 1945.
14. *Expressen*, 16 November 1945.
15. *StT*, 10 January 1946.
16. For example, see *AL*, *HS*, *US* and *SSd*, 11, 12, 14 and 15 December 1945.
17. *SSd*, 12 December 1945.
18. *HS*, 21 November 1945.
19. *SSd*, 17 November 1945.
20. Salminen, *Aselevosta Kaappaushankkeeseen*, p. 120.
21. *HS*, 22 November 1945.
22. *IS*, 21 November 1945.
23. *US*, 19 October 1945.
24. For example, Renée Poznanski refers to the ghetto uprising as 'paradigm of Jewish resistance'. See Renée Poznanski, 'Reflections on Jewish Resistance and Resistance in France', *Jewish Social Studies* 2 (1995), p. 128. It is also worth observing that the anniversary of the uprising also marks Israel's national day of Holocaust remembrance, Yom Hashoah, as Yisrael Gutman noted in *Resistance: The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising* (Boston, MA: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1994), p. 258.
25. For example, John Hershey, *The Wall* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950) and Leon Uris, *Mila 18* (London: Heinemann, 1961).
26. For a good recent analysis on the difficulty of resistance, see Rachel L. Einwohner, 'Opportunity, Honour, and Action in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943', *American Journal of Sociology*, 109: 3 (2003), pp. 650–75.
27. *IS*, 14 December 1945.
28. *SSd*, 15 December 1945. See also *IS*, 14 December 1945 and *US*, 14 and 15 December 1945.
29. *HS*, 15 December 1945.
30. *AL*, 15 December 1945.
31. IMT 3, p. 553.
32. *HS*, 21 December 1945.
33. *SSd*, 21 December 1945.
34. *HS*, 3 January 1946; see also *US*, 3 January 1946; for the full version of Gräbe's powerful and disturbing testimony, see IMT 19, p. 508.
35. *AL*, 3 January 1946.
36. *AL*, 4 January 1946.
37. *HS*, 4 January 1946. See also *US*, 3 January 1946.
38. For example, *HS*, 11, 17 and 19 January 1946; *SSd* 9, 12, 17 and 19 January 1946; *US*, 17 January 1946; *IS*, 17 January 1946.
39. *HS*, 29 January 1946.
40. Marrus, *The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial*, p. 157; Tusa and Tusa, *The Nuremberg Trial*, pp. 193–4.
41. *SSd*, 19 January 1946 and *US*, 19 January 1946.
42. *US*, 28 November 1945.
43. Douglas, *The Memory of Judgment*, pp. 78–9.
44. On the other hand, as Marrus has noted, there was also ambivalence among the Jews themselves as to how they should/could present dispassionate proof of their suffering. See Marrus, *The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial*, pp. 192 and Douglas, *The Memory of Judgment*, p. 282, cf. 17.
45. Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial*, p. 102.

46. *AL*, 16 April 1946.
47. *HS*, 16 April 1946.
48. *US*, 16 April 1946.
49. *US*, 27 and 28 July 1946; *HS*, 26 July 1946. It is significant to point out that on Shawcross's closing argument the Final Solution forms a focal point. Moreover, it was not an accident, but a deliberate strategy to give a painful and personalised (he reiterated Gräbe's emotional testimony) face to the Nazi crime, which otherwise, owing to its scale, seemed to defy any personal representation.
50. *AL*, 28 July 1946.
51. *US*, 23 September 1946.
52. *US*, 1 October 1946.
53. *HS*, 1 October 1946.
54. *HS*, 3 October 1946.
55. *SSd*, 3 October 1946.
56. For example, see *IS*, 2 October 1946, *HS*, *SSd* and *US*, 3 October 1946.
57. Sigmund Freud, 'Screen Memories' (1899), *Standard Edition of The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 2, ed. and trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1962), pp. 303–22.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 306.
59. Patrick H. Hutton, 'Sigmund Freud and Maurice Halbwachs: The Problem of Memory in Historical Psychology', *The History Teacher*, 27: 2 (1994), pp. 147–8.
60. Freud, 'Screen Memories', p. 322.
61. For example, see Silvennoinen, *Salaiset aseveljet*; Henrik Meinander, *Suomi 1944. Sota, yhteiskunta, tunnemaishetki* (Helsinki: Siltala, 2009). Jokisipilä, 'Suomalainen historiallinen myytti', *Tieteessä tapahtuu*, 2 (2006), pp. 16–22.
62. For the Russian POWs, see Antti Kujala, *Vankisurmat*. For the civilians in the occupied Eastern Karelia, see Hyttiä, 'Helmi Suomen maakuntien joukossa'.
63. *HS*, 20 September 2003.
64. For the most recent synthesis of Finland and the Holocaust, see Antero Holmila, *Holokausti. Tapahtumat ja tulkinnat* (Jyväskylä: Atena, 2010), Chapter 7. See also Antero Holmila, 'A Different Story Altogether? Finland and the Holocaust: A book review of Hannu Rautkallio's *Holokaustilta Pelastetut*', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 40: 2 (2006), pp. 186–8.
65. Tom Söderman, 'Förintelsen – hur stor är vår skuld?' *Nya Argus*, 8 (2003). For a more in-depth investigation of Finland's collective memory of the Holocaust and the Second World War, see Holmila, 'Varieties of Silence: Collective Memory of the Holocaust in Finland', in Tiina Kinnunen and Ville Kivimäki (eds), *Finland in World War Two: History, Memory, Interpretations* (Brill, forthcoming); and Oula Silvennoinen, 'Still Under Examination: Coming to Terms with Finland's Alliance with Nazi Germany', *Yad Vashem Studies*, 37: 2 (2009), pp. 67–92.

## 8 The Problem of Displaced Jews and the Holocaust

1. *Suomen Kuvalehti*, 16 (1945), p. 426.
2. Zorach Wahrhaftig, *Uprooted: Jewish Refugees and Displaced Persons after Liberation* (New York: Institute of Jewish Affairs, 1946), p. 39.

3. For example, see Yehuda Bauer, *Out of the Ashes: The Impact of American Jews on Post-Holocaust European Jewry* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1989), p. 45. By early 1947 the figure of Jewish DPs peaked at 250,000.
4. *AL*, 3 July 1946.
5. *Expressen*, 4 October 1945.
6. Sharf, *The British Press and Jews*, p. 191.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 192.
8. Susan L. Carruthers, *Winning Hearts and Minds: British Governments, the Media and Colonial Counter-insurgency 1944–1960* (London and New York: Leicester University Press, 1995), p. 62.
9. Arie J. Kochavi, *Post-Holocaust Politics: Britain, the United States, and Jewish Refugees, 1945–1948* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), p. 89.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 89; Michael Brenner, *After the Holocaust: Rebuilding Jewish Lives in Postwar Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 11.
11. Mark Wyman, *DPs: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945–1951* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1998), p. 135.
12. Kochavi, *Post-Holocaust Politics*, p. 89.
13. Cited in Wyman, *DPs*, p. 136. For the full report, see, for example, Leonard Dinnerstein, *America and the Survivors of the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), Appendix B, pp. 291–305. It is also accessible online at [http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/truman\\_on\\_harrison.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/truman_on_harrison.html) [last accessed 19 June 2007].
14. For the US Administration, the report formed a cornerstone for its Palestine policy between 1945 and 1948. See Kochavi's discussion on the Harrison Report in *Post-Holocaust Politics*, pp. 89–97.
15. *The Manchester Guardian*, 1 October 1945.
16. For example, see *The Manchester Guardian*, 29 September 1945.
17. *The Daily Herald*, 2 October 1945.
18. *DN*, 30 September 1945; Wyman, *DPs*, p. 135.
19. *GHT*, 1 October 1945.
20. *StT*, 1 October 1945.
21. *DN*, 3 October 1945.
22. Kochavi, *Post-Holocaust Politics*, p. 91.
23. General Patton's anti-Semitic remarks on Jewish DPs are particularly infamous. After a visit to a DP camp in September 1945 Patton wrote: 'We entered the synagogue which was packed with the greatest stinking bunch of humanity I have ever seen. ... Either the Displaced Persons never had any sense of decency or they else they lost it all during their period of internment by the Germans. My personal opinion is that no people could have sunk to the level of degradation these have reached in the short space of four years.' See Brenner, *After the Holocaust*, p. 15. For a good discussion on anti-Semitism among the US occupational authorities, see Suzanne Brown-Fleming, "'The Worst Enemies of a Better Germany': Postwar Antisemitism among Catholic Clergy and U.S. Occupational Forces', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 18: 3 (2004), pp. 379–401.
24. *US*, 1 October 1945.
25. *GHT*, 1 October 1945.
26. *The Daily Telegraph*, 1 October 1945.

27. *GHT*, 1 October 1945.
28. *HS*, 1 October 1945.
29. *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 October 1945; *Dagens Nyheter*, 2 October 1945; *Svenska Dagbladet*, 2 October 1945.
30. Anita Lasker-Wallfisch, *Inherit the Truth 1939–1945* (London: Giles de la Mare, 1996), p. 85 and 157–63. See esp. p. 158.
31. See, for example, *The Manchester Guardian*, 2 October 1945; *The Daily Express*, 2 October 1945; *The Daily Herald*, 2 October 1945.
32. For example, see *Expressen*, 4 January 1946.
33. *The Manchester Guardian*, 4 January 1946.
34. *The Daily Telegraph*, 7 January 1946. For literature on postwar anti-Semitism in Poland, there are a number of excellent studies available. See, for example, Jan T. Gross, *Fear: Anti-Semitism in Poland after Auschwitz: An essay in historical interpretation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); Jan T. Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of a Jewish Community in Poland* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001); Lucjan Dobroszycki, *Survivors of the Holocaust in Poland: A Portrait Based on Jewish Community Records* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1994); Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Neutralizing Memory: The Jew in Contemporary Poland* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1989).
35. *DN*, 11 January 1946.
36. *SvD*, 3 January 1946.
37. *AL*, 6 January 1946.
38. *Vapaa Sana*, 11 January 1946.
39. *Ibid.*
40. *US*, 5 January 1946.
41. Natalia Aleksion, 'Rescuing a Memory and Constructing a History of Polish Jewry: Jews in Poland 1944–1950', *Jews in Russia and Eastern Europe*, 54–5: 1–2 (2005), p. 11.
42. *HS*, 16 January 1946.
43. *HS*, 4 January 1946; *US*, 30 April 1946; *US*, 26 June 1946; *IS*, 5 July 1946.
44. For example, see *IS*, 6 July 1946. The total number of victims in Kielce is 41 or 42. According to Pieter Lagrou, the number is 42. See 'Return to a Vanished World: European Societies and the Remnants of Jewish Communities, 1945–1947', in David Bankier (ed.), *The Jews Are Coming Back: The Return of the Jews to their Countries of Origin after WWII* (New York and Oxford: Beghahn Books, 2005), p. 8. Wyman fixes the number at 41. See Wyman, *DPs*, p. 144.
45. For a full discussion on Cold War rhetoric and the Holocaust, see Chapter 10 below.
46. *The Manchester Guardian*, 15 July 1946.
47. *AL*, 6 July 1947.
48. *Expressen*, 6 July 1947.
49. *HS*, 12 January 1946.
50. *SSd*, 12 January 1946.
51. *HS*, 19 February 1947.
52. *Ibid.*
53. Ariel J. Kochavi, 'Britain's Image Campaign against the Zionists', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 36: 2 (2001), p. 293.
54. *The Daily Telegraph*, 21 December 1945.
55. *The Daily Express*, 5 January 1946. Emphasis added.

56. *The Manchester Guardian*, 4 January 1946. A letter to the editor by Leonard Cohen.
57. *The Manchester Guardian*, 13 September 1945.
58. Cited in Carruthers, *Winning Hearts and Minds*, p. 46.
59. Cited in *Ibid.*, p. 31.
60. *IS*, 19 December 1946.
61. For example, Ruth Gruber, *Exodus 1947: The Ship That Launched a Nation* (New York: Times Books, 1999).
62. Idith Zertal, *Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood*, p. 44.
63. Ruth Gruber, *Destination Palestine: The Story of the Haganah Ship Exodus 1947* (New York: Current Books, 1948).
64. Gruber, *Exodus 1947*.
65. Aviva Halamish, *The Exodus Affair: Holocaust Survivors and the Struggle for Palestine* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1998); Idith Zertal, *From Catastrophe to Power: Holocaust Survivors and the Emergence of Israel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).
66. Zertal, *Israel's Holocaust*, p. 45.
67. *SvD*, 19 July 1947.
68. *SSd*, 19 July 1947.
69. *The Daily Telegraph*, 21 July 1947.
70. *The Daily Mirror*, 21 July 1947.
71. *SvD*, 21 July 1947.
72. For example, see *The Daily Telegraph*, 23 July 1947.
73. *The Manchester Guardian*, 23 July 1947.
74. Kochavi, *Post-Holocaust Politics*. For Bevin at the Labour Party conference and its repercussions, see pp. 114–15 and for the elections, see, for example, pp. 97, 100–1 and esp. pp. 119–33.
75. *The Daily Telegraph*, 18 October 1946.
76. Cited in Kochavi, *Post-Holocaust Politics*, p. 101.
77. *Ibid.*, for example, pp. 23, 100 and 122–4.
78. *Expressen*, 30 July 1947.
79. *IS*, 30 July 1947.
80. *The Daily Herald*, 2 August 1947.
81. Cited in Nicholas Bethell, *The Palestine Triangle: The Struggle between the British, the Jews and the Arabs 1935–48* (London: André Deutsch, 1979), p. 336.
82. *GHT*, 2 August 1947.
83. Kochavi, *Post-Holocaust Politics*, p. 149.
84. For the British government policy on DPs and illegal immigration to Palestine, see Kochavi, *Post-Holocaust Politics*, esp. pp. 60–86.
85. *The Daily Express*, 1 August 1947.
86. *The Times*, 1 August 1947.
87. Carruthers, *Hearts and Minds*, pp. 24–71.
88. *The Daily Express*, 5 August 1947.
89. *The Daily Telegraph*, 4 August 1947.
90. *The Manchester Guardian*, 4 August 1947.
91. Tony Kushner, 'Anti-Semitism and Austerity: The August 1947 Riots in Britain', in Panikos Panay (ed.), *Racial Violence in Britain in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London and New York: Leicester University Press, 1996), pp. 150–70.

92. MO, File Report 2515: 'Report on Attitudes to Palestine and the Jews, September 1947'.
93. MO, D5447, 5 August 1947.
94. *Expressen*, 3 August 1947.
95. Gruber, *The Ship that Launched a Nation*, pp. 170–1.
96. For example, see *The Daily Telegraph*, 9 September 1947.
97. *AL*, 8 September 1947.
98. *The Daily Express*, 11 September 1947.
99. For example, *HS*, 7 September 1947; *GHT*, 6 September 1947.
100. *The Manchester Guardian*, 8 September 1947.
101. *HS*, 10 September 1947.
102. *GHT*, 10 September 1947.
103. *The Daily Express*, 11 September 1947.
104. *Expressen*, 8 September 1947.
105. *The Daily Telegraph*, 9 September 1947.
106. Zertal, *From Catastrophe to Power*, p. 244.
107. *The Daily Express*, 9 September 1947.
108. *Expressen*, 8 September 1947.
109. *SvD*, 11 September 1947.
110. *US*, 10 September 1947.
111. Lomfors, *Blind Fläck*, p. 23.
112. Koblik, *The Stones Cry Out*, p. 138; according to Sune Persson there are two 'Jewish lists' containing the figures 3,303 and 3,775. See Sune Persson, *Viåker till Sverige: De vita bussarna 1945* (Rimbo: Fischer & Co., 2002), p. 482.
113. Lars Olsson, *På tröskeln till folkhemmet: Baltiska flyktingar och polska koncentrationslägerfångar som reservarbetskraft/i skånskt jordbruk kring slutet av andra världskriget* (Lund: Morgonrodnad, 1995), p. 26.
114. Kochavi, 'Britain's Image Campaign against the Zionists', pp. 293 and 305.

## 9 The Holocaust, the Founding of Israel and the Arab-Israeli War in the British, Swedish and Finnish Press

1. Walter Harrelson and Randall Falk, *Jews and Christians: A Troubled Family* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), p. 139.
2. Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 242.
3. Novick, *The Holocaust*, p. 77. See also Zertal, *Israel's Holocaust*, p. 3.
4. Wyman, *DPS*, p. 155.
5. Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, p. 248.
6. Novick, *The Holocaust*, esp. pp. 78–84. See also Zertal, *From Catastrophe to Power*, *passim*.
7. Novick, *The Holocaust*, p. 80. See also p. 69: 'Those who have survived the Holocaust are not the fittest.'
8. For example, see Laurence J. Silberstein (ed.), *New Perspectives on Israeli History: The Early Years of the State* (New York: New York University Press, 1991); Zertal, *From Catastrophe to Power*; Yehuda Bauer, *Flight and Rescue: Brichah* (New York: Random House, 1970); Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin (eds),



- The Israel–Arab Reader: A Documentary History of the Middle East Conflict*, 6th edn (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2001).
9. *The Daily Mirror*, 17 November 1945.
  10. *Suomen Kuvalehti*, 16 (1945), p. 426. This commentary is based on Swedish Jew, Hugo Valentin's book *Judiska Folkets Öde* (Stockholm: Bonniers, 1944).
  11. Ossi Kuoppala, *Antisemitismi ja sionismi Suomen juutalaisessa aikakauslehdistössä vuosina 1908–1948* (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Helsinki, 1982), p. 140.
  12. MO, File Report 2515, September 1947. On 3 December 1946, a Mass-Observation diarist had written in her diary: '[a]s more and more lads are killed there [in Palestine], I begin to wish we had started the war a bit later, so that Hitler would have exterminated a few more Jews ... our benevolent attitude doesn't seem to stop their murderous deeds'. See MO, D5447, 3 December 1946.
  13. For example, Tiina Kirkas, *Helsingin päivälehtien suhtautuminen Palestiinan kysymykseen Yhdistyneiden Kansakuntien jakopäätöksestä 1947 Israelin sodan päättymiseen 1949* (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Helsinki, 1989), p. 34.
  14. *The Daily Herald*, 29 September 1948.
  15. *The Daily Telegraph*, 1, 3, 4, and 5 December 1947.
  16. Harrelson and Falk, *Jews and Christians*, pp. 139–40.
  17. For example, see Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist–Arab Conflict, 1881–2001* (New York: Vintage, 2001), p. 219.
  18. Caunt, cited in Greenslade, *Press Gang*, p. 43. See pp. 41–4 for an account of the British press and the suffering of the Jews.
  19. See David Leitch, 'Explosion at the King David Hotel', in Michael Sissons and Philip French (eds), *The Age of Austerity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 59–61.
  20. *The Daily Express*, 15 May 1948.
  21. *The Daily Herald*, 15 May 1948.
  22. *The Manchester Guardian*, 15 May 1948.
  23. See Gunnel Rikardsson, *The Middle-East Conflict in the Swedish Press. A Content Analysis of Editorials in Three Daily Newspapers, 1948–1973* (Lund: Esselte Studium, 1978), pp. 103–6.
  24. *StT*, 2 December 1947.
  25. *GHT*, 1 December 1947.
  26. *GHT*, 4 December 1947.
  27. *Expressen*, 17 May 1948.
  28. *DN*, 16 May 1948.
  29. *DN*, 18 May 1948.
  30. *Ibid.*
  31. See also Dalia Ofer, 'Holocaust Survivors as Immigrants: The Case of Israel and the Cyprus Detainees', *Modern Judaism*, 16: 1 (1996), pp. 1–23, esp. pp. 6–7.
  32. Taimi Torvinen, *Kadimah*, p. 175.
  33. *Ibid.*, p. 178.
  34. *Ibid.*
  35. *US*, 16 May 1948.
  36. *SSd*, 21 May 1948.

37. Summa was one of the main battlefields in the Winter War in 1939–40. In the Finnish war narrative it denotes Finnish heroism in the face of overwhelming adversity.
38. *US*, 24 July 1949.
39. According to James L. Gelvin, the narrative of the war as David versus Goliath has been challenged by the 'New Historians' in Israel since the 1980s. See James L. Gelvin, *The Israel–Palestine Conflict: One Hundred Years of War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 129–34. See also, Ilan Pappé, *The Israel/Palestine Question (Rewriting Histories)* (London: Routledge, 1999).
40. Kirkas, 'Helsingin päivälehtien suhtautuminen', p. 53.
41. Anu-Elina Kiviranta, *Kirottu ja Valittu Kansa. Juutalaiset ja Saksan juutalais-politiikka Suomen kirkollisessa lehdistössä toisen maailmansodan aikana* (Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Helsinki, 2005), p. 57.
42. Esko Salminen, *The Silenced Media: The Propaganda War between Russia and the West in Northern Europe* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1999), passim.
43. *Ibid.*, passim.
44. Dalia Ofer, 'Linguistic Conceptualization of the Holocaust in Palestine and Israel, 1942–53', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 31: 3 (1996), p. 581.
45. Tom Segev, *The Seventh Million: The Israelis and the Holocaust* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994), p. 435.
46. Koestler's reports formed the basis of his 1949 book, *Promise and Fulfilment. Palestine 1917–1949* (London: Macmillan, 1949).
47. *The Manchester Guardian*, 26 June 1948; *GHT*, 26 June, 1948.
48. *The Manchester Guardian*, 14 September 1948.
49. *The Manchester Guardian*, 19 November 1948.
50. *The Daily Herald*, 10 November 1948.
51. For a good recent account on how the Holocaust's meaning has changed in the Israeli body politic, see Zertal, *Israel's Holocaust*.
52. *US*, 2 July 1948. Emphasis added.
53. *The Daily Telegraph*, 3 February 1949.
54. *GHT*, 6 August 1948.
55. Henrik Bachner, *Återkomsten: Antisemitism i Sverige efter 1945* (Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1999), pp. 70–2 and passim.
56. For example, see his discussion on Johan Hansson, the founder and the editor of publishing company Natur och Kultur, pp. 72–83.
57. Mats Deland, 'Har vänstern bidragit till antisemitismen', *Aftonbladet*, 24 November 1999. Also available online: <http://www.aftonbladet.se/vss/kultur/bokbanken/recension/0,2024,9127076415,00.html> [last accessed 18 September 2007].
58. Rikardsson, *The Middle-East Conflict in the Swedish Press*, pp. 103–6; Bachner, *Återkomsten*, pp. 90–2.
59. *DN*, 18 September 1948.
60. For example, see *The Daily Express* and *The Daily Herald*, 18 September 1948.
61. *The Daily Mirror*, 18 September 1948. See also *The Daily Herald*, 18 September 1948.
62. For example, see *The Daily Mirror*, 20 September 1948.
63. *The Daily Telegraph*, 20 September 1948.

64. *The Daily Express*, 20 September 1948.
65. For example, Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust*, p. 247.
66. 'Jewry's debt to Bernadette – unceasing errands of mercy', *The Times*, 21 September 1948.
67. Teun A. van Dijk, 'Discourse and the Denial of Racism', *Discourse and Society*, 3 (1982), pp. 87–118.
68. *Ibid.*, p. 557.
69. *The Times*, 23 September 1948.
70. *The Times*, 24 September 1948.
71. *Ibid.*
72. Bachner, *Återkomsten*, pp. 72–4.
73. *DN*, 18 September 1948.
74. *SvD*, 18 September 1948.
75. Carruthers, *Hearts and Minds*, p. 63.
76. *StT*, 18 September 1948.
77. *Ibid.*
78. *SvD*, 22 September 1948.
79. *DN*, 18 September 1948.
80. For example, see *HS*, 19 September 1948.
81. Torvinen, *Kadimah*, p. 175; For the Finnish press and Israel, see Kirkas, 'Helsingin päivälehtien suhtautuminen', pp. 32, and 51.
82. *SSd*, 19 September 1948.
83. *SSd*, 20 September 1948.
84. *SSd*, 21 September 1948.
85. *IS*, 18 September 1948.
86. *SSd*, 19 September 1948.
87. *HS*, 19 September 1948.
88. *US*, 18 September 1948. Emphasis added.
89. *AL*, 18 September 1948.
90. *IS*, 18 September 1948.
91. *AL*, 19 September 1948.
92. *Ibid.*
93. Harrelson and Falk, *Jews and Christians*, pp. 139–40.

## 10 Forgetting to Remember: The Press Discourse, the Cold War and Conjectures of Remembrance

1. Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget*, p. 142.
2. Jeffrey Herf uses the term in his *Divided Memory* to describe the period of ca. 1945–1949, when (especially West) German politicians raised and debated the issue of the Holocaust. See, for example, pp. 1–2 and passim.
3. See, for example, Novick, *The Holocaust*, passim.
4. Annette Wieviorka, *The Era of the Witness* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006); Zoe Waxman, *Writing the Holocaust: Identity, Testimony, Representation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
5. Lawson, 'Constructing a Christian History of Nazism', pp. 146–76.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 165.

7. For example, *The Daily Telegraph* published Winston Churchill's memoirs and *Helsingin Sanomat* did the same for Eisenhower.
8. Bo Enander and Franz Arnheim, *Så härskade herrefolket* (Stockholm: Bonniers, 1945).
9. For example, the book's Finnish translation, *Niin hallitsi Hitler* (Helsinki: Union, 1945), was advertised in *Aamulehti* on 15 December 1945.
10. Lawson, 'Constructing a Christian History of Nazism', p. 148.
11. Herf, *Divided Memory*, pp. 208–9.
12. Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p. xxiv.
13. Novick, *The Holocaust*, p. 86.
14. Dominick LaCapra, 'Trauma, Absence, Loss', *Critical Inquiry*, 25: 4 (1999), p. 726.
15. *The Daily Herald*, 28 February 1948.
16. *The Daily Telegraph*, 4 March 1948. Emphasis in original.
17. MO, FR 2493, 'Opinions on Russia', May 1947.
18. *The Daily Express*, 11 March 1946.
19. *StT*, 15 April 1950.
20. Lawson, 'Constructing a Christian History of Nazism', p. 148.
21. Herf, *Divided Memory*, pp. 208–9.
22. A letter from Ben-Zion Dinur to David Ben Gurion, 3 April 1953. Cited in Segev, *The Seventh Million*, p. 431.
23. Orna Kenan, *Between Memory and History: The Evolution of Israeli Historiography of the Holocaust, 1945–1961* (New York: Peter Lang, 2003), p. 45.
24. Lagrou also makes a similar point although in less explicit terms. See 'Victims of Genocide', p. 211 for discussion on 'anti-fascist' and 'anti-communist' camps.
25. *Kauppalehti*, 2 February 1948. To a certain extent, Whitehall used similar kinds of argument in order to bring pressure on Washington to stop supporting the sailings from the Communist Bloc. See Kochavi, *Post-Holocaust Politics*, p. 149.
26. *Vapaa Sana*, 10 August 1952.
27. Marie Syrkin, *Blessed is the Match. The Story of Jewish Resistance* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947).
28. *Vapaa Sana*, 30 May 1951.
29. For example, see *The Times*, 10 December 1948.
30. Arthur K. Kuhn, 'The Genocide Convention and State Rights', *The American Journal of International Law*, 46: 3 (1949), p. 499.
31. Matthew Lippman, 'A Road Map to the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime Genocide', *Journal of Genocide Research*, 4: 2 (2002), p. 178.
32. *The Times*, 10 December 1948.
33. See Chapter 5; Douglas, *The Memory of Judgment*, pp. 46–52.
34. *The Manchester Guardian*, 10 December 1948.
35. *Ibid.*
36. *The Times*, 10 December 1948.
37. For a discussion on Nazism and the Western thought, see, for example, Stone, *Constructing the Holocaust*, pp. 52–81.

38. *The Daily Telegraph*, 14 December 1948.
39. *US*, 13 December 1948. It is worth bearing in mind that even though the West's view on genocide mostly prevailed, some notable concessions had to be made in order to secure the passing of the resolution. Particularly, the USSR was able to get the killing of members of a social class, members of a political or ideological group as well as cultural killings excluded from the Convention's purview.
40. *US*, 13 December 1948.
41. *AL*, 12 December 1948.
42. *AL*, 14 December 1948.
43. *DN*, 12 December 1948.
44. *SvD*, 17 December 1948.
45. *GHT*, 13 December 1948.
46. Lagrou, 'Victims of Genocide', pp. 211–15.
47. Binoy Kampmark, 'Shaping the Holocaust: The Final Solution in US Political Discourses on the Genocide Convention, 1948–1956', *Journal of Genocide Research*, 7: 1 (2005), p. 87.
48. *The Manchester Guardian*, 8 May 1950.
49. *The Daily Express*, 8 May 1950.
50. *DN*, 7 April 1950.
51. Eva Hoffmann, *After Such Knowledge. A Meditation on the Aftermath of the Holocaust* (London: Vintage, 2005), p. 85.
52. *The Manchester Guardian*, 9 May 1950.
53. *HS*, 6 May 1950; *The Daily Telegraph*, 6 May 1950.
54. *The Times*, 9 May 1950.
55. The film was made in 1948, and was David Lean's second screen adaptation of Charles Dickens's works, the first being a successful 1946 film, *Great Expectations*.
56. Sharf, *The British Press*, pp. 152–4.
57. *The Daily Telegraph*, 22 February 1949, cited in Sharf, *The British Press*, p. 153.
58. *The Times*, 23 February 1949.
59. *DN*, 22 February 1949.
60. *Expressen*, 22 February 1949.
61. *SvD*, 22 February 1949.
62. *HS*, 17 April 1950.
63. *US*, 18 April 1950.
64. *The Manchester Guardian*, 21 April 1950. See also *The Times*, 17 April 1950.
65. *The Manchester Guardian*, 12 May 1950.

## Conclusions

1. *StT*, 26 April 1945.
2. Levine, *From Indifference to Activism*, p. 229.
3. The War of Lapland, where the Finns were pitted against the Germans, led to a vast destruction of Lapland's infrastructure, but a small number of victims. For example, unlike in the case of Eastern Europe, people were not summarily executed or enslaved, but allowed to evacuate the war zone. Compared with

other countries that were caught between Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia, it is obvious that Finland's lot was very fortunate.

4. Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial*, p. 225.
5. For the whole issue, especially the case of 'Stalag Luft III', see Priscilla Dale Jones, 'Nazi Atrocities against Allied Airmen: Stalag Luft III and the End of British War Crimes Trials', *Historical Journal*, 41: 3 (1998), pp. 543–65.
6. Smith, *Reaching Judgment at Nuremberg*, pp. 88–9.
7. See also Holmila, 'Portraying Genocide', pp. 206–20.
8. See, especially, Lasse Lehtinen and Hannu Rautkallio, *Kansakunnan sijaiskärsijät. Sotasyllisyyks uudelleen arvioituna* (Helsinki: WSOY, 2005).
9. For *The News Chronicle* and the Harrison Report, see Reilly, *Belsen*, pp. 90–1.
10. See *The Daily Telegraph*, 9 September 1947.
11. Donald Bloxham, 'Punishing German Soldiers during the Cold War: The Case of Erich von Manstein', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 33: 4 (1999), pp. 25–45.
12. MO, FR 2515. Emphasis added.
13. In Norway, Ingjerd Veiden Brakstad's ongoing PhD thesis engages with the question of the Norwegian press and the fate of Jews in the immediate post-war years.
14. Kushner, *Liberal Imagination*, p. 276.

## Appendixes

1. Source: Colin Seymour-Ure, *The British Press and Broadcasting Since 1945* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), pp. 28–9, table 3.2. The circulation of the top 10 national papers was 12,575,000. My selection covers 8,336,000, which is 66 per cent.
2. Source: Lars-Åke Engblom, et al. (eds), *Svenska Pressens Historia IV* (Stockholm: Ekerlids Förlag, 2002).
3. Source: Päiviö Tommila, et al. (eds), *Suomen Lehdistön Historia 3* (Kuopio: Kustannuskiila, 1988), pp. 78–9. Table 11. The circulation of the top 10 national papers in 1948 was 646,200. My selection covers 416,000, which is 64 per cent, thus giving a fairly similar figure to that of the British Press.
4. First half of 1947 examined by the method of random sampling: one week per month has been examined thoroughly.
5. First half of 1947 examined by the method of random sampling: one week per month has been examined thoroughly.
6. First half of 1947 examined by the method of random sampling: one week per month has been examined thoroughly.
7. First half of 1947 examined by the method of random sampling: one week per month has been examined thoroughly.
8. First half of 1947 examined by the method of random sampling: one week per month has been examined thoroughly.
9. First half of 1947 examined by the method of random sampling: one week per month has been examined thoroughly.
10. January–April 1948 examined by the method of random sampling: one week per month has been examined thoroughly.
11. First half of 1947 examined by the method of random sampling: one week per month has been examined thoroughly.

12. January–April 1948 examined by the method of random sampling: one week per month has been examined thoroughly.
13. Dividing editorials into different categories is in some instances an arbitrary process. The division between ‘refugee problem’ and ‘Palestine problem’ is a particularly difficult one, for in many cases editorials cover both aspects, dealing with the issue of Jewish refugees’ immigration to Palestine. The category of refugees here refers primarily to refugee issues other than immigration to Palestine, for example, Jewish refugees in German camps (without discussion about Palestine) and millions of destitute and displaced European persons.
14. For example, the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in 1948, editorials about world politics, other than situation in Palestine.

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*Göteborgs Handels – och Sjöfartstidning*  
*Stockholms-Tidningen*  
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