

**Holocaust Consciousness in New Zealand 1980-2010:
A Study**

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Abstract

This thesis chronicles and examines the major New Zealand specific Holocaust-related issues of the last three decades, in the time period 1980 to 2010. The Holocaust has had a long reaching legacy worldwide since the end of the Second World War. There have been major news items and issues that have brought the Holocaust to the forefront of people's consciousness throughout the decades, the most prominent example being the trial of Adolf Eichmann in 1961. It was major news such as that trial, as well as Hollywood productions such as the TV miniseries *Holocaust* in the late 1970s, that brought about widespread consciousness of the Holocaust worldwide, in countries such as the United States and Australia. In New Zealand, but major Holocaust-related issues connected specifically to New Zealand did not begin to emerge until the 1980s. This thesis investigates, in three chapters, differing issues over the aforementioned time period that have had an impact on consciousness of the Holocaust in New Zealand.

The issues investigated are respectively: the war criminals investigation of the late 1980s and early 1990s, the colonial 'holocaust' argument of the late 1990s and early 2000s, Holocaust denial controversies in New Zealand academia, and the growth and evolution of Holocaust commemoration and education. Although some issues, such as commemoration and education, began earlier, it was not until the 1980s that these issues developed in earnest and a greater number of people began to take notice of the connection of these issues, and in turn New Zealand, to the Holocaust. The main arguments made in this thesis are that New Zealand's consciousness of the Holocaust developed when it did and at the rate it did because of particular aspects of the Jewish community and New Zealand society as a whole, including the geographical isolation of

the country, the size and assimilation of the Jewish and survivor communities here, and the overall attitudes and on occasion apathy and ignorance towards the Holocaust. All of these aspects have influenced, to varying degrees, consciousness of the Holocaust within New Zealand throughout the time period of 1980 to 2010.

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Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iv
Contents	v
Introduction	1
Chapter One: The Australian Influence: War Criminals Controversies and Colonial Arguments	12
Chapter Two: Holocaust Denial and Anti-Semitism in New Zealand	44
Chapter Three: Holocaust Commemoration, Education, and Jewish Identity in New Zealand	78
Conclusion	110
Bibliography	117

Introduction

In 1993, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) opened in Washington DC. It was the culmination of years of organisation and preparations that had begun nearly two decades earlier. The museum now welcomes visitors from all over the world and has played an immeasurable role in Holocaust consciousness in the United States, and to a certain extent worldwide, through its exhibitions, events such as workshops and conferences, and hosting schools and other large visitor groups. New Zealand has had to rely on a variety of different methods to sustain Holocaust consciousness and the growth of it here, as private and government funding for such endeavours is not as accessible here as other countries. Consciousness can be defined as a person's awareness or perception of something.¹ Awareness or perception of an event of such magnitude and emotional impact as the Holocaust stems from a number of different factors, such as the willingness of survivors to talk about their experiences, the prominence of memorial days such as *Yom HaShoah* and International Holocaust Memorial Day within both the Jewish and wider communities, places of remembrance such as memorial plaques, Holocaust-related news items and issues, and movies, television series and documentaries. The opportunity to propagate Holocaust consciousness clearly comes in many shapes and forms and has varying results throughout the world.

The main objective of this thesis is to shed light on an area of scholarship that has been neglected in New Zealand: the role of Holocaust consciousness in wider society, and examinations as to why it did not seem to become fully part of wider consciousness until the 1980s onwards. When comparing international Holocaust related events from 1945 up

¹ R. E. Allen ed. *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 8th edition, Oxford, 1990, p.243

to the present day with events specific to New Zealand, it is clear that while consciousness has ebbed and flowed to an extent over the decades since the Second World War, New Zealand's turning point in consciousness did not occur until the mid 1980s. This could be pinpointed to the 1985 Wellington-based Holocaust commemoration, which was attended by many people including Prime Minister David Lange. There were of course defining moments before this commemoration, such as the trial and execution of Adolf Eichmann in Israel in 1961-62. However, this was an external event, meaning it was based outside New Zealand. And while external events certainly played important roles in bringing consciousness of the Holocaust to the wider New Zealand community, it is the New Zealand specific, internal events that play the most important role in the way in which Holocaust consciousness fully emerged. I will argue foremost that New Zealand, both through its Jewish and non-Jewish communities, displays particular characteristics in the way certain important Holocaust-related events have been approached and handled, ways which distinguish it from other countries but also exhibit close links, especially with countries such as Australia. I will also argue that the Jewish community of New Zealand is singular to this country in a number of ways historically and through its approach to the Holocaust and Holocaust related issues.

The main issues that will be examined relate to an extent to the state and development of Holocaust consciousness in New Zealand within the past three decades, in the time period from 1980 to 2010. This time period was chosen specifically because, in my examination of Holocaust related events and news items worldwide and specifically in this country, there seemed to be a substantial growth in events and news items from the early to mid 1980s onwards. Compared with the international sphere, especially the United States, Britain, and Australia, New Zealand has been apparently late coming with its own type of Holocaust awareness. There have of course been major international news events

that reached New Zealand in some shape or form. Hollywood has also had a large impact, especially since the mid 1970s with for example the miniseries *Holocaust* in 1977, and perhaps most famously *Schindler's List* in 1993. However, these productions not only affected New Zealand audiences but countless millions worldwide, and are therefore while important not a cause for great examination here. What is truly of interest are the events specifically tied to New Zealand. These include memorial events, news controversies, commemorations and news items that tied New Zealand to the Holocaust in a way that cannot be seen in the immediate decades after the Second World War and into the 1970s.

I examine a number of important events related to the Holocaust. The first chapter, *The Australian Influence: War Criminals Controversies and Colonial Arguments*, explores whether the war criminals controversy of the mid 1980s to early 1990s had any kind of effect on the state of Holocaust consciousness in New Zealand, and why the media and public reacted in the manner they did to the issue. The argument surrounding the use of the term 'holocaust' when referring to the suffering of Maori during the colonial period will also be examined. Whether this had any impact on Holocaust awareness and whether the attitudes of many in this debate are related in any way to New Zealand's history with the United Nations Genocide Convention and its attitude towards its own colonial past. I argue that because of New Zealand's history, the country's late discovery and settlement, the way both issues were approached are particular and somewhat different to how both issues have been addressed in Australia, despite the cultural similarities between the two countries.

In the second chapter, *Holocaust Denial and Anti-Semitism in New Zealand*, the Joel Hayward Holocaust denial controversy will be examined, along with two other university and Holocaust-related scandals, the Kupka and van Leuween affairs. I will argue that the media and public reacted the way it did to these controversies because of a deep

seated attitude towards freedom of speech, and also possible ignorance of the Holocaust, brought on by potential factors such as isolation and education. My third chapter, *Holocaust Commemoration, Education, and Jewish Identity in New Zealand*, explores the state of Holocaust commemoration and education in New Zealand. Commemoration and education have been a steadily growing aspect of Holocaust consciousness here, and I will analyse its growth and movement from the Jewish to the wider community; how did it come about? Were there any specific events or people who brought about a growth in commemoration and education? How did the wider public react and what does commemoration's rather slow growth in New Zealand say about the overall state of Holocaust consciousness here? My arguments in this chapter include that New Zealand's unique history of remembrance of past wars could have helped shape how the public approaches Holocaust remembrance, and how it has transitioned from the Jewish to the non-Jewish community in the past decades. Also, this chapter questions whether the particular Jewish identity within New Zealand played an important role in how and when Holocaust commemoration and education grew in the manner it did.

The methodology employed is similar throughout the whole study. Material from a variety of sources within the Jewish and wider communities in New Zealand will be used. First and foremost are newspaper items. The most important source for Jewish news is the nationwide publication the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle*, which was published in Wellington and distributed nationwide from 1944 until 2009. Newspapers from across New Zealand will also play an important role in the investigation of all the aforementioned issues. The *New Zealand Herald*, *Weekend Herald*, *Sunday Star Times*, *Waikato Times*, *Dominion Post*, *Evening Post*, *Dominion*, and *Press* all provide insight into the wider community's attitude towards the issues I will examine. Official documents are also important, the majority of which come from Archives New Zealand and hail from various

government departments. Official documents from the Victoria University Wellington law library pertaining to the war criminals investigation here are also of importance, as are the New Zealand Jewish Council papers relating to commemoration and anti-Semitism. Over the course of my research I conducted interviews with various people who have at some point been involved either directly or indirectly with one or more of the issues examined. These interviews provide very valuable insight into how certain matters played out, and what these interviewees perceive as the overall reaction of not just the Jewish community (of which most are a part) but also the wider community. It is necessary to maintain a critical perspective when examining and interpreting all sources, so that impartiality is preserved and a properly thorough examination of the evidence can take place.

It is extremely important before examining the specific issues to first provide some background on the role of the Jewish community in New Zealand, and in turn the country's relationship with this community. This contextual information is important to help understand the history of New Zealand's Jewish community and its relationship with not only the wider community, but also with the refugees and Holocaust survivors who came from Europe in the 1930s and 1940s. It will also help in understanding wider New Zealand's relationship with, and attitude towards, the Jewish and survivor community and in turn the Holocaust. There has been a Jewish community in New Zealand since the earliest stages of the colonial period, following the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840.² The largest Jewish communities within New Zealand have been those of Auckland and Wellington, and the Wellington community has had the most written about it, perhaps because of its size and the fact that Wellington is the nation's capital.

² Maurice Pitt 'the Early History of the Wellington Jewish Community (1840-1859), in Stephen Levine ed. *A Standard for the People: the 150th Anniversary of the Wellington Hebrew Congregation 1843-1993*, Christchurch, 1995, p.31

Daniel Lazar notes: ‘We have before us a community that has survived for more than 150 years, whose first founders were among the very first Europeans to settle in New Zealand.’³ New Zealand Jewry, according to Levine, ‘arrived rather gradually, its development a matter of decades and demography.’⁴ This could be seen as fairly unique compared to other nations, for example the United Kingdom, which saw large numbers of Eastern European Jews seek refuge there after fleeing the pogroms of their homelands. The first arrivals of Jews into New Zealand took place as early as 1840, and those numbers were very small. Between 1840 and 1843 a very small number of Jews arrived in Wellington, most of whom came either individually or in small family groups.⁵ It was only in 1843 when there was a substantial enough Jewish population that the Wellington Jewish community became a fully established part of the new colony.⁶

Despite the very small population the community has played an active role in wider community affairs, especially in Wellington. As Frank Kitts, ex-Mayor of Wellington, notes in his introduction to Jack Meltzer’s 1974 survey of the Jewish community of the city: ‘We have had a Jewish prime Minister, a Chief Justice and a Mayor, to mention only a few of the important positions in which Jews have given service to the community.’⁷ The prominence of many Jewish people within the wider community is interesting given the somewhat monocultural state of the country through most of its history post European colonisation, monocultural in this context meaning the British influence on the nation, due to it being a British colony, despite numerous immigrants coming from elsewhere, such as China and Yugoslavia in the late 1800s. In comparison to Australia, where according to

³ Daniel Lazar ‘Introduction,’ in Stephen Levine *The New Zealand Jewish Community*, Oxford, 1999, p.2

⁴ Levine p.17

⁵ Pitt, in Levine ed. p.31

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Frank Kitts ‘Introduction,’ in Jack Meltzer *Wellington Jewish Community: a Historical Survey*, Wellington, 1974, p.7

Howard Sachar Jewish refugees ‘experienced only minimal social pressures to conform,’⁸ the cultural climate was perhaps easier for Jews to settle into society without assimilating, especially when there was an already significant thriving population. This could demonstrate how the Jewish community in New Zealand found it easier to assimilate into the dominant culture rather than distinguish themselves from the rest of the population.

Other centres are not left by the wayside. Auckland, the West Coast, Hawkes Bay, Otago and Canterbury are all touched upon in Meltzer’s survey.⁹ Auckland’s Jewish community may have even older origins than that of Wellington, with some evidence revealing that it was visited by a number of Jewish people in the 1830s, and a cousin of Sir Moses Montefiore, the Anglo-Jewish philanthropist, settled in the Bay of Islands in 1831, the same year a J. S. Polack settled in Hokianga.¹⁰ The South Island has had a Jewish community, albeit very small, for many years. Otago and Canterbury are the main centres for Jewish life in the south, with the Canterbury congregation dating from 1864 and the Otago community from around the time of the major gold discoveries in the early 1860s.¹¹ The Jewish community in New Zealand was well established by the time of the Nazi rise to power in Germany in 1933 and the subsequent arrival of refugees and later Holocaust survivors. As mentioned earlier although the Jewish community in New Zealand is small it has contributed greatly to wider society through politics and other areas, on example being the election of a Jewish Prime Minister, Julius Vogel, in 1875.

A brief overview of how the Jewish community has integrated with the wider New Zealand community and how it dealt with the arrival of refugees from Europe and Holocaust survivors in the 1930s and 1940s, is worthy of note. Without this information

⁸ Howard M. Sachar *A History of the Jews in the Modern World*, New York, 2005, p.662

⁹ Meltzer, pp.28-29

¹⁰ Meltzer, p.28

¹¹ Meltzer, p.29

some of the deeper meanings within the aspects of Holocaust consciousness examined here could be lost. The size and character of the Jewish community indicates that some of the ‘typologies appropriate for distinguishing Jews from one another elsewhere have little relevance to the New Zealand Jewish setting.’¹² This means that groups such as *Hasidim*, or ultra-Orthodox Jews, are non-existent here, simply because the Jewish community of New Zealand in general is either simply Orthodox or Reform. This in turn most probably means it has been that much easier for the Jewish community to assimilate into wider society. This ease of assimilation could go some way to explaining prevailing attitudes towards and consciousness of the Holocaust; if New Zealand’s Jewish and survivor community is not as easily visible or vocal as other Jewish communities about Holocaust related issues then it can be harder to spread awareness to the wider community, and could trigger some indifference or even resentment. This idea will be explored further in the coming chapters in relation to specific Holocaust-related events in New Zealand.

The Jewish community in New Zealand leading up to the Second World War was generally quiet but active, as evidenced earlier with the examples of top public service and political positions members of the Jewish community had been appointed to over the years. The subsequent arrival of refugees and later Holocaust survivors from Europe meant that this quietness and assimilation was at times made more difficult by these new arrivals from the European continent. While a small number of refugees and survivors did come to New Zealand, the numbers themselves were severely restricted by New Zealand immigration policy. Settlers of British origin were always preferable although there have also been other groups such as Asians and continental Europeans who have gradually arrived and made their mark, and by 1939, the year the Second World War began, the alien population

¹² Levine, *the New Zealand Jewish Community*, p.21

numbered 8,000 out of 1,640,000.¹³ The realisation of Nazi Germany's policies towards Jews, and the Second World War did virtually nothing to relax the Anglo-centricity of New Zealand's immigration policies. It is estimated that 50,000 refugees applied for permits to enter New Zealand, and in the period 1936-38 1,731 entry applications were declined and 727 applications were granted.¹⁴ These numbers are minimal, especially when compared with the 25,000 Central and Eastern European Jews who settled in Australia between 1925 and 1954.¹⁵ The Jewish community of New Zealand played an active role on behalf of these refugees, but its efforts were toned down by considerations of the policies of the New Zealand government.¹⁶ The harsh policies towards Jewish refugees were mitigated by not only the fact that they were not British but many of them were treated as enemy aliens because of their continental European origins. The situation was similar in Australia, where according to historian Paul Bartrop, upon the outbreak of war 'most of the refugees passed from the status of 'refugee Jews' to that of 'enemy aliens.'¹⁷

This tempering of activism on behalf of the refugees and survivors could have also been influenced by the fact that the New Zealand Jewish community for the most part had difficulty identifying with not only the continental culture of these new arrivals but also with their horrific experiences in their home countries before departure. Most members of the community who did not have close relatives who were persecuted or murdered 'tended to see the events in Europe as a distant horror, similar to the massacres and disasters they would read about in history books.'¹⁸ This could have created a sense of distance from the events in Europe in a personal sense, and also in a more general sense. Because the

¹³ Ann Beaglehole, *A Small Price to Pay: Refugees from Hitler in New Zealand 1936-46*, Kuala Lumpur, 1988 p.4

¹⁴ Beaglehole, *A Small Price to Pay*, p.15

¹⁵ Hilary Rubenstein *Chosen: the Jews in Australia*, Sydney, 1987, p.213

¹⁶ Beaglehole, *A Small Price to Pay*, p.20

¹⁷ Paul Bartrop *Australia and the Holocaust 1933-45*, Glen Waverley Australia, 1994, p.216

¹⁸ Ann Beaglehole & Hal Levine *Far from the Promised Land: being Jewish in New Zealand*, Wellington, 1995, p.15

established Jewish community felt a sense of distance towards the Holocaust, and this sense of distance could have also spread to the wider community. The Jewish community as stated earlier have been quiet and relatively assimilated within the wider community. However, there have been instances when the Jewish community have made their presence known, usually in response to a major news story or event. One example of this is the 1967 Six Day War when some members of the Jewish community made financial contributions towards Israel.¹⁹ Instances related to the Holocaust that I have examined also played a role in the Jewish community becoming more vocal within New Zealand, for example the Joel Hayward thesis controversy.

While the Jewish community has on the whole been rather reticent to become overly vocal about events, perhaps for fear of negative reactions from the wider community, often in the form of anti-Semitism, there have been exceptions to this rule. The Jewish community in New Zealand is not only isolated from world Jewry but also very assimilated, but there have been some Jews who have risen to prominence on a wider community scale. There were also a number of Zionist organisations in New Zealand who aided Holocaust survivors. The Holocaust can appear distant, but from the 1980s onward Holocaust related events particular to New Zealand meant that the events of the Nazi era moved closer to home. The importance of my research in this area is that consciousness of the Holocaust in New Zealand has not been examined in any depth. The Holocaust is also perhaps more important in a New Zealand context than many are actually aware of. For example, many would not know that one of the first Western reports on the Auschwitz and Majdanek camps after their liberation came from a New Zealand diplomat who had been posted to Moscow at the time, Paddy Costello.²⁰ A small number of New Zealand soldiers were also imprisoned in concentration camps, for example Theresienstadt (used mainly as

¹⁹ Beaglehole, *A Small Price to Pay*, p.44

²⁰ James MacNeish *The Sixth Man: the Extraordinary Life of Paddy Costello*, Auckland, 2007

a ghetto), which is now situated in the Czech Republic.²¹ These stories are unknown to many and show the connection the Holocaust has to New Zealand. Perhaps with my research regarding other Holocaust related issues specific to New Zealand more people will become aware of the role the Holocaust has within certain aspects of this country's history and how New Zealand, through its Jewish, survivor, and wider populations, has contributed particular issues to the wider framework of Holocaust consciousness worldwide.

²¹ David McGill *POW: the Untold Story of New Zealanders as Prisoners of War*, Lower Hutt, 1987

Chapter One:

The Australian Influence: War Criminals Controversies and Colonial Arguments

The influence of Australia presides over a number of issues in New Zealand, from the colonial period up to the present day. This influence is sometimes more palpable than many people would care to admit. The controversy in the late 1980s and early 1990s over Nazi war criminals possibly residing in New Zealand, and how to investigate and prosecute them, shows a great deal of influence from Australia's own war criminals investigation. In the debate regarding using the terms genocide and 'holocaust' when examining the colonial period and what happened to the Aboriginal and Maori people, the influence is not as obvious, but still tangible. Both issues have at least some Australian influence. The subject of war criminals has been a worldwide topic of discussion since the end of the Second World War and the Nuremberg Trials; the matter of addressing the wrongs of the colonial past and how to best describe them has become more prominent in more recent decades. Both issues, in a New Zealand context, can be tied to consciousness of the Holocaust through the wider New Zealand public's attitudes towards criminals of the Nazi period, and how issues such as genocide and colonial injustice have been addressed here through important issues such as the ratification of the United Nations Genocide Convention, itself a response to the Holocaust.

The war criminals controversy, which arose in the mid-1980s, will be examined first, followed by the colonial 'holocaust' debate, which occurred in the late 1990s to early

2000s. When investigating both issues media coverage played an important role, especially news articles. Large investigative pieces and interviews contained fraught opinions on the matter of war criminals. Media coverage in newspapers and magazines when MP Tariana Turia made her comments in 2000 was extensive, for the most in the form of opinion pieces and editorials about colonialism and the use of the term ‘holocaust’ in such instances. Despite the fact that the full report on the investigation into potential war criminals is not available, there are some official documents available at libraries and Archives New Zealand which shed valuable light on New Zealand’s relationship with Australia on this issue, and the views of some people involved at the time. The Waitangi Tribunal’s *Taranaki Report* will play an important role as this was the genesis itself of the use of the term holocaust in New Zealand. The views of some interviewees will also play a role in examining views on both issues.¹

The issue of Nazi war criminals possibly residing in New Zealand and the argument about a Maori ‘holocaust’ may not seem related but are joined through the influence of Australia and the arguments and debates that occurred there because of these issues. The New Zealand government closely followed events in Australia through the mid 1980s and the establishment of the team to investigate the Simon Wiesenthal Center’s list of alleged criminals who had found refuge in Australia. The debate over the use of the term ‘holocaust’ in a New Zealand context was occurring at roughly the same time as a similar debate in Australia regarding the country’s treatment of Aborigines. Consciousness of the Holocaust could be defined as a wider public awareness of the Holocaust as a major historical event, which can be cultivated through major news stories or other factors such as commemorations and Hollywood films. I have chosen war criminals and the colonial debate because they both connect in certain respects with New Zealand’s past and present

¹ I have tried to get in contact with MP Turia for an interview but have been unsuccessful, due to the busy schedule she has as an MP and co-leader of the Maori Party.

attitudes towards difficult issues such as how to address wrongs committed to indigenous peoples during the colonial period. What makes New Zealand distinctive in the way in which these two issues may or may not have strengthened Holocaust consciousness? What are the main factors of both issues that influence Holocaust consciousness here? The first issue I will be examining has the most overt Australian influence and also the most tenuous influence on Holocaust consciousness in New Zealand, the war criminals controversy.

The issue of Nazi war criminals possibly living in New Zealand first rose to prominence in the mid 1980s. At that time the government was closely following similar events in Australia. New Zealand was a part of the Displaced Persons Programme, which helped thousands of refugees after the Second World War, for example Balts, about 19,000 of whom were known to have served in the German Armed Forces.² Towards the end of the 1980s the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Jerusalem sent the New Zealand government a list of names of suspected war criminals who may have come to this country.³ Because of these allegations the government set up a small team to investigate the people on the list. The team reported their findings (which are as of 2011 unavailable) and other organisations voiced their opinions about what should be done in these circumstances. Despite Attorney General Paul East's assertion that New Zealand did not want to play 'follow the leader' with regards to the investigation and potential prosecution of suspected war criminals, the influence of Australia's own investigations is apparent upon further examination of the sources available.

Unfortunately scholarly works dealing with the issue of war criminals in countries such as the Australia and New Zealand are not vast; but there is still a small

² J. J. McGrath, *Report on War Crimes Allegations*, Wellington, 1991, p.9

³ Simon Wiesenthal Center, *Understand Simon Wiesenthal Center's Mission*, <http://www.wiesenthal.com/site/pp.asp?c=lsKWLbPJLnF&b=4441257>, last accessed 28 February 2011
The mission of the Center is to confront 'anti-Semitism, hate and terrorism, promotes human rights and dignity, stands with Israel, defends the safety of Jews worldwide, and teaches the lessons of the Holocaust for future generations.'

number of works available about war criminals in other countries. Erich Haberer, for example, argues that the Nuremberg trials failed to ‘capture the true nature of the Nazi state and the Holocaust,’ and consequently the public’s education of the Holocaust was one which marginalised the victims.⁴ Donald Bloxham argues that for decades Nuremberg did not mean much and that the importance of Nuremberg as a precedent for the prosecution of crimes of mass murder and ethnic cleansing has led some to believe that genocide must have been the major impetus for Nuremberg itself.⁵ Scholarship dealing with the war criminals issue in Australia helps explain the government’s and wider public’s attitude to not only the Holocaust and consciousness of it, but also genocide in general. Mark Aarons has chronicled the Nazi war criminals issue in Australia from the immediate post-war period up to the 1980s. He argues that Australia had a problem with alleged war criminals coming into the country under the Displaced Persons Programme. Aarons examines the implications of the *Menzies Report*, which investigated possibly Nazi war criminals finding refuge in Australia and notes that the country has ‘much to be grateful for as a result.’⁶ The New Zealand government followed the progress that stemmed from the report closely, and its implications for Australia.

Great Britain also has some scholarship regarding its own war criminals investigations and the debates and controversies they inspired. Historian David Cesarani has written about the controversy that took place in the mid 1980s, and the subsequent attempt to introduce retroactive legislation to target Nazi war criminals and collaborators. He notes that the debates in Parliament and the British press revealed ‘deeply running and

⁴ Erich Haberer ‘History and Justice: Paradigms of the Prosecution of Nazi Crimes,’ *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, vol.19, no. 3, Winter 2005, p.489

⁵ David Bloxham ‘Milestones and Mythologies: the Impact of Nuremberg,’ in Patricia Heberer & Jürgen Matthäus eds. *Atrocities on Trial: Historical Perspectives on the politics of Prosecuting War Crimes*, Washington DC, 2008, p.273

⁶ Mark Aarons *Sanctuary! Nazi Fugitives in Australia*, Port Melbourne, 1989, p.287

frightening currents of racism in British society.⁷ As with works focusing on Australia, the number of scholarly or journalistic works focusing on Great Britain is very small. The wider comparative approaches to countries and war crimes prosecution has a burgeoning scholarship which focus on a comparative approach to the war criminals issue worldwide. Paul Arnell has compared the legal proceedings of war criminal trials and war crimes legislation in Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom, arguing that the three countries took very different approaches to war crimes legislation.⁸ These comparative approaches show in a sense the similarities and influences other nations' investigations have had on each other and provide a context for the New Zealand experience.

By the time the Displaced Persons (DP) Programme was implemented at the end of the Second World War, Communism had replaced Fascism as the focus of hostility. Although most who arrived in New Zealand and other participating nations were legitimate refugees, an unknown number of others were in fact escaping their countries of origin because of what they had done in collaboration with the Nazis during the war. New Zealand was one of twenty nations represented in a Special Committee which addressed the issue of Refugees and DPs in 1946.⁹ That same year, it was reported that European Jews looked to both New Zealand and Australia to speak for them at a Peace Conference in Paris, with the head of the World Jewish Congress Dr Maurice Perlzweig claiming that both nations 'spoke for humanity's conscience.'¹⁰ In the period from 1949 to 1951 New

⁷ David Cesarani, *Justice Delayed: How Britain became a Refuge for Nazi War Criminals*, London, 2000, p.191

⁸ Paul Arnell, 'War Crimes – a Comparative Opportunity,' *International Relations*, 13:29, 1996, p.32

⁹ 'Twenty nations Given Representation on Uno Speacial Committee on Refugees and DPs,' *Jewish Telegraphic Agency Archive*, 20 Feb 1946, <http://archive.jta.org/article/1946/02/20/2743720/twenty-nations-given-representation-on-uno-special-committee-on-refugees-and-dps>, last accessed 20 June 2011

¹⁰ 'European Jews Look to Australia, New Zealand to Speak for Them at Peace Parley,' *Jewish Telegraphic Agency Archive*, <http://archive.jta.org/article/1946/07/17/2745811/european-jews-look-to-australia-new-zealand-to-speak-for-them-at-peace-parley>, last accessed 20 June 2011

Zealand accepted around 800 DPs from the Baltic States,¹¹ where the majority of the war criminals suspects originated from before being located in DP camps in Germany. One of the major problems with screening for criminals in the Displaced Persons Programme was that there was exhaustive search for German war criminals, which meant that people from Central and Eastern Europe who had participated in Nazi crimes were ignored.¹² This problem was widespread and also compounded by the fact that Communism was the enemy and these people came from countries that were now in the USSR. They came under the pretence of being fiercely anti-Communist, which for the most part they were, and because of this stance along with other factors such as Nordic appearance and apparently good work ethic, they were allowed to enter the country. In essence they were racially preferable.

By 1949 the Cold War was officially under way, and focus had shifted from the fight against Fascism to the fight against Communism. Many émigrés from Central and Eastern Europe concocted false histories and anti-Communist nationalistic slogans in order to enter a new nation under the Displaced Persons Programme.¹³ There were isolated instances over the decades since the first DPs emigrated that shed light on the possibility of war criminals seeking refuge outside of Europe, a problem which was not unique to New Zealand. As early as 1949 the Yugoslav government was sending extradition requests to the Australian government for alleged Nazi war criminals.¹⁴ In the 1960s following the trial of Adolf Eichmann, there were protests to bring other Nazi criminals and collaborators to justice. It was not until the late seventies and into the 1980s that the subject of prosecuting war criminals and collaborators became a larger issue. In 1979 Simon Wiesenthal, the renowned Holocaust survivor, archivist, and Nazi hunter, alleged that a

¹¹ McGrath, p.10

¹² Aarons, p.31

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Aarons, p.131

Lithuanian man who had participated in crimes during the Holocaust was now living in Australia.¹⁵ US Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti announced intensified efforts to trace and deport accused war criminals now residing in the United States.¹⁶ These events show an increase in awareness of the crimes committed by collaborators in Nazi occupied Eastern Europe. War crimes units in Australia, Canada, Great Britain and the United States were created to investigate allegations. Although these units were not identical in terms of organisation and investigative mandate they all included a team of investigators, lawyers, and historians.¹⁷ As David Cesarani notes, by the mid 1980s overt concern regarding Nazi war criminals had spread from larger nations such as Great Britain below the equator to Australia.¹⁸ In Australia the tipping point came in 1986, when the *Menzies Report* was completed.

The *Menzies Report* was the result of an investigation into allegations of suspected Nazi war criminals and collaborators now residing in Australia. Once it was published the Australian government studied the report and in 1987 adopted the main recommendations.¹⁹ An investigative committee was established to probe the allegations of war criminals and collaborators living in Australia. The New Zealand government followed the actions of the Australian government very closely. Archives New Zealand houses files containing all manner of reports, speeches and news items regarding Australia's approach to war criminals. One file is organised under International Affairs and the sub-series Armed Conflict. The file dates from 1986 to 1992, spanning the period of

¹⁵ Aarons, p.269

¹⁶ Aarons, p.270

¹⁷ Haberer, p.507

¹⁸ Cesarani, p.190

¹⁹ Aarons, p.291

New Zealand's own war criminals controversy.²⁰ The file includes copies of the original Australian War Crimes Act of 1945 and the amended Act of 1987, amended after the Australian government reviewed the *Menzies Report*.²¹ There are also copies of fax memos sent from Wellington to Australia (usually Canberra and Sydney). One memo dated February of 1987 mentions a visit to Sydney in April by the then Deputy Solicitor General Craig Thompson to have 'further consultations with the Special Investigations Unit.'²² This shows the clear interest of the New Zealand government in what was happening in Australia.

In July 1988 the New Zealand High Commission in Canberra sent a communiqué to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Wellington, which details the recent happenings regarding the war criminals investigation and the amendment of the Australian War Crimes Act. The question of whether New Zealand will launch its own investigation is raised, as well as whether any of the suspects would be of particular interest to New Zealand.²³ One report also provided background information on the refugee programme in New Zealand in the post-war period, a brief overview of the procedure for admitting people into the Displaced Persons Programme to come here, and some details of intakes of refugees in the years 1949, 1950 and 1951.²⁴ There are also numerous telex messages regarding the Australian investigation, the *Menzies Report*, and media enquiries into whether New Zealand will be investigating any allegations itself; one message, dated 11 June 1986, mentions the Media Minister's belief that 'it is extremely unlikely that any

²⁰ International Affairs - Armed Conflict - Nazi War Criminals [06/1986-03/1992] [Archives reference: ABHS 22128 W5533 Box 53 CBA 41/10/4 part 1 Alternative number 205162] Archives New Zealand Wellington

²¹ Ibid

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

person with Nazi background entered NZ... but this could not be entirely ruled out.²⁵ This belief was not uncommon, but later in the decade it would become clear that there was a pressing need to investigate possible Nazi war criminals, and media exposure was imminent.

Official documents regarding the New Zealand war criminals issue are not numerous. Most of them date from the mid 1980s onwards and examine the potential legal ramifications of prosecuting anyone found to have participated in war crimes. In 1990 the Auckland District Law Society Public Issues Committee published a report regarding the legal issues with investigating and prosecuting war criminals. They conclude that if there is to be any response to war criminals residing here, 'it should be one within the existing laws and legal framework of this country.'²⁶ The official report on the war criminals allegations, written by Solicitor General J. J. McGrath and published in 1991, examines the allegations, analyses the issues, and provides recommendations as to what could or should be done. McGrath notes that 'New Zealand's situation...is exacerbated because we are up to five years behind in approaching this issue.'²⁷ New Zealand, unlike other nations, had a very limited independent screening process for DPs in post-war Europe.²⁸ McGrath also observes that the New Zealand justice system, as of 1991, does not have any 'coherent jurisdiction' over war crimes committed overseas.²⁹ Because of the focus on the legal framework of the war criminals issue and not the historical framework and the importance of bringing these people to justice, the actual crimes are lost amongst the legal rhetoric, as is the opportunity to raise the level of Holocaust consciousness. These crimes included

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Auckland District Law Society Public Issues Committee, *Nazi War Criminals – Some Legal Issues*, Auckland, 1990, p.14

²⁷ McGrath, p.46

²⁸ McGrath, p.10

²⁹ McGrath, p.42

participation in *Einsatzgruppen*, or mobile killing units, and their massacres of Jews in Eastern European countries under Nazi control.

There was some media coverage of the Australian war criminals investigation in New Zealand, partly because of the extensive media coverage it had there. An article from the December 1986 *Dominion* notes Anthony Terry, a former major involved with Britain's war crimes investigation, believed it possible that Nazi war criminals found refuge in New Zealand in part because it is the furthest from Europe as can be.³⁰ Whether a news item like this, in a fairly large newspaper, sparked a growth in consciousness of Nazi crimes and the Holocaust is debatable. What is certain is that large scale media awareness of the possibility of Nazi war criminals and collaborators residing in New Zealand did not appear until about 1990, four years after the Simon Wiesenthal Center sent its first list of suspected war criminals to the New Zealand government. In the mid 1980s the matter received little coverage in New Zealand, and was probably seen as a minor issue at the time. The role the media played in bringing the war criminals issue, and in turn the Holocaust, to the wider New Zealand public is very important. Large articles and investigative pieces were published by various publications from the wider New Zealand media, most notably the *New Zealand Listener* and some newspapers such as the *Evening Post*.

In May 1990 a number of articles appeared in various newspapers regarding the issue of suspected Nazi war criminals residing in New Zealand, and what could or should be done about them. The May 17 *Evening Post* carried a front page article in which a number of perceived obstacles to investigating and prosecuting war criminals, including the cost of launching investigations and prosecutions and the inevitable need to change the

³⁰ 'War villains in NZ likely says major,' *The Dominion*, Wellington, 13 December 1986, p.3

law so that people could be prosecuted retroactively, were raised.³¹ In that same edition of the *Post* there was also an article regarding members of the public offering to ‘dob in’ suspected Nazi war criminals, and the displeased reaction of then External Relations and Trade Minister Mike Moore, who stated that people should think about the implications of pointing fingers at neighbours and friends.³² Further war criminals coverage in the same issue of the *Post* continues with articles about the expense of a trial in Adelaide, and another on those who dedicate themselves to hunting war criminals worldwide.³³ The war criminals issue was prominent for a very short time, and coverage was not sustained for any great period.

The 16 May *Dominion* carried a front page piece regarding the New Zealand government receiving the list of suspected war criminals. Simon Wiesenthal is quoted in the article as hoping that New Zealand would follow Australia’s example by launching a full investigation.³⁴ The next day’s *Dominion* carried another front page article saying more suspects will be named, that in 1986 a list of suspects was being drawn up for the New Zealand government, and that then Prime Minister Geoffrey Palmer had stated that the government had ruled out changing the law to allow trials of war criminals.³⁵ This issue also carried a special feature with multiple articles, covering issues from the costs of Australia’s first war crimes prosecution, to the difficulties of getting evidence for New Zealand’s own investigation.³⁶ In 1991 an investigative team was established in New Zealand and once again the war criminals controversy made it to the front page of the *Dominion*, which noted that a preliminary investigation had found that there was a real

³¹ Ruth Laugesen & John Goulter, ‘War criminals free to go, say law experts,’ *The Evening Post*, Wellington, 17 May 1990, p.1

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Steven Reae, ‘Govt to get Nazi Suspect List today,’ *The Dominion*, 16 May 1990, p.1

³⁵ Matthew Grainger & Simon Kilroy, ‘Nazi hunters say more will be named,’ *The Dominion*, 17 May 1990, p.1

³⁶ *Ibid.*

possibility of war criminals now residing here.³⁷ The *Dominion Sunday Times* carried a large article about the possibility of Australia and New Zealand joining forces in their war criminals investigations.³⁸ This coverage demonstrates that although the war criminals issue certainly made headlines, it did so for only a short period of time. Anthony Hubbard, the only journalist who was prominently involved in reporting on the war criminals issue, states: ‘On the whole they were not interested, some were hostile... no one took an abiding interest, except the *Listener*.’³⁹

In 1990 the *New Zealand Listener* carried some major investigative pieces regarding the war criminals controversy. The first of these was part one of a two-part piece, chronicling Hubbard’s investigation into the allegations of war criminals now residing in this country. These investigations unearthed some unnerving information, including documents ‘alleging the involvement of a Wellington Yugoslav in war crimes in Serbia,’ and also ‘copies of a Serbian Supreme Court document which says the Wellington man was declared a war criminal for crimes against Yugoslav partisans,’ as well as open cooperation with the Nazis.⁴⁰ The article notes that like other nations at the time New Zealand was interested in taking in refugees from the Baltic states, they were anti-Communist, strong physically, and ‘like us.’⁴¹ The second part of this investigation examined the flaws in the immigration scheme which allowed those with a seriously chequered past to gain entry to New Zealand. The article notes in 1948 there were some articles in various newspapers in Australia hinting at the possibility of war criminals hiding in that country, and of anti-Semitic incidents on Displaced Persons ships heading to

³⁷ Simon Kilroy & John Drinnan, ‘Nazi-hunt team to operate for a year,’ *The Dominion*, 18 July 1991, p.1

³⁸ James Gardiner, ‘New Nazi hunt plan,’ *The Dominion Sunday Times*, Wellington, 9 June 1991, p.1

³⁹ Interview by Author with Anthony Hubbard, Wellington, 10 February 2011

⁴⁰ Anthony Hubbard, ‘Murderers Amongst Us?’, *New Zealand Listener*, Auckland, 21 May 1990, p.10

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

Australia.⁴² According to the article, the closest New Zealand got to such a furore was an incident in 1950 in which a young Polish woman jumped overboard on a refugee ship bound for here, apparently because of ill treatment by other passengers.⁴³

The *New Zealand Listener* featured the most coverage of the war criminals controversy, primarily because of Anthony Hubbard and his intense interest in the topic. Nearly a year after the two-part investigation in 1990 there appeared an article which examined the difficulties of tracking a criminal decades after the crime was committed. The article also includes the view of Attorney General Paul East, who favoured extradition, and revealed the Australian government was allowing their war crimes investigation team to assist New Zealand officials with their own investigations.⁴⁴ This assistance demonstrates another area in which our neighbours influenced us in this issue. The wider press gave at least some coverage to the war criminals controversy in the period of 1990 to 1993, after which the issue essentially disappeared. In 2006 the issue arose again in a large piece in the *Sunday Star Times*, again by Anthony Hubbard. This article included an interview with one of the policemen who made up the investigative team in New Zealand, Wayne Stringer. The piece focuses on one man Stringer interviewed in the early nineties, Janus Pukas. The article concludes that ‘it was possible, but unlikely, that Pukas took no part in the killings,’ killings being a massacre of Lithuanian Jews in the early 1940s.⁴⁵

While the wider New Zealand media paid some attention to the war criminals issue, even for a limited period of time, Jewish community publications did not, at least to quite the same extent. The Jewish press in New Zealand is not great in size, but newsletters from various congregations, social clubs, and Zionist groups have circulated widely. The most

⁴² Anthony Hubbard, ‘Sanctuary: How We Let in the War Criminals,’ *New Zealand Listener*, 28 May 1990, pp. 24, 26 & 28

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Anthony Hubbard, ‘Kith and Killers,’ *New Zealand Listener*, 8 April 1991, pp.30-32, p.32

⁴⁵ Anthony Hubbard, ‘The Nazi-hunter’s tale,’ *Sunday Star Times*, 19 March 2006, pp.C1-C2

prominent of these is the nationwide publication the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle*. The December 1987 issue of the *Chronicle* contained two articles regarding war criminals investigations elsewhere in the world. A list from the Simon Wiesenthal Center of the ten most notorious Nazi war criminals believed to still be at large was reprinted by the *Chronicle*, on the same page as an item regarding the apprehension of a war criminal in Argentina.⁴⁶ The June 1990 issue of the *Chronicle* covers the topic of war criminals in New Zealand on its front page, stating that ‘there seems to be little doubt that the matter cannot now be left to rest,’ and that ‘we must trust in the due process of the law.’⁴⁷ Despite this front page coverage the *Chronicle* carried few articles regarding the war criminals issue in this country. The only large article that comes after 1990 is in April 1994, regarding the Nazi sympathies of Dr Reuel Lochore, responsible for alien administration during the Second World War, who held questionable views on Jewish refugees.⁴⁸

The overarching opinion of those interviewed for this chapter was that the war criminals issue was not addressed adequately. Judith Clearwater, former editor of the *Chronicle* from about 1986 to 1994, surmised that the reasons for this lack of attention to the war criminals issue could be that New Zealand is ‘remote...we are very much away from things,’ and that there was ‘an unwillingness to get involved, just sort of a laziness almost, that this was a long time ago and wasn’t in our country.’⁴⁹ David Zwartz, former head of the New Zealand Jewish Council, regards New Zealand’s apathetic attitude towards war criminals as one of ‘a small country which doesn’t want strife.’⁵⁰ Stephen Levine, Professor of Politics and International Relations at Victoria University Wellington, feels that the official attitude at the time, displayed perhaps best by then Attorney General

⁴⁶ ‘Nazi War Criminal Apprehended in Argentina,’ *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle*, Wellington, December 1987, p.13. Hereafter all references citing this paper will contain the abbreviation *NZJC*.

⁴⁷ ‘Hunt for Nazi War Criminals Reaches New Zealand,’ *NZJC*, June 1990, p.1

⁴⁸ ‘Did a Nazi Sympathiser Dictate NZ’s Wartime Policy towards ‘Aliens’?’, *NZJC*, April 1994, pp.9-11

⁴⁹ Interview by Author with Judith Clearwater, Wellington New Zealand, 25 November 2010

⁵⁰ Interview by Author with David Zwartz, Wellington New Zealand, 13 December 2010

Paul East, was that it was not seen ‘in terms of New Zealand playing its role in bringing to justice a group of people for their involvement in these crimes but rather anybody bringing this topic up is a nuisance.’⁵¹ Anthony Hubbard, the journalist who was the most involved in this issue at the time, has strong opinions regarding the wider public’s reaction to the war criminals issue: ‘They [the public] couldn’t see that these old men, if they were war criminals, had committed the most appalling atrocities when they were young, and we should hunt these people to the ends of the bloody earth.’⁵²

The issue of war criminals relates to the wider public’s consciousness of the Holocaust through shedding light on the atrocities that for example apparently ordinary Lithuanians and Latvians oftentimes willingly participated in. These crimes did not take place in the concentration or death camps, but in the open fields and forests of Eastern Europe, often with the willing assistance of locals.⁵³ The influence of the New Zealand war criminals controversy in raising Holocaust consciousness, through letters to the editor or a rise in Holocaust education, is arguable, judging by the evidence from official documents, newspaper items, and the opinions of interviewees. Anthony Hubbard, as stated earlier, was the only member of the media to have dedicated time and effort to investigating the allegations. The issue of Nazi war criminals exploded in a sense for a short period, although it did not really leave a lasting effect on the consciousness of the wider public of the Holocaust itself, if consciousness is measured by the level of wider media coverage and public response. The reasons for this could be the fact that New Zealand is so isolated, or as J. J. McGrath’s official report states, that the country was about five years behind the rest of the world on the issue. At the time of the war criminals issue the New Zealand

⁵¹ Interview by Author with Stephen Levine, Wellington New Zealand, 30 November 2010

⁵² Interview with Anthony Hubbard, Wellington New Zealand, 10 February 2011

⁵³ Omer Bartov ‘Eastern Europe as the Site of Genocide,’ *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 80, no.3, September 2008

Ruth Bettine Birn ‘Collaboration with Nazi Germany in Eastern Europe: the Case of the Estonian Security police,’ *Contemporary European History*, vol. 10, no.2, July 2001

justice system had ‘no coherent jurisdiction over war crimes committed overseas.’⁵⁴ The media interest could have also played a factor; while there were some large articles, most journalists did not seem very sympathetic towards the issue. The matter of war criminals itself could seem very remote for many people, having happened years ago on the other side of the world, and therefore have little lasting impact on Holocaust consciousness here, unlike other issues closer to home such as arguments which arise when the colonial past is compared to the Holocaust.

The issue of using the term ‘holocaust’ when discussing the wrongs imposed upon Maori during the colonial period is not unique to this country. In 1996 the Waitangi Tribunal published the *Taranaki Report*, which called the tragedy of Maori treatment at Parihaka by the colonial army in the nineteenth century a ‘holocaust.’⁵⁵ In Australia in 1997 the *Bringing Them Home* report was published, which examined the catastrophe suffered by the Stolen Generations, the children of Aboriginal women and white men who were forcibly removed from their Aboriginal families during the period from 1910 to 1970, sparking a furious debate in that country about whether what happened to the Aborigines could be called a holocaust or genocide. The Genocide Convention stipulates five methods by which genocide is committed, one of which is taking the children of a certain group away from that group.⁵⁶ In August 2000 then Labour MP Tariana Turia gave a speech stating that Maori suffered from ‘post-colonial traumatic stress disorder’ and what Maori had suffered under colonisation was a ‘holocaust.’ It is clear that the colonial argument for using a term such as holocaust, which has such a deep connection to one particular event, has existed for some time and is not unique to any particular country. The furore that erupted over MP Turia’s comments, through opinion pieces and newspaper reports, is

⁵⁴ McGrath, p.42

⁵⁵ Waitangi Tribunal, *The Taranaki Report Kaupapa Tuatahi*, Wellington, 1996, p.312

⁵⁶ United Nations, *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, New York, December 1948, <http://www.un.org/millennium/law/iv-1.htm>, last accessed 7 March 2011

possibly comparable to the furore that has occurred in Australia through the publication of the *Bringing Them Home* report, due to the division that can be seen amongst the opinions of those in the media and public.

Scholarship regarding the use of 'holocaust' in a colonial context has grown in the last decade or so. The most important scholarship here examines the investigations into the treatment of the Aborigines in Australia from the colonial period through to the late twentieth century. Dirk Moses, among other historians, has written about the Aboriginal genocide debate, and the furore that arises when the word holocaust is brought up.⁵⁷ David B. MacDonald has written about the Maori holocaust debate, examining how the use of the Holocaust by the Waitangi Tribunal and Tariana Turia has a precedent in other countries where marginalised minorities use the Holocaust as a source of comparison for their own sufferings.⁵⁸ Michael Goldsmith has also written about this, arguing that 'it is quite legitimate to argue that there have been holocausts in the Pacific over the last 200 years or so,'⁵⁹ and while these holocausts of the Pacific were for the most part in the form of 'blocking cultural transmission,' the Nazi Holocaust 'accomplished the murder of six million Jews in less than twelve years.'⁶⁰ In the post-1945 world the Holocaust has become a benchmark for all massacres. Neil Levi argues that 'Australian history and memory themselves evoke comparison with the Holocaust' and that memory of the Holocaust can enable a country to face its own history.⁶¹ Patrick Brantlinger argues that the colonial

⁵⁷ Dirk Moses, 'Genocide and Holocaust Consciousness in Australia' *History Compass*, 1, 2003, 001-013

⁵⁸ David MacDonald, 'Daring to Compare: the Debate about a Maori 'holocaust' in New Zealand, *Journal of Genocide Research*, 5(3), September 2003, p.383

⁵⁹ Michael Goldsmith, 'Maori Assertions of Indigeneity, Post-Colonial Traumatic Stress Disorder, and Holocaust Denial' in Erich Kolig and Hermann eds *Politics of Indigeneity in the South Pacific: Recent Problems of Identity in Oceania*, Munster, 2002, p.89

⁶⁰ Goldsmith, p.90

⁶¹ Neil Levi, 'No Sensible Comparison?' The Place of the Holocaust in Australia's History Wars', *History & Memory*, v.19, n. 1, Spring/Summer 2007, p.127

authorities knew what was happening to the Aborigines and deplored it.⁶² The general consensus among many historians is that, according to the UN definition, the treatment of the Aborigines, particularly the Stolen Generations, constitutes genocide.

Scholarly works that examine the comparison used between the Holocaust and the colonial experiences of minorities has also developed over recent years. Jürgen Zimmerer for example states that like Nazism, ‘race and space’ were at the foundation of colonialism.⁶³ These sorts of comparison can be seen in not only work about settler societies in general, but between select colonial societies. Katherine Ellinghaus has compared the assimilation policies of the United States and Australia and the arguments about whether these policies constitute genocide. She argues that using a term such as genocide politicises and complicates discussion regarding the effects of colonial expansion on the original inhabitants of Australia and the United States.⁶⁴ While this comparison does not mention New Zealand, it is nonetheless valuable as a source of assessment and information as to how significant an influence Australia has on New Zealand in this regard. Connections can be made through identifying possible ways the colonial ‘holocaust’ debate has crossed the Tasman, through the influence of the Australian scholars who have examined the genocide debate there and how it can compare with New Zealand’s colonial past. The use of the term ‘holocaust’ has also emerged in recent historical debates surrounding the history of German colonialism, but the scholarship and context used in this chapter originate predominately from the former British Empire.

⁶² Patrick Bratlinger, ‘“Black Armband” versus “White Blindfold” History in Australia,’ *Victorian Studies*, vol. 46, no. 4, Summer 2004, p.669

⁶³ Jürgen Zimmerer, ‘Colonialism and the Holocaust – Towards an Archaeology of Genocide,’ *Development and Dialogue*, n.50, December 2008 p.100

⁶⁴ Katherine Ellinghaus, ‘Biological Absorption and Genocide: A Comparison of Indigenous Assimilation Policies in the United States and Australia,’ *Genocide Studies and Prevention*, vol. 4, no. 1, Spring 2009, pp.59-79, p.60

The issues surrounding the treatment of Maori during the colonial period was something the wider New Zealand public was still coming to terms with in the 1990s. The question of using terms like ‘holocaust’ when describing what happened to indigenous peoples under colonialism transcends national boundaries. Whether this argument played any role in bringing consciousness of the Holocaust itself to the wider New Zealand public is something worth examining further. The first time the issue of the use of the term ‘holocaust’ in a New Zealand context arose was in 1996, when the Waitangi Tribunal published the *Taranaki Report*. The report examined what happened to Taranaki Maori under colonisation, particularly to pacifist Maori protestors at Parihaka in the 1880s. It concluded that evidence describes ‘the holocaust of Taranaki history and the denigration of the founding peoples in a continuum from 1840 to the present.’⁶⁵ In 2000 the Ngati Poa tribe had alleged a ‘holocaust,’ but one that was committed against themselves by another tribe – Ngapuhi – and not British settlers.⁶⁶ However, it was the *Taranaki Report*’s use of the term which became the major issue of contention.

The *Bringing Them Home* report concluded that the child separation policies that took Aboriginal children from their parents to be housed with white families from 1910 to 1970 totalled genocide.⁶⁷ In the wake of the report there were a large number of articles about Australia’s relationship with its indigenous people and how this tied into its treatment of Jewish refugees and Holocaust survivors, with some alleging that in the quest for a ‘racially pure Australia’ successive governments adopted policies to ‘blot out any future Aboriginal presence’ and ‘restrict the entry of Jews.’⁶⁸ The similarities in the

⁶⁵ Waitangi Tribunal, p.312

⁶⁶ MacDonald, p.386

⁶⁷ Giselle Byrnes, & David Ritter, ‘Antipodean Settler Societies and their Complexities: the Waitangi Process in New Zealand and Native Title and the Stolen Generations in Australia,’ *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, vol. 46, no. 1 February 2008, pp.54-78, p.62

⁶⁸ Paul Bartrop, ‘The Holocaust, the Aborigines, and the Bureaucracy of Destruction: an Australian Dimension of Genocide,’ *Journal of Genocide Research*, 3(1), 2001, pp.75-87, p.83

colonial ‘holocaust’ arguments can certainly be seen on the face of these issues. However, the *Taranaki Report* did not have quite the same impact here as *Bringing Them Home* did in Australia. The real firestorm came in 2000 when then Labour MP Tariana Turia used the term ‘holocaust’ in a speech.

On 29 August 2000 Tariana Turia gave a speech at the New Zealand Psychological Society Conference at Waikato University. She addressed what she deemed ‘post-colonial traumatic stress disorder’ suffered by Maori due to colonisation. Midway through she mentions Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and the work that psychologists have been doing with Jewish survivors of the Holocaust, noting: ‘What seems to have not received similar attention is the holocaust suffered by indigenous people including Maori as a result of colonial contact and behaviour.’⁶⁹ Only through the acknowledgement of the ‘holocaust suffered by many Maori tribes during the land wars’ could proper healing occur.⁷⁰ By the time Turia’s speech and its content became widely known, the reaction of the media and its commentators sparked a major debate regarding Turia’s right to use a word like ‘holocaust’ when discussing the injustices suffered by Maori under colonisation, as well as the implication through Turia’s speech that the settlers were like Nazis. The media and public reaction to this issue displays some of the reasoning as to why this matter played a large role in Holocaust consciousness in New Zealand.

Two days before her speech to the Psychological Society Conference a news item appeared in the *Sunday Star Times* which examined her thoughts on the causes behind the high figures of Maori domestic violence, claiming it stems from colonisation and the effects of it suffered by Maori.⁷¹ Five days after Turia’s speech the *Dominion* carried an

⁶⁹ *New Zealand Herald*, ‘What Tariana Turia Said: in Full,’ <http://www.nzherald.co.nz/news/print.cfm?objectid=149643>, last accessed 12 January 2011

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ Anthony Hubbard, ‘Turia never far from trouble,’ *The Sunday Star Times*, 27 August 2000, p.C5

article covering the thoughts of some Taranaki Maori about what Turia had said. The leader of the Parihaka community, Te Miringa Hohaia, is quoted as saying that people need to look more closely at the actual events that happened before denying that a holocaust took place in Taranaki.⁷² Accompanying the article about Taranaki Maori is a type of opened piece which includes Turia's comments from her speech and a definition of the term 'holocaust' from the Concise Oxford Dictionary, the definition being 'a case of large-scale destruction, especially by fire or nuclear war.'⁷³ The inclusion of a dictionary definition of the term 'holocaust' shows that there was a need felt by some within the media to educate the perhaps ignorant wider public as to the precise definition of a term which carries significant emotional weight for many people.

The media coverage which followed Turia's comments predominantly took the shape of opinion pieces. On September 6 an opinion piece by Colin James was published in the *New Zealand Herald*. A dictionary definition of 'holocaust' is offered as well as James' thoughts that 'ethnic European ("mainstream") New Zealanders,' apart from not prolifically reading dictionaries, have a hazy understanding of our country's past and to them as well as to Prime Minister Helen Clark "holocaust" is the Nazi's [sic] planned, industrial extermination of the Jews. They object, on good grounds, to being equated with Hitler.'⁷⁴ The next day another opinion piece appeared in the *Herald*, written by a lecturer in History from Massey University. He argues that while the debate over the use of the term 'holocaust' is new to New Zealand it has been going on for some time in other parts of the world. He cites the Native American scholars Ward Churchill and David Stannard, and their arguments for the use of the words holocaust and genocide when referring to the

⁷² Jonathan Milne, 'War never ended in Taranaki,' *The Dominion*, 2 September 2000, p.28

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Colin James, 'Ethnic factors in Clark's equation,' *New Zealand Herald*, 6 September 2000, p.A19

suffering endured by Native Americans.⁷⁵ He then concludes that Turia ‘did not reckon on the insular nature of our small country,’ nor the vehemence with which equating what happened to Maori to the Holocaust.⁷⁶

A lengthy article, printed in the *Evening Post*, accused Turia of ‘an inadequate knowledge of history,’ and that the reference to the Holocaust ‘was as ill-informed as it was crass.’⁷⁷ The article also mentions the use of the term holocaust in the *Taranaki Report*, labelling it ‘regrettable and ought not to be used as a permissive precedent.’⁷⁸ The wider media on the whole condemned Turia for what they saw as the careless and ignorant use of a term that has come to have deep emotions attached to it. The reverberations from Turia’s comments were felt throughout the wider Jewish or non-Jewish community. When looking at the Jewish press’ major publication, the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle*, there is a marked difference, simply from the fact that there was basically no coverage of Turia’s comments. There are also a scant number of articles in the *Chronicle* relating to the comparison of the suffering of indigenous peoples with the Holocaust. In July 2005 a small piece appeared, taken from Australia, quoting a senior rabbi’s views that the plight of Aborigines should not be equated with the Holocaust.⁷⁹ There could be a number of reasons for this scant coverage in the *Chronicle*; perhaps they thought it a debate not worth commenting on, or perhaps they did not want to draw attention to the community through this topic.

Media coverage of Turia’s comments and the ensuing controversy carried over to editorial cartoons. In the September 7 edition of the *New Zealand Herald* a cartoon

⁷⁵ Danny Keenan, ‘Whose holocaust? That is still a good question,’ *New Zealand Herald*, 7 September 2000, p.A13

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Hugh Laracy, ‘Was Colonisation Really that Bad?’, *The Evening Post*, 9 September 2000, pp.27&31

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ ‘Holocaust has no Parallel,’ *NZJC*, July 2005, p.4

appeared depicting Helen Clark warning Turia that she was not to use the ‘‘H’ word’ again, with Turia agreeing but her shadow thumbing its nose at Clark.⁸⁰ In the September 11 issue of the *Evening Post*, Chris Laidlaw addresses the difficulty in New Zealand of discussing sensitive cultural and historical issues, especially regarding the colonial period, calling Turia’s use of the term ‘holocaust’ ‘a ham-fisted device, provoked rather more by naivete [sic] than any real sense of proportion.’⁸¹ However, Laidlaw notes that it is perhaps too easy to dismiss Turia’s efforts to spark dialogue and ‘get the truth out on the table’ as cultural nonsense that has no relevance today, when it is not that simple.⁸² The issue of the wider public dismissing efforts to promote discussion about painful parts of the nation’s past is not new. Tariana Turia obviously was trying to spark conversation, but the strong emotional nature of a word like ‘holocaust’ and the implications of using it, is something that should be thoroughly considered before the word itself is used, but freedom of speech comes into focus here because through the *Bill of Rights Act* Turia has the freedom to express herself however she sees fit.

Five years after the Tariana Turia controversy, in 2005, another Labour MP, John Tamihere, was quoted in an interview saying that he was ‘sick and tired of hearing how many Jews got gassed...How many times do I have to be made to feel guilty?’⁸³ Again a New Zealand Member of Parliament caused a Holocaust related controversy. The media coverage of Tamihere’s comments was not as intense when compared to reactions to Tariana Turia’s speech, but they may have sparked more conversation about the Holocaust itself. In the Political Week section of the 11 May *Dominion Post*, Tracy Watkins brings up not only his Holocaust comments but also his previous statements about women. She

⁸⁰ Paul Ekers, Cartoon, *New Zealand Herald*, 7 September 2000, p.A12

⁸¹ Chris Laidlaw, ‘Turia’s argument undeniable, but its execution was clumsy,’ *The Evening Post*, 11 September 2000, p.5

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ ‘Tamihere’s Holocaust Comments,’ *NZJC*, May 2005, p.18

argues that if the comments Tamihere is claimed to have made are true then he is a man with ‘a disturbing world view’ who waves off the Holocaust as history and uses crude terminology for women.⁸⁴ This issue speaks to the debate surrounding the uniqueness of the Holocaust in history versus the Holocaust being just another in a long list of genocides. It also refers to the issues surrounding comparisons of suffering, the identity and role of perpetrators.

In the May 11 issue of *the Dominion Post* a cartoon depicting Tamihere holding a long list of things he needs to apologise for, including Anti-Semitism, appeared.⁸⁵ The most relevant news article that came out of Tamihere’s comments is the large feature published in the May 16 *Dominion Post* asking, using Tamihere’s comments as context, whether people today actually understand the Holocaust at all. The article’s first section gives the author David McLoughlin’s thoughts on Tamihere’s comments and argues Tamihere was trying to draw a parallel between people being reminded of the Holocaust and ‘Pakeha allegedly being made to feel guilty about wrongs done to Maori.’⁸⁶ However, according to McLoughlin this is ‘an extraordinarily stupid parallel’ given the recent Holocaust related history such as the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, the New Zealand government’s banning of David Irving from entering the country, and the desecration of Jewish graves in Wellington.⁸⁷ Included in the article are sections entitled ‘What was the Holocaust?’, ‘The Final Solution,’ ‘Why is the Holocaust such a Touchy Subject?’, and a table chronicling the percentage of Jews murdered in the Holocaust by country.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Tracy Watkins, ‘the burning bridges of Tamihere county,’ *The Dominion Post*, 11 May 2005, p.B7

⁸⁵ Tom Scott, Cartoon, *The Dominion Post*, 11 May 2005, p.B6

⁸⁶ David McLoughlin, ‘Understanding the Holocaust,’ *The Dominion Post*, 16 May 2005, p.A13

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

McLoughlin seems to have felt that the wider New Zealand public deserved or needed further education about the Holocaust. Tamihere's comments were made public because he said them in an interview, and he was an MP. If someone so senior in the political world could say such tendentious things about a major event in world history, then who knows what the knowledge of the average New Zealand public is like. The wider media paid some attention to Tamihere's comments and the surrounding controversy, partly within the context of his other contentious statements, partly within the context of resenting being reminded about the Holocaust, and whether this attitude stems from ignorance or something more sinister. The *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle* paid some attention to Tamihere's comments, mostly in the form of two pieces from its May 2005 issue. One article examines the comments Tamihere made and the interviewer's thoughts on them, stating his analogy was 'bad' but it was a view unfortunately held by 'many New Zealanders.'⁸⁹ On another page of the same issue of the *Chronicle* The New Zealand Jewish Council provide a record of some of the events following Tamihere's comments, including then Council President David Zwartz's statement that 'it is deeply shocking for all other Jews, as was the earlier trivialising of the Holocaust by Mrs Tariana Turia.'⁹⁰

The views of interviewees were on the whole not positive regarding Tariana Turia's and John Tamihere's comments.⁹¹ Judith Clearwater, in reference to Turia, says that although what happened to Maori was not a 'holocaust,' this assertion should not negate 'other people's suffering because it doesn't measure up to the Holocaust.'⁹² Hanka Pressburg, a Holocaust survivor and one of the main advocates in the establishment of what is now the Wellington Holocaust Research and Education Centre, simply states 'there

⁸⁹ 'MP's Holocaust blunder,' *NZJC*, May 2005, pp.1-2

⁹⁰ 'Tamihere's Holocaust comments,' *NZJC*, May 2005, p.18

⁹¹ Interview by Author with Walter Hirsh, Auckland New Zealand, 10 November 2010

⁹² Interview with Judith C.

is no comparison.’⁹³ Walter Hirsh, former Race Relations Conciliator, deemed Turia’s use of the term ‘inappropriate’ but noted that the use of such a term, as well as terms like genocide, in certain colonial contexts, would be dependent on the severity: ‘there is a point where there is no other word suitable but holocaust and genocide.’⁹⁴ With regards to John Tamihere’s comments, David Zwartz thinks that their origin may stem from ‘the feeling that too much is made of the Holocaust.’⁹⁵ Zwartz also comments that the Jewish community in New Zealand possibly does not talk about itself enough, to raise its profile within the wider community. However, ‘if they do you have other people like John Tamihere resenting being told about Jewish sensitivities. It’s a difficult line to balance on.’⁹⁶

The views of New Zealanders such as Tariana Turia reflect a development in terms of the painful histories of many indigenous peoples and the need to remedy historical injustices. The argument surrounding the use of such terms in New Zealand, along with John Tamihere’s frustration with being, to his mind, forced to confront the Holocaust more than he would care to, could stem from a number of factors. The origins could be related to the New Zealand government’s attitude towards the United Nations Genocide Convention, which was introduced in 1948 but which New Zealand did not seriously consider ratifying until 1978.⁹⁷ This late ratification is in stark contrast to Australia, which was the third nation to ratify the Convention, in 1949.⁹⁸ Official files shed light on New Zealand’s attitude, both when it was being drafted and when the government was in discussions about

⁹³ Interview by Author with Hanka Pressburg & Carol Calkoen, Wellington New Zealand, 17 November 2010

⁹⁴ Interview with Walter H.

⁹⁵ Interview with David Z.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Human Rights - Topics – Genocide Convention [1964-1990] [Archives reference: ABVP 7410 W5218 181/LEG-7-5-8] Archives New Zealand, Wellington

⁹⁸ ‘Australian Parliament Ratifies U.N. Convention on Genocide; is the Third Nation to Act,’ *Jewish Telegraphic Agency Archive*, 10 July 1949, <http://archive.jta.org/article/1949/07/10/3020159/australian-parliament-ratifies-un-convention-on-genocide-is-third-nation-to-act>, last accessed 20 June 2011

ratifying the Convention. This information helps explain the origins of New Zealand's seemingly cavalier attitude towards such a serious, emotional issue that would result in comments such as Turia's and Tamihere's. The files range in time from the late 1940s up to the 1970s and include news clippings from various New Zealand newspapers, official cables between the government here and the government's UN mission in New York, and various other items.⁹⁹

The earliest of the files includes items from when the Genocide Convention was still being drafted. One item is from the 16 December *Evening Post* and comments on the General Assembly's declaration that the crime of genocide is 'a violation of international law for which even private individuals may be punished.'¹⁰⁰ In November 1947 a telegram was sent to the Prime Minister from the New Zealand branch of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, stating an 'earnest desire that this be acted upon by your government.'¹⁰¹ A draft reply to this telegram states that the current draft of the Convention needs 'further careful consideration' and assures that the government will support 'appropriate action by the United Nations to finalise the convention.'¹⁰² In February 1948 a letter from the Secretary of External Affairs suggests to those wishing to become more involved in the Convention to 'exercise some discretion' as 'the Convention involved difficult legal questions which should properly be considered by persons with the necessary technical training.'¹⁰³ A hand-written annotation to this letter, with indecipherable signature, states that: 'The Attorney General has no sympathy whatever for this project and may I feel wish to take the line that the UN is frittering away

⁹⁹ Social affairs - Human rights - Genocide - General, 1946-1949 [Archives New Zealand Reference: EA2 284 108/11/7/1 part 1]

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

its time on an issue of a tendentious nature which should not merit our support.’¹⁰⁴ This comment is jarring when the other pieces of this file are examined, along with the outward stance of the New Zealand government, because it is harshly worded, especially when compared to the diplomatic approach of most of the official documents in the file.

There are a number of inward telegrams between the New Zealand Mission to the UN in New York and the government in Wellington. A telegram sent to Prime Minister Peter Fraser in July 1948 notes the communications received from various organisations worldwide urging support for the adoption of the Genocide Convention, asking the New Zealand delegation take a favourable position in further meetings.¹⁰⁵ An inward telegram from the New Zealand UN Mission to the Department of External Affairs notes that ‘New Zealand has not expressed any decided views on the Convention of Genocide; nor have there been any detailed instructions from Wellington.’¹⁰⁶ In November 1949 New Zealand signed the Genocide Convention.¹⁰⁷ The Convention had been signed, but not ratified. Telegrams from various peoples and institutions urged the ratification of the Genocide Convention by New Zealand. One is from Bela Varga, President of the Hungarian National Council, stating ‘Hungarian Nation Mortally Endangered Through Deportations,’ and ratification would ‘Help Save Hungary.’¹⁰⁸ A letter dated 26 February 1952 to the Department of External Affairs asks whether New Zealand will ratify the Convention, chronicling a conversation in which Raphael Lemkin, the architect of the Genocide Convention, wonders whether New Zealand has given any thought ‘lately’ to ratification.¹⁰⁹ This attention would not happen for some decades. New Zealand eventually ratified the Genocide Convention in December 1978. The fact that it was ratified at that

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

time, when the Maori sovereignty movement was gaining substantial traction within the country, could help explain how Tariana Turia and John Tamihere's comments originated. It could also help explain the wider public's reaction to such comments, as well as the prevailing attitudes to and consciousness of genocide and the Holocaust.

The argument regarding the comparison of what happened to the Aborigines with the Holocaust has been quite vitriolic. Peter Read and Lorna Lipmann have written since the early 1980s about the effects past injustices have had on race relations in modern Australia.¹¹⁰ The most recent debate in Australia started in 1988, the bicentenary of the First Fleet's arrival. Aboriginal protestors declared it a year of mourning, and argued that asking Aborigines to celebrate the first Fleet 'would be like asking the Jewish people to celebrate an anniversary of the Holocaust.'¹¹¹ In 1997 the *Bringing Them Home* report sparked the debate between those belonging to the 'Black Armband' school of thought and 'White Blindfold.'¹¹² The debate within New Zealand began later and had a slightly varying outcome. Tariana Turia is a member of the New Zealand Parliament, and after she made the comments 'a full ban was placed on members of parliament using that word in reference to the Maori experience.'¹¹³ Australia by comparison did not bring in such a ban. In Australia 'genocide and Holocaust consciousness cannot be separated,' and it is argued that 'the generally held sacrality [sic] of the Holocaust and enduring Australian apathy about the indigenous peoples' means that people continue to feel relaxed and apathetic about their national pasts.¹¹⁴ Has something similar or different happened in New Zealand? There has been some level of connecting genocide and the Holocaust together by a number

¹¹⁰ Peter Read, *Belonging: Australians, Place and Aboriginal Ownership*, Oakleigh Australia, 2000
Lorna Lippmann, *Generations of Resistance: the Aboriginal Struggle for Justice*, Hong Kong, 1981

¹¹¹ Brantlinger, p.656

¹¹² Brantlinger, "'Black Armband' versus 'White Blindfold' History in Australia'

¹¹³ Teresia Teaiwa, 'On Analogies: Rethinking the Pacific in a Global Context,' *The Contemporary Pacific*, vol. 18, no. 1, Spring 2006, p.78

¹¹⁴ Moses, p.8

of people. When Turia made her comments claiming a holocaust of Maori people, she was attempting to draw attention to the injustices of the colonial past and to spark a discussion about possible remedies. In doing so she managed to fall into a heated and emotional debate.

The media paid more attention to Turia's comments than John Tamihere's but also a large information piece about the Holocaust was produced because of his comments. Does this mean that the outcome of Tamihere's words resulted in more Holocaust consciousness in the wider New Zealand community? Is it because of a lapse in time between the two controversies that more attention to the Holocaust was paid? Judging by the small but vocal media reaction it could be argued so, but it can also be argued that Tamihere's comments were overshadowed by his other controversial statements. This would mean that the possibility for a growth in awareness of the Holocaust would be lost amongst the controversy regarding a rogue MP and his often unwise choice of words. Turia's comments sparked conversation and awareness of the Holocaust through the debate about the use of the term itself in a colonial context. However, despite the media attention her comments garnered it is again noticeable that the opportunity for the media to spread more consciousness of the Holocaust was lost amongst the examination of the wrongs that occurred to indigenous peoples. It is also clear from the articles and commentary that the separation of the Holocaust from genocide is something a number of New Zealanders possibly find hard to do.

When the Genocide Convention was drafted in the United Nations in the late 1940s, New Zealand seemed quick to sign it. This may have been due to internal and external pressure. It took until the late 1970s for New Zealand to ratify the Convention. Maori activism against injustices imposed upon them by the government steadily grew from the 1960s onward. Maori protestors at the time were heavily influenced by the Native

American protestors in the United States.¹¹⁵ Maori dissatisfaction with the Treaty of Waitangi reached a climax during the 1970s and 1980s, on a 'collision course with the political establishment.'¹¹⁶ Could these events have inspired the New Zealand government to finally ratify the Genocide Convention? It is possible, but speculative. As the Maori sovereignty movement grew from the 1960s onwards, so did the number of historians and scholars writing about New Zealand's colonial past and the Treaty of Waitangi and its implications for race relations. In recent decades historians such as James Belich and Giselle Byrnes have contributed to this field.¹¹⁷ Robert and Joanna Consedine have also addressed the challenges that face New Zealanders when confronting painful facts about our colonial past.¹¹⁸ This growth in scholarly works focusing on the issues of New Zealand's colonial past recognise New Zealand's attitude towards its history, and on the whole argue that New Zealand needs to properly confront its own colonial past in order to move forward with reconciliation. By understanding at least some of this it is easier to explain the attitude many New Zealanders seem to have towards not only genocide in general but the Holocaust in particular.

Both the war criminals controversy and the Turia and Tamihere issues were influenced to a certain degree by overseas debates. The war criminals investigation was heavily influenced by its Australian counterpart. When the Simon Wiesenthal Center handed the New Zealand government a list of suspects, the media paid it some attention for a short period of time. Compared to Australia and other Western nations, New Zealand was

¹¹⁵ MacDonald, p.384

¹¹⁶ Giselle Byrnes 'Jackals of the Crown? Historians and the Treaty Claims Process in New Zealand,' *The Public Historian*, vol. 20, no. 2, Spring 1998, pp.9-23, p.13

¹¹⁷ Byrnes, pp.9-23

James Belich, *Making Peoples: a History of the New Zealanders from Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century*, North Shore, 1996

James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: a History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the Year 2000*, Auckland, 2001

¹¹⁸ Robert Consedine & Joanna Consedine, *Healing Our History: the Challenge of the Treaty of Waitangi*, Camberwell Australia, 2005

unique in that it investigated some of the suspects but did not charge or prosecute a single one. The Australian influence on the colonial 'holocaust' debate is less obvious. Maori activists in the late 1970s and early 1980s were influenced by the Native American not Aboriginal protest movement, which had used the term 'holocaust' before. In 1997 the *Bringing Them Home* report about Australia's Stolen Generations was published, a year after the *Taranaki Report*. The Australian influence in this issue is peripheral. While these two issues garnered at least some attention towards the Holocaust, and may well have assisted in strengthening at least for a little while consciousness of it in New Zealand, it is clear that the history of the Holocaust itself got swept away amongst other, more New Zealand-focused issues. There is nothing particularly unique in New Zealand's reactions towards the war criminals and colonial 'holocaust' issues, but it is clear that a need to distinguish the nation from the rest of the world may have played a role in New Zealand's lacking response to the war criminals issue. The impact of both issues lasted for a short period of time, certainly not long enough to inspire renewed attention to the Holocaust and its consciousness in New Zealand.

Chapter Two:

Holocaust Denial and Anti-Semitism in New Zealand

Holocaust denial has existed for decades, and since the 1970s it has gained more traction worldwide. New Zealand has never really been party to this, save for a visit by David Irving, one of the principal Holocaust deniers, in the 1980s. However, in the late 1990s and into the new millennium Canterbury University Master of Arts student Joel Stuart Hayward caused an enormous controversy after the History thesis he completed in 1993 was finally made available after the five year embargo he had imposed upon it. In 2000 a scandal erupted at Waikato University when it emerged that a mature student, Hans Joachim Kupka, was planning a PhD about the German language in New Zealand, and was discovered to be a frequent poster on far-right websites of anti-Semitic Holocaust denying comments. In 2008, again at Waikato University, Roel van Leuween had his Masters thesis regarding an obscure far right group removed from the University's shelves because the main person of focus in the thesis, well known far right figure Kerry Bolton, laid an official complaint with the University. All three incidents garnered varying reactions from the public, the Jewish community, the academic community, and the media. All three incidents speak to an issue regarding the presence or knowledge of the Holocaust in New Zealand academic culture and the role Holocaust consciousness has played in these controversies.

The reactions of those within the Jewish and wider communities, and within the media and academic circles, were wide ranging. Some people argued that Hayward's thesis amounted to little more than blatant Holocaust denial, others defended Hayward with the

argument of freedom of speech, stating that he was a naïve student at the time. Kupka's PhD could have required him to interview a number of people who either fled Nazi persecution prior to the Second World War or were survivors of the Holocaust, since many spoke German. Some viewed his postings on far right websites as evidence that he could cause a great deal of pain with his research, others saw this as again a case for academic freedom, that no matter what his beliefs Kupka had a right to research what he liked. The van Leuween case yet again saw Waikato University come under criticism for its handling of the issue. This was a case of Bolton's claim of libel versus van Leuween's right to write about Bolton because he was the founder of the far-right group he examined in his thesis. The role of consciousness of the Holocaust in these issues is through the unawareness of many of the difference between freedom of speech and hate speech based on falsehoods, especially regarding Holocaust denial, and how this can stem from basic ignorance and even apathy towards the past.

This chapter examines these three cases and the reactions they garnered. Hayward's thesis and the subsequent controversy is the main focus because of the vast amount of publicity and conversation the case received. Kupka and van Leuween complete the investigation because both cases involved the Holocaust to an extent. While Holocaust denial has been a major talking point in countries such as the United States, where the Institute for Historical Review has grown more vocal, how much of an issue has Holocaust denial been here? Far right groups have existed in New Zealand for decades, spouting ideology imported from their parent organisations, such as the National Front from Great Britain. What part have these controversies, as well as the background of the far right groups' involvement with Holocaust denial, played in bringing more consciousness of the Holocaust to the wider public, if at all? Is there anything about these issues that speaks to a kind of uniqueness about New Zealand's Holocaust consciousness, or lack of it, and its

approach to the topic? Interviews with some key people involved in these scandals, as well as official reports and newspaper items, will all assist in the illustration of how these three affairs were shaped by New Zealand's attitude to the extreme right, freedom of speech, and the Holocaust.

Scholarly works regarding the influence of the extreme right in New Zealand are not numerous. The best source for information is Paul Spoonley's 1987 book *The Politics of Nostalgia: Racism and the Extreme Right in New Zealand*. Spoonley chronicles some of the major right wing groups that have emerged in New Zealand in recent history, examining their origins and influence on other right wing groups or political parties. Spoonley devotes one section to anti-Semitism, and investigates how this prejudice came about in New Zealand and how it became incorporated into the extreme right. With regard to the influence of the Holocaust on anti-Semitic prejudice in New Zealand, Spoonley argues that although the Holocaust reduced anti-Semitism for a short period after the Second World War, 'the effect has not been permanent.'¹ One major group Spoonley focuses on is the League of Rights, well known in New Zealand and Australia for their anti-Semitic, Holocaust denying beliefs, though recently, instead of being outwardly anti-Semitic, the League uses coded language such as 'Zionist' instead of 'Jew' to avoid the criticism that it is anti-Semitic.² Spoonley also argues that in New Zealand anti-Semitism never really took hold because of the very small size of the Jewish community here.³

Scholarship dealing with anti-Semitism and the extreme right worldwide is important comparatively and contextually. Andrew Moore has written about the extreme right in Australia, arguing that conspiracy is one of the central organising concepts of

¹ Paul Spoonley, *The Politics of Nostalgia: Racism and the Extreme Right in New Zealand*, Palmerston North, 1987, p.35

² Spoonley, p.125

³ Spoonley, p.244

right-wing groups. Certain threats – Jews, communists, and others – are seen as ‘undermining ‘the nation’ or ‘the community.’”⁴ Particular groups are brought into focus, such as again the League of Rights, though according to Moore with the end of the Cold War in 1989 the League’s influence declined somewhat, challenged by other groups.⁵ In a broader worldwide framework Jocelyn Hellig has examined the role the Holocaust has played in the changing face of anti-Semitism. Hellig points that out after the Holocaust overt expressions of anti-Semitism became ‘socially taboo,’ but with the passing decades anti-Semitism has ‘transmuted into anti-Zionism.’⁶ It is important to note that while this literature focuses on other parts of the world, anti-Semitism is well travelled and there have been isolated instances in New Zealand for some time. Therefore these texts provide useful information about anti-Semitism and its ties to Holocaust denial and the extreme right.

Literature specifically regarding the issue of Holocaust denial is virtually non-existent. One study, by sociologists Roger Openshaw and Elizabeth Rata, examined the Joel Hayward controversy, and investigates the argument of academic freedom, they argued that the reaction to the Hayward affair showed that the ‘traditional role of the university as critic and conscience of society’ became subject to an increasing threat from ‘a zealotry based on a highly contestable theory of culture essentially derived from Western academic discourse.’⁷ Openshaw and Rata query whether Hayward denies the Holocaust. They cite David Zwartz, former head of the New Zealand Jewish Council, who condemned Canterbury University for accepting Hayward’s thesis, which, ‘allegedly questioned the extent of the Holocaust.’⁸ Jeremy Jones, formerly of the Executive Council

⁴ Andrew Moore, ‘Writing about the Extreme Right in Australia,’ *Labour History*, no. 89, November 2005, pp.1-15, p.1

⁵ Moore, p.10

⁶ Jocelyn Hellig, *The Holocaust and Anti-Semitism: a Short History*, Oxford, 2003, p.301

⁷ Roger Openshaw & Elizabeth Rata, ‘The Weight of Inquiry: Conflicting Cultures in New Zealand’s Tertiary Institutions,’ *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 17:4, p.422

⁸ Openshaw & Rata, p.418

of Australian Jewry, has written about Holocaust denial in Australia, examining the danger of Holocaust denial permeating Australian society and how it has been made a criminal offence in other countries, such as Germany and Austria. Jones argues that Holocaust denial 'has become the single most important theme linking the disparate and competing forces of racist extremism.'⁹ Jones chronicles the groups and individuals that are at the forefront of Holocaust denial in Australia, namely the League of Rights and its leader Frederick Toben. The majority of anti-Semitism in Australia, Jones argues, comes from 'pre-Nazi racists,' including the League of Rights, and that this anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial has also occasionally come from extreme opponents of Israel.¹⁰ Jones concludes that the best way to combat Holocaust denial and anti-Semitism in Australia is through the government providing its citizens with 'recourse' whenever they are exposed to racial denigration and prejudice.¹¹

There are many works regarding Holocaust denial within a worldwide context. While none specifically relate to New Zealand they provide background and context for examining how Holocaust denial controversies here relate to the worldwide context and what they say about New Zealand's attitude to and consciousness of the Holocaust. The most valuable scholarly work regarding Holocaust denial is Deborah Lipstadt's *Denying the Holocaust: the Growing Assault on Truth and Memory*. Lipstadt recounts how Holocaust denial originated and how it has permeated many countries under the guise of academic revisionism. New Zealand is mentioned briefly with Australia through Lipstadt's mention of the League of Rights, which she states has 'adopted a particularly deceptive guise' in which its actual intentions are obscured behind 'a facade of defending civil

⁹ Jeremy Jones, 'Holocaust Denial: 'Clear and Present' Racial Vilification,' *Australian Journal of Human Rights*, 1 (1), 1994, <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/AJHR/1994/10>, last accessed 26 August 2010

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Ibid

liberties.’¹² Lipstadt momentarily focuses on the New Zealand League of Rights, arguing that to ‘obfuscate and camouflage their agenda is the tactic Holocaust deniers will increasingly adopt in the future.’¹³ The main focus of Lipstadt’s work is Holocaust denial in the United States, how it has begun to pervade universities under the guise of revisionism, and what should be done to stop it.

While Lipstadt may have written the definitive book about Holocaust denial, there have been numerous other works about this subject. Richard Evans has also written about Holocaust denial and its implications.¹⁴ Many of these works tie Holocaust denial to anti-Semitism and the extreme right, which is not surprising as Holocaust denial and anti-Semitism are often connected. Recent works focus on anti-Semitism within Arab nations and how it has developed over time, especially with regard to the influence of Nazism and Arab-Israeli conflict. However, due to the focus of this chapter being Holocaust denial and anti-Semitism in the West, the Arab anti-Semitism paradigm, while worthy of further study, will not be examined here in any detail. Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman detailed the reasoning behind Holocaust denial and argued that as well as anti-Jewish propaganda most Holocaust denial arguments and literature contain ‘a strong conspiratorial streak.’¹⁵ Pierre Vidal-Naquet has also written about Holocaust denial, noting that with Holocaust denial we find ourselves in the position of being forced to prove what happened.¹⁶ He also argues that Holocaust denial only became a ‘crisis’ in the West after the screening of the

¹² Deborah Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust: the Growing Assault on Truth and Memory*, New York, 1993, p.12

¹³ Lipstadt, p.13

¹⁴ Richard Evans *Lying About Hitler: History, Holocaust, and the David Irving Trial*, New York, 2001

¹⁵ Michael Shermer & Alex Grobman, *Denying History: Who Says the Holocaust Never Happened and Why Do They Say It*, Los Angeles, 2000, p.80

¹⁶ Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Assassins of Memory: Essays on the Denial of the Holocaust*, New York, 1992, p.20

television miniseries *Holocaust* in 1977, ‘that is, after the turning of the genocide into a spectacle...an object of mass consumption.’¹⁷

Other literature examines Holocaust denial from a legal perspective. Vera Ranki has examined various legal frameworks in which the Holocaust plays a role. Ranki examined the trials in 1985 and 1988 of Ernst Zündel, the German-Canadian Holocaust denier, and the issues Holocaust denial presents regarding the rights of free speech. Ranki notes that although a number of countries have criminalised Holocaust denial, the deniers’ response is ‘to present themselves as martyrs on the altar of freedom of speech.’¹⁸ The freedom of speech argument came to the forefront in the New Zealand controversies. There is some literature that deals with the role of Holocaust denial in education, especially in the United States. Jonathan Petropoulos examined the challenges teachers may face when confronted by Holocaust denial in the classroom. Many Holocaust denial groups target schools and universities with their literature and arguments. Petropoulos argues that in order to fully confront Holocaust deniers it is important to understand not only how they spread their views ‘but also the rationale behind them.’¹⁹ However, to properly confront those who deny the Holocaust may require more time and energy than some universities may be willing to give. The worry of Holocaust denial permeating schools is an issue that, although not really discussed in New Zealand, perhaps should be so given the three cases that have taken place here in an academic setting.

All three cases brought scandal and disrepute to Canterbury and Waikato, and at least some of the people involved. How do these affairs relate to consciousness of the Holocaust in New Zealand? Could it be that New Zealand’s attitude towards these scandals,

¹⁷ Vidal-Naquet, p.98

¹⁸ Vera Ranki, ‘Holocaust History and the Law: Recent Trials Emerging Theories,’ *Cardozo Studies in Law and Literature*, vol. 9, no. 1, Boalt Hall: Law and Literature Symposium, Part 2, Spring-Summer, 1997, p.25

¹⁹ Jonathan Petropoulos, ‘Confronting the “Holocaust as Hoax” Phenomenon as Teachers,’ *The History Teacher*, vol. 28, no. 4, August 1995, p.528

and in turn the Holocaust, is somewhat apathetic and indifferent? This is especially relevant when compared with how New Zealand treats history it has been involved in militarily, especially the two World Wars. The central debate in all three cases was that of academic freedom, freedom of speech, and how far one can take these ideas before straying into disreputable territory and garnering scorn. How New Zealand academia views these matters is important to understanding Holocaust consciousness. An institution's attitude can influence its staff and students through policy or ideas that either promote or do not promote awareness of history. Examining the history of the extreme right in New Zealand is important because many international far right groups use anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial in their manifestos and beliefs, and it is no different here. This past possibly shaped the environment that led to the Hayward, Kupka and van Leuween affairs and could explain how Holocaust consciousness is affected by these new stories.

In 1982 Paul Spoonley and Helen Cox published a report for the New Zealand Jewish Council entitled *Anti-Semitism in New Zealand since 1945*.²⁰ The report examines various extreme right groups and their philosophies. While it is noted that 'New Zealand has not experienced... extensive and often violent anti-Semitism,' it is evident that local anti-Semitism, however minor, is a cause for concern.²¹ The report chronicles some anti-Semitic incidents that have occurred from 1945 to 1982, such as the incident of swastikas and daubing reading 'Hitler will live forever' appearing on a Christchurch synagogue in 1960.²² Several reasons for these anti-Semitic outbreaks are suggested, including recent television screenings of footage from concentration camps, the television film *Playing for Time* (screened October 31 1981, concerning Auschwitz), being singled out as the most

²⁰ Paul Spoonley & Helen Cox, *Anti-Semitism in New Zealand since 1945*, Report no. 11, New Zealand Jewish Council, Wellington, 1982

²¹ Spoonley & Cox, p.1

²² Spoonley & Cox, p.5

recent.²³ A list of extreme right groups is then detailed, which includes the League of Rights, the National Front, the New Zealand National Socialist Party, and Social Credit.²⁴ Important propaganda publications are also listed, among which is *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, debunked decades ago, the book *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, and the *Journal of Historical Review*.²⁵ The addition of these tracts displays a clear tie between New Zealand's extreme right groups and Holocaust denial. What is different is how New Zealand has dealt with it, the consequences of which can be seen in the university controversies, as well as New Zealand's educational approach to the Holocaust at university level and even in some secondary schools, which could be seen as well behind other Western nations, and lacking in the proper mechanisms to deal with such issues when they arise.

The importance of examining New Zealand's own past with regard to Holocaust denial and the three major scandals in which it plays a role is so that it can be prevented from recurring. New Zealand's attitude to the Holocaust and consciousness of it needs to be examined in the context of these controversies. How did the country's attitude towards the far right's presence here affect the response to these Holocaust denial cases, and did New Zealanders' attitudes towards the issue of freedom of speech play any role in these reactions? Any subsequent consciousness of the Holocaust to come from these issues may have been tainted, so to speak, by past attitudes to the far right and freedom of speech. What kind of role did these controversies ultimately play in any growth of Holocaust consciousness here? The first and most significant of the three controversies is the scandal which erupted in 2000 over Joel Hayward's 1993 Master of Arts History thesis, a scandal that lasted for a number of years.

²³ Spoonley & Cox, p.7

²⁴ Spoonley & Cox, pp.8-12

²⁵ Spoonley & Cox, pp.13-15

In 1993 Joel Stuart Hayward, a Master of Arts student in Canterbury University's History Department, submitted his thesis, entitled *The Fate of the Jews in German Hands: An Historical Enquiry into the Development and Significance of Holocaust Revisionism*.²⁶ That same year Hayward also restricted its availability with an embargo lasting three years. In 1996 Hayward wrote to the university librarian, asking that the availability of his thesis be restricted yet again 'so that it may not be consulted *without written permission* until January 1999.'²⁷ The thesis itself is substantially longer than a regular Master of Arts thesis, in the range of 150,000 words.²⁸ The thesis contains five chapters covering different groups and people involved in Holocaust denial. There are also seven appendices, a list of abbreviations, a glossary, acknowledgements, introduction, conclusion, and bibliography. It is a large piece of work, and apart from the fact that the thesis significantly exceeds the word limit, it is the content of the thesis that caused the controversy that lasted for a number of years.

In his thesis' introduction Hayward states 'the phrase "Holocaust deniers", used by Bauer and Gutman (and almost every other anti-Revisionist), is, unfortunately, inaccurate and misleading.'²⁹ He argues that revisionists do not deny that 'very large numbers of Jews were deported from all over German-occupied Europe into ghettos and concentration camps,' that many were killed because of this, nor do revisionists deny the execution of 'very many Jews' by the *Einsatzgruppen*,³⁰ the mobile killing units that travelled through Eastern Europe murdering local Jews. Hayward argues that what the 'revisionists' do deny is the deliberate Nazi Party policy of extermination, although it 'was "proven"' at the

²⁶ Joel Hayward *The Fate of the Jews in German Hands: An Historical Enquiry into the Development and Significance of Holocaust Revisionism*, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, 1993

²⁷ Italics are Hayward's

²⁸ J H Jensen, 'Examiner's Report on Dr Hayward's Thesis Dated 15 April 1993,' *Report by the Joel Hayward Working Party*, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, December 2000, Appendix M

²⁹ Hayward, p.1

³⁰ Hayward, pp.1-2

Nuremberg Trial of 1945-46 and subsequent trials.³¹ Hayward criticises the deniers for not criticising the racial policies and ideology of the Nazi regime,³² however he goes on to say the ‘anti-Revisionists – including many scholars – tend to be intolerant of views other than their own.’³³ The credence Hayward has offered to the deniers within his introduction, with small features such as the inverted commas around certain words, is apparent. Hayward then goes on to chronicle Holocaust denial and those who propagate it.

Hayward’s first chapter focuses on the development of Holocaust denial. He compares Holocaust deniers who have been roundly criticised and debunked by academics to Salman Rushdie, calling them modern day ‘heretics’ who try to touch upon a subject that ‘is regarded by many as a sacrosanct subject, not open to legitimate private investigation, let alone public debate.’³⁴ Hayward’s second chapter investigates Arthur Butz, who wrote the Holocaust denial tract *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*. Hayward argues that virtually no scholar of note has published an extensive critique of Butz’s work, and this ‘may indicate that that scholars upholding received opinion believe ‘The Hoax’ would be difficult to refute.’³⁵ Hayward examines Butz’s argument that the term ‘final solution’ was used not in reference to the extermination of Europe’s Jewish population, but to the deportation of the Jewish population from German-occupied Europe.³⁶ Hayward concludes that while Butz’s arguments are substandard in some areas, such as his handling of *Einsatzgruppen* reports, his analysis in other areas, such as of the epidemics that raged through Auschwitz, are ‘balanced and well constructed.’³⁷ Hayward also argues that the

³¹ Hayward, p.2, the use of apostrophes for the word proven is Hayward’s.

³² Hayward, p.8

³³ Hayward, p.14

³⁴ Hayward, p.24

³⁵ Hayward, p.85

³⁶ Hayward, p.123

³⁷ Hayward, p.142

murder of Europe's Jews 'cannot have been a well disguised state secret necessitating euphemisms on some days only, but not on others.'³⁸

Hayward's third chapter concerns the Institute for Historical Review (IHR), a well known Holocaust denial group based in the United States. Hayward begins by listing the IHR's achievements, to his eyes, such as the fact that it publishes a regular newsletter and journal.³⁹ Hayward claims, without elaboration or evidence, that the vast majority of opponents of the IHR are Jewish.⁴⁰ In the chapter's conclusion he claims that the majority of the IHR's detractors have no historical training, and cannot grasp that although the IHR has differing views these views have 'still been based on an impartial consideration of evidence.'⁴¹ In his final two chapters Hayward examines two prominent figures in the Holocaust denial world, Fred Leuchter and David Irving. In 1988 Fred Leuchter, a man from Massachusetts with no engineering qualification who worked as a self styled expert in execution engineering, such as gas chambers and gallows, published the *Leuchter Report*. The report claimed that, after taking illegal and time and weather-worn samples of bricks from Auschwitz and Majdanek and having them tested, that there was no evidence of use of Zyklon B gas. This has been proven to be completely false and pernicious, but the report continues to be a touchstone for Holocaust deniers worldwide. Hayward names it the '*tour de force* of Holocaust revisionism,'⁴² and claims that the report appears to be 'supported by ample evidence.'⁴³

Finally, David Irving is examined, and here Hayward lends a great deal of weight to the arguments of Holocaust deniers. He uses a quote from George Orwell regarding

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Hayward, p.143

⁴⁰ Hayward, p.149

⁴¹ Hayward, p.204

⁴² Hayward, p.205

⁴³ Hayward, p.208

those who challenge the ‘prevailing orthodoxy,’ that an ‘unfashionable opinion is almost never given a fair hearing.’⁴⁴ Hayward claims that the criticism and derision heaped upon Irving means that it is not untenable to conclude these actions of ‘militant and immoderate Jews’ are in keeping with the ‘spirit...dominated by the swastika.’⁴⁵ Hayward concludes that while Irving has made some misjudgements in the past he remains ‘a researcher, biographer and military historian of outstanding aptitude.’⁴⁶ The most troubling section of the thesis, and perhaps the crux of the furore that followed, comes in Hayward’s conclusion. He begins by discussing atrocity propaganda, and states that ‘a careful and impartial investigation of the available evidence pertaining to Nazi gas chambers reveals that even these apparently fall into the category of atrocity propaganda.’⁴⁷ Finally, Hayward claims that although ‘Jews in German hands suffered terribly during the Second World War’ the ‘weight of the evidence supports the view that the Nazis did not systematically exterminate Jews in gas chambers or have an extermination policy as such.’⁴⁸

After handing in his thesis in 1993 Hayward was awarded an A+ by both his internal examiner Vincent Orange, who was also his supervisor, and John Jensen, the external examiner then of Waikato University. Hayward embargoed his thesis until 1996 and after that restricted its access to those who wrote asking to him for permission. In January 1999 the thesis became available to the general public and a little over a year later the full content of Hayward’s thesis became known. The scandal that occurred in the media, particularly newspapers, was unprecedented in New Zealand, possibly because the Holocaust had never been a major module of education in schools or universities and

⁴⁴ Hayward, p.266

⁴⁵ Hayward, p.321

⁴⁶ Hayward, p.327

⁴⁷ Hayward, p.331

⁴⁸ Hayward, p.335

therefore this kind of media scandal over a thesis was something not seen before; this is especially the case when Hayward wrote the thesis, in 1993. In 2000 Hayward was a History lecturer at Massey University in Palmerston North. Media coverage of the issue began in force in April of that year and continued on and off until 2001. The main debate that emerged from the scandal was that of the reach of freedom of speech, and whether a thesis that is tantamount to Holocaust denial should be accorded that right or protected under that legislation.

Dov Bing, Professor of Political Science at Waikato University, is one of the academics who became most involved in the controversy. He received a copy of Hayward's thesis in 1999 when the embargo was lifted, and in his words: 'I was absolutely shocked by its contents.'⁴⁹ It was upon Bing's recommendation that the New Zealand Jewish Council contacted Richard Evans of Cambridge University to review the thesis. Bing had been informed early on of Hayward's thesis and the potential trouble it could cause. The group Opposition to Anti-Semitism Incorporated (OIA) had contacted him, as well as the Canterbury University History department, in the early 1990s, warning that Hayward was on a dangerous route.⁵⁰ As Bing relates: 'the students had a discussion with...Hayward that they had taped... Hayward came across at this meeting as being basically a Holocaust denier and a follower of David Irving, and they were disturbed about it.'⁵¹ Hayward himself had been involved with OIA for some time until he began his Masters thesis and left the group, and the organisation published advertisements for support in the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle* in the early 1990s.⁵² Hayward himself had

⁴⁹ Interview by the Author with Dov Bing, Hamilton New Zealand, 26 & 27 October 2010

⁵⁰ Ibid

⁵¹ Ibid

⁵² Advert, Opposition to Anti-Semitism Incorporated, *NZJC*, October 1991, p.22

also written articles for the *Chronicle* about David Irving and Fred Leuchter that were very critical and almost the opposite of what he would come to write in his thesis.⁵³

In April 2000 a number of articles appeared in print media. The *Evening Post* contained a small article in which David Zwartz, then President of the New Zealand Jewish Council, argued Canterbury University ‘should have raised questions about the thesis before it was completed and never allowed it to be published.’⁵⁴ Zwartz also argues the University should have ultimate responsibility for the thesis and that Hayward’s supervisor should have realised the implications of what Hayward was writing.⁵⁵ The *Weekend Herald* issue of April 15-16 contained an article in which the chancellor of Massey University defended employing Hayward and claimed that Hayward no longer had any part in teaching, writing or research related to the Holocaust.⁵⁶ The April 20 issue of the *Evening Post* contained an editorial piece in which the editor argues that Hayward should be protected under the *Bill of Rights Act*.⁵⁷ The editor claims that people who argue the thesis should never have been published are the ones who go too far, that they have ‘lost perspective and are threatening freedom of expression.’⁵⁸

Following this editorial’s publication the *Evening Post* received a number of letters criticising it for its views. One letter is from David Zwartz, arguing that the editorial ‘confuses freedom of speech with academic freedom,’ another letter argues that Hayward’s thesis, ‘alleging blatant untruths...blatantly denigrates the reputation of a great university.’⁵⁹ The *Press* contained some coverage of the issue, not surprising given that Christchurch is the home of Canterbury University. An article appeared in the April 27

⁵³ Joel Hayward, ‘Most Gifted, Most Despised: Historian’s Denial of Holocaust,’ *NZJC*, February 1991

Joel Hayward, ‘Demolishing the Leuchter Lie,’ *NZJC*, June 1991

⁵⁴ Brent Edwards, ‘Jew upset at Holocaust thesis,’ *The Evening Post*, 13 April 2000, p.2

⁵⁵ *Ibid*

⁵⁶ ‘Varsity leader defends historian,’ *Weekend Herald*, 15 April 2000, pp.15-16

⁵⁷ ‘Freedom of speech and the Holocaust,’ *The Evening Post*, 20 April 2000, p.4

⁵⁸ *Ibid*

⁵⁹ Letters to the Editor, *The Evening Post*, 28 April 2000, p.4

issue of the *Press* covering the news that Hayward's thesis was to be investigated by a working party set up by the university.⁶⁰ This party was to investigate the circumstances in which the Masters degree came to be awarded to Hayward. The *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle*, in its April 2000 issue, carried a number of articles regarding the Hayward case. Because the *Chronicle* was the largest, nationwide, Jewish newspaper, that carried many articles relating to the Holocaust, it is not surprising that the Hayward affair was paid particular attention. Mike Regan, editor of the *Chronicle* at the time, wrote a large piece that covered the entire front page and continued on to page six entitled 'Thesis supporting Holocaust denial accepted at Canterbury University.'⁶¹

In this article the research of Dov Bing into the thesis is chronicled. According to Bing, while Hayward's thesis was embargoed it was in circulation amongst well-known Holocaust deniers, and in 1997 Frederick Toben from the Australian branch of the League of Rights tried to use the thesis in a case taken against him by the Executive Council of Australian Jewry under the Racial Hatred Act, for content on his website.⁶² Also in this issue of the *Chronicle* is an editorial entitled 'University's unwitting support of Holocaust deniers,'⁶³ and a piece examining the thesis in depth, stating that its acceptance 'has given sanction to claims laid by Holocaust deniers.'⁶⁴ An apology letter from Joel Hayward also appears in which he claims that when he wrote the thesis, he was 'inexperienced at the historian's craft and knew relatively little about the Holocaust and its complex historiography.'⁶⁵ The level of coverage in the *Chronicle* illustrates how important the Hayward issue was to at least the Jewish community in the country. The *Chronicle* and the

⁶⁰ Michal Rentoul, *The Press*, Christchurch, 27 April 2000, p.1. The members of the Party were: Sir Ian Baker QC former Chancellor of Auckland University, Emeritus Professor Ann Trotter of Otago University and Professor Stuart Macintyre of University of Melbourne.

⁶¹ Mike Regan, 'Thesis supporting Holocaust denial accepted at Canterbury University,' *NZJC*, April 2000

⁶² Regan, p.1

⁶³ Mike Regan, 'University's unwitting support of Holocaust deniers,' *NZJC*, April 2000, p.4

⁶⁴ Dov Bing, 'The Hayward thesis examined,' *NZJC*, April 2000, p.3

⁶⁵ Joel Hayward, Letter to the Editor, *NZJC*, April 2000, p.2

wider New Zealand media continued to give the issue coverage throughout 2000, while the Working Party was investigating the thesis.

Canta, Canterbury University's student magazine, carried an article about the Hayward affair on the front page of its May 3 issue, which stated 'Canterbury University stands accused of being the only university in the world to authorise a thesis supporting the arguments of Holocaust revisionists.'⁶⁶ The May 20 *Press* contained a supplement in which author Sean Scanlon chronicled some of Hayward's life and the writing of his Masters thesis, and the controversy and the scandal that ensued once the thesis contents became known.⁶⁷ An opinion piece by Frank Haden from the 21 May *Sunday Star Times* compares those who were calling for the degree to be revoked to 'the narrow prescriptions imposed on universities in Germany during the Nazi era.'⁶⁸ This opinion is in tune with some arguments at the time that Hayward should have the freedom to say what he likes even if it is grossly offensive. There were also writers who argued that Hayward's thesis arguments were not covered under freedom of speech. Diana Wichtel, daughter of Holocaust survivor Ben Wichtel and a journalist, wrote a piece for the 2-3 August *Weekend Herald* arguing that if one was to accept the main conclusions of the thesis one 'must believe everyone from survivors to SS personnel to Nazi war criminals at Nuremberg lied in unison.'⁶⁹ The debate over freedom of speech and the validity of Holocaust denial continued for months.

Letters to the Editor in various media outlets were divided between support for Hayward and support for stripping him of his degree. In the August 2 *Dominion Post* two letters regarding the affair were in support of Hayward. One argues that Hayward had

⁶⁶ Steve Dane, 'Standing Accused,' *Canta*, Christchurch, 3 May 2000, p.1

⁶⁷ Sean Scanlon, 'Making History,' *The Press*, 20 May 2000, pp.1-2

⁶⁸ Frank Canlon, 'Holocaust denier should have the freedom to upset,' *Sunday Star Times*, 21 May 2000, p.C6

⁶⁹ Diana Wichtel, 'A dangerous and damaging lapse of judgment,' *Weekend Herald*, 2-3 August 2000, p.A23

suffered ‘unfair vilification and persecution’ and that he ‘should not only be given a break; he should also be given a job.’⁷⁰ Another argues that ‘this lamentable affair shows how much power and influence Zionist Jewish interests have, even here.’⁷¹ The one letter not in support of Hayward argues ‘legitimate historians don’t question the existence of the gas chambers or the fact that the Nazis had a systematic policy of annihilation for the Jewish people.’⁷² Hayward also wrote letters to certain publications, to give his side of the affair and to defend himself. In a letter to the *New Zealand Listener* Hayward insisted that he did not intend to deny the Holocaust or hurt the Jewish people.⁷³ He also claims that since writing the thesis he has discovered evidence ‘now available’ which has convinced him that the number of Jews killed in the Holocaust ‘was far greater than I believed.’⁷⁴

In December 2000 a number of articles appeared in various newspapers. The *Press* carried an article about the indignation felt by Bill Loveday, a former British infantryman who was imprisoned in a concentration camp, at the claims made in Hayward’s thesis.⁷⁵ All of these articles, opinion pieces, and letters to the editor varied in their arguments and tone. New Zealand is so far the only country in the Western world to award a degree for a thesis such as Hayward’s. The main argument in support of Hayward and his thesis is that Hayward should be able to say what he wants even if it offends people. However, with a work such as Hayward’s thesis, the argument regarding freedom of speech becomes less straightforward. Those against Hayward’s thesis argued that when Holocaust denial is involved freedom of speech does not apply. The release of the Working Party’s findings in December 2000, in the *Report by the Joel Hayward Working Party*, brought the Holocaust and the denial of it further into the spotlight, at least in New Zealand academia. An article

⁷⁰ Letters to the Editor, *The Dominion Post*, 2 August 2000, p.B6

⁷¹ Ibid

⁷² Ibid

⁷³ Joel Hayward, Letter to the Editor, *New Zealand Listener*, 24 June 2000, p.6

⁷⁴ Ibid

⁷⁵ Tara Ross, ‘POW angry over thesis,’ *The Press*, 12 December 2000, p.1

appeared in the December 22 *New Zealand Herald* that chronicled the findings of the Working Party Report and the views of various people involved.⁷⁶

The *Report by the Joel Hayward Working Party* contains not only the full report of the Working Party's findings but also extensive appendices covering the time from Hayward's enrolment in the Master of Arts programme to the present.⁷⁷ The report found the thesis was 'seriously deficient in the handling of evidence and quality of argument,' and that the appropriate result for the thesis, instead of an A+, would have been for Hayward 'to revise and resubmit the thesis.'⁷⁸ The Working Party expressed concern over the thesis' conclusion, calling it 'perverse and unjustified.'⁷⁹ The thesis' supervision is called into question, with the report stating that a thesis about such a topic as Holocaust denial 'required a knowledgeable supervisor,' and noted that Vincent Orange, Hayward's supervisor, admitted himself that he was not a specialist of the Holocaust.⁸⁰ As to whether Hayward's Masters Degree should be withdrawn, the report found that dishonest practice would need to be proven in order for Hayward to be stripped of his degree.⁸¹ Hayward's embargo of the thesis is also commented on, noting that although it is not entirely unusual, Hayward still did 'see fit to distribute it to at least three persons, two of whom could not be thought of as orthodox Holocaust historians.'⁸² Despite all of these negative factors, the Working Party decided to allow him to keep his degree. The controversy surrounding the thesis seemed to have been settled with this report, but in 2003 it came back to haunt Hayward even more.

⁷⁶ Rebecca Walsh, 'A-plus equals anger for Jewish groups,' *New Zealand Herald*, 22 December 2000, p.A15

⁷⁷ Joel Hayward Working Party, *Report by the Joel Hayward Working Party*, Canterbury University, Christchurch, December 2000

⁷⁸ Joel Hayward Working Party, p.63

⁷⁹ Joel Hayward Working Party, p.62

⁸⁰ Joel Hayward Working Party, p.64

⁸¹ Joel Hayward Working Party, p.70

⁸² Joel Hayward Working Party, p.73

In 2003 Thomas Fudge, a Professor in Canterbury University's History Department, wrote a piece for the department's journal *History Now* in defence of Hayward, entitled 'the Fate of Joel Hayward in New Zealand Hands: from Holocaust Historian to Holocaust?'⁸³ Before the journal was distributed it was decided that it be recalled and the editor, Ian Campbell, be fired.⁸⁴ The *Press* issue of July 23 accounts the furore surrounding Fudge's article and his subsequent disagreement with the History Department that resulted in him handing in his resignation; one student is quoted saying that teachers should be able to research any issue even if it is controversial and even if 'the truth may be offensive to those who do not want to hear it.'⁸⁵ Though copies of *History Now* with Fudge's article were embargoed, the article was published in various newspapers. The *New Zealand Herald* published the first part in its July 23 edition, in which Fudge claimed that critics of Hayward's thesis have not read the thesis at all.⁸⁶ The second part of Fudge's article was published in the following day's edition, in which he wrote about the Working Party inquiry and claimed that since then Hayward had been receiving death threats.⁸⁷ The main argument that emerged regarding Fudge's article pertained to freedom of speech and whether the article went too far in its defence of Hayward, with articles from the September 20-26 issue of the *New Zealand Listener* examining the issue.⁸⁸

Throughout part of 2003 Hayward's thesis was brought back into the spotlight because of the Fudge controversy. Dov Bing wrote an article for the *Press* distinguishing proper historical revisionism as being an 'honest endeavour,' examining 'a well-known facet of history' that comes to a new conclusion, and stating 'Holocaust denial is not

⁸³ This issue of *History Now* in which Fudge's article appeared was destroyed before distribution.

⁸⁴ Tara Ross & Matt Conway, 'University Split Over Decision to Suppress Article,' *the Press*, 22 July 2003, p.A1

⁸⁵ Tara Ross & Matt Conway, p.A9

⁸⁶ Thomas Fudge, 'Holocaust, history and free speech,' *New Zealand Herald*, 23 July 2000, pp.A16-17

⁸⁷ Thomas Fudge, 'Historian learns bitter lesson from,' *New Zealand Herald*, 24 July 2000, pp.A20-21

⁸⁸ Philip Matthews, 'Canterbury Tales,' *New Zealand Listener*, 20-26 September 2003

history at all,' with deniers using deceptive methods to label themselves as historians.⁸⁹ Richard Evans, who was asked by the New Zealand Jewish Council to review Hayward's thesis because of his involvement in the trial of David Irving vs. Deborah Lipstadt, wrote an article for the August 20 *New Zealand Herald*, arguing that freedom of speech was not the central issue, rather the poor academic standards that allowed Hayward's thesis to be completed.⁹⁰ Opinion pieces followed the publication of Fudge's article. The *Press* opinion piece of July 23 defended Fudge's article and argued that while people like David Irving had 'given revisionism a bad name, it is an essential tool to advancing our understanding of history.'⁹¹ In the July 26 issue of the *Press* an article appeared examining Hayward, his thesis, and other people who were involved in the scandal and the subsequent Fudge article, as well as quoting the main personalities involved.⁹²

Hayward again wrote a letter to the *Press*, stating that he hoped the exposure of his 'maltreatment should ensure that academics remember that universities are not there for their benefit; they are there for the benefit of the students.'⁹³ In the July 24 *Press* all the letters published argued that Hayward, and also Fudge, had been made pariahs of the New Zealand academic establishment, one claiming that 'academic freedom got lost in the melee,' and another claiming that Jews, while they can agree or disagree with what is taught or learnt, 'are not to be determiners of the subject matter regardless of their own persuasions.'⁹⁴ Despite the large amount of support for Hayward, and also at this time Fudge, there were also those who took them to task. In the earlier mentioned *Listener* article Philip Matthews argued that many in the New Zealand media have helped propagate 'the image of Hayward as victim,' citing an interview in which Hayward produced a bullet

⁸⁹ Dov Bing, 'Revisionism and denial differ,' *the Press*, 11 August 2003, p.A11

⁹⁰ Richard Evans, 'Academic standards the issue, not freedom,' *New Zealand Herald*, 20 August 2003, p.A20

⁹¹ Opinion, 'Air-brushing history,' *the Press*, 23 July 2003, p.A12

⁹² Tara Ross, 'That thesis again,' *the Press*, 26 July 2003, p. D4

⁹³ Joel Hayward, Letter to the Editor, *the Press*, 28 July 2003, p.A8

⁹⁴ Letters to the Editor, *the Press*, 24 July 2003, p.A8

he alleged had been sent to him as a threat, but the *Listener* had obtained an affidavit that the bullet was a dud from a Second World War era rifle that had been given to Hayward as a keepsake.⁹⁵ Matthews concludes that Holocaust deniers have been given a platform in New Zealand through ‘otherwise reputable academics who are able to be exploited by this hatred.’⁹⁶

Both Dov Bing and David Zwartz were involved in the Hayward affair and have vivid memories and clear opinions about the controversy. Bing calls the way in which the affair was handled ‘an absolute scandal.’⁹⁷ Zwartz argues Hayward and his thesis were ‘supported by people who were anti-Jewish and they eased his way into getting his thesis accepted and marked much higher than it should have been.’⁹⁸ Zwartz was asked to get involved with the New Zealand Jewish Council by Dov Bing, and he agreed that ‘it was important to try,’⁹⁹ that is, to attempt to show that the thesis was tantamount to Holocaust denial and the degree should be revoked. Bing, Zwartz and others saw that the Hayward issue merited attention, to bring to light the mishandling of a thesis which was, to theirs as well as many others’ minds, nothing but an attempted exoneration or even toleration of Holocaust denial.

The reaction of the wider New Zealand public is interesting in its upholding of complete freedom of speech even in the apparent case of the proliferation of historical untruths. It is also worth noting that while the freedom of speech debate raged not a great deal of thought was given to the state of academic standards at Canterbury University and the role the apparent carelessness by many, including Hayward, his supervisor, and the Canterbury University History Department, in the thesis being written and marked so

⁹⁵ Matthews, p.28

⁹⁶ Matthews, p.29

⁹⁷ Interview with Dov B.

⁹⁸ Interview with David Z.

⁹⁹ Ibid

highly. The *Working Party Report* lists a number of deficiencies found in the academic standards at the Canterbury University History Department, citing the regulations as ‘applied, if applied at all, somewhat loosely, not just in the Hayward case but in general.’¹⁰⁰ These regulations are provided in Appendices K, K1, K2 and K3 of the *Report*.¹⁰¹

Around the same time the Hayward affair became national news another scandal erupted, this time at Waikato University. It involved the potential PhD topic of Hans Joachim Kupka, and the revelations of his background and beliefs that sparked outrage among many. The April 11 2000 issue of *Nexus*, Waikato University’s student magazine, broke the Kupka story, the page reading ‘Freedom of speech: if you read only one issue of *Nexus* all year, make it this one.’¹⁰² Inside were articles giving background information about Kupka and the allegations against him. Hans Joachim Kupka was a doctoral student at Waikato University who emigrated from Germany in 1992.¹⁰³ He was enrolled in the university’s German department, where he intended to write his doctoral thesis on the use of the German language in New Zealand. Norman Franke, from the university’s German department, and later Dov Bing and others, objected to Kupka’s intended thesis because it was discovered that Kupka had been posting comments and opinions that were deemed Holocaust denying and anti-Semitic on the internet.¹⁰⁴ Bing clarifies that Kupka had every right to complete a PhD: ‘It would not be proper for anybody to make a complaint about somebody’s political views,’ but University regulations clearly indicate that ‘you could only do research about the particular community if you have the consent from the particular community to approach them. That’s what it says in the Human Ethics

¹⁰⁰ *Report by the Joel Hayward Working Party*, p.74

¹⁰¹ *Report by the Joel Hayward Working Party*, Appendices K, K1, K2, K3s

¹⁰² *Nexus*, Waikato University, Hamilton, Issue VI, 11 April 2000

¹⁰³ David Young, ‘Who is Hans Joachim Kupka?’, *Nexus*, p.7

¹⁰⁴ ‘What did Kupka Write?’, *Nexus*, p.8

Regulations.’¹⁰⁵ This would become a problem since many refugees from Europe and survivors of the Holocaust in New Zealand are German speakers.

After *Nexus* published its report the wider media followed. Coverage was nowhere near as prevalent as the Hayward affair, but still enough to bring the case to wider attention. The *Waikato Times* became involved early on. The April 12 issue carried an article in which it is stated the Human Rights Commission, the Race Relations Office and the university mediator all supported Kupka’s right to study for a PhD.¹⁰⁶ The next day the *Times* quoted Kupka, saying his freedom of speech ‘had been upheld by the Race Relations Office,’ and quoted the university’s Vice-Chancellor as saying that the university was put at risk by the affair but ‘behaved appropriately.’¹⁰⁷ In the following day’s issue of the *Times* Race Relations Conciliator Rajan Prasad stated that Waikato University ‘should have dealt with the case...rather than forwarding it to his office,’ but that the internet writings of Kupka were ‘unlikely to incite racial hatred in New Zealand.’¹⁰⁸ Newspapers elsewhere took notice of the story not long after these initial articles. In the April 20 *Evening Post* an article appeared in which Kupka argued that his proposed PhD study ‘has certainly nothing to do with interviewing victims of the Holocaust.’¹⁰⁹ The *New Zealand Listener* of June 10 featured an article that questioned ‘why is a Holocaust revisionist still enrolled at a New Zealand university?’¹¹⁰ The article points out that although Kupka’s proposed PhD topic is seemingly innocuous, the issue of cultural safety is potentially at

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Dov B.

¹⁰⁶ Winston Aldworth, ‘Student upsets Jewish Academics.’ *The Waikato Times*, Hamilton, 12 April 2000, p.1

¹⁰⁷ Winston Aldworth, ‘Decision heeds freedom of speech: student,’ *The Waikato Times*, 13 April 2000, p.3

¹⁰⁸ Winston Aldworth, ‘University passed the buck: conciliator,’ *The Waikato Times*, 14 April 2000, p.3

¹⁰⁹ ‘I’m no holocaust denier – student,’ *the Evening Post*, 20 April 2000, p.12

¹¹⁰ Philip Matthews, ‘In the Extreme,’ *New Zealand Listener*, 10 June 2000

play because ‘no study of German culture in New Zealand is possible without attention to Jewish refugees from the Third Reich.’¹¹¹

In August 2000 an official investigation was launched into the affair. The inquiry report was published in September 2002.¹¹² The report notes the severe division among university colleagues and assesses aspects of the case. Perhaps the core of the protest against Kupka’s proposed PhD topic was the fact that he had allegedly been posting anti-Semitic, Holocaust denying opinions on the internet, raising an important issue regarding Kupka’s objectivity. The inquiry reviewed those postings and concluded that they were of a ‘racist, anti-Semitic, and Holocaust denying-character.’¹¹³ The prospect of Kupka interviewing subjects for his PhD was also considered and it was concluded that Kupka ‘did not intend to interview people,’ but it was reasonable for members of the university ‘versed in social science practice’ to conclude that interviews would be taking place.¹¹⁴ Upon publication of the *Review* the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle* published an article in its November 2002 edition, and stated that Waikato University’s personal apology for the whole affair was only made available through the *Waikato Times*, not through the university’s website, and had not been sent to the *Chronicle*.¹¹⁵

The most important issues in the Kupka affair were those regarding his apparent intention to interview groups of people that would include Holocaust survivors and refugees from Europe, and his internet forum messages. As with Hayward the issue of freedom of speech became the central debate for many. The earlier-mentioned issue of *Nexus* made this clear from the outset of the whole scandal. Freedom of speech, as set out

¹¹¹ Matthews, p.35

¹¹² William Renwick, *A Review of the Case of Hans Joachim Kupka*, University of Waikato, Hamilton, September 2002

¹¹³ Renwick, p.72

¹¹⁴ Renwick, p.82

¹¹⁵ Mike Regan, ‘Sorry, Jews,’ *NZJC*, November 2002, pp.1&8

in the ‘freedom of expression’ section of the *Bill of Rights Act*, is the right to ‘seek, receive, and impart information and opinions of any kind or form.’¹¹⁶ As to why the university acted the way it did in at first defending Kupka’s right to complete a PhD and then buckling under pressure to launch an inquiry, Dov Bing has his theory: ‘New Zealand is really in denial about Holocaust denial, they just pretend it doesn’t exist.’¹¹⁷ Could the academic culture within New Zealand hold some clues as to why the Kupka affair happened in the manner it did? This is a question best examined in conjunction with the Hayward affair and one more university related scandal, the most recent of the three.

In 2008 Roel van Leuween, a Philosophy student at Waikato University, submitted his Masters thesis entitled *Dreamers of the Dark: Kerry Bolton and the Order of the Left Hand Path, a Case-Study of a Satanic/Neo-Nazi Synthesis*.¹¹⁸ The thesis examined a neo-Nazi magazine called the *Watcher*, its editor Kerry Bolton, and the Order of the Left Hand Path, a neo-Nazi-Satanic organisation.¹¹⁹ Essentially van Leuween was examining the links between the Satanic and neo-Nazi themes in these organisations. The thesis was supervised by Dov Bing and Marg Coldham-Fussell, and received distinguished marks upon assessment. However, that same year it was removed from the Waikato University library and online repository, without van Leuween or his supervisors being informed. The removal of the thesis was because of a complaint from Bolton, who claimed that ‘the thesis is libellous, and ineptly researched...It is motivated by personal malice, rather than scholarship.’¹²⁰ Bolton had six ‘suggested remedies’ for what he saw as personal slander – immediate removal of the thesis from public access, guarantee that the thesis will not be

¹¹⁶ *New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990*, Ministry of Justice Wellington, 1990

¹¹⁷ Interview with Dov B.

¹¹⁸ Roel van Leuween, *Dreamers of the Dark: Kerry Bolton and the Order of the Left Hand Path, a Case-Study of a Satanic/Neo-Nazi Synthesis*, Waikato University, Hamilton, 2008

¹¹⁹ Van Leuween, p.vi

¹²⁰ Kerry Bolton, *Complaint of Kerry Raymond Bolton Re: Dreamers in the Dark by W.R. van Leuween*, Waikato University, 2008, p.2

published or made publicly available, revocation of van Leuween's Masters degree, that the supervisors Bing and Coldham-Fussel along with Dennis Green, who inspired the thesis, be held accountable for their involvement, an explanation as to why the thesis was passed by examiners, and financial compensation.¹²¹

Dov Bing questions why the university took Bolton seriously in the first place, with his history of involvement in far-right groups, most prominently the National Front.¹²² The university decided to hold an inquiry into Bolton's accusations, which according to Bing, was unwarranted: 'even though the thesis had been examined by two external examiners the University still went ahead.'¹²³ While the inquiry was underway, Bolton posted online an article entitled *Dreamers of the Dark – Exposed*, in which he claimed 'Zionist smear-mongering' was to blame for the thesis.¹²⁴ Once the investigation into Bolton's accusations was under way the media started to pay some attention to it. The *Waikato Times* was the newspaper that gave the most coverage to the story. In the October 7 issue of the *Times* the argument of academic freedom was brought up in an article in which it is stated that despite the thesis being pulled from shelves, Waikato University sees preserving academic freedom as important, and the thesis had been pulled from library shelves while the university 'established a robust, fair process to deal with the complaint.'¹²⁵

In the October 16 issue of the *Times* an editorial argued that Waikato University should explain its reasoning for pulling van Leuween's thesis without warning.¹²⁶ It calls the move 'highly questionable' and noted that no legal action was taken by Kerry Bolton against van Leuween or the university, legal action which 'should be the only grounds for

¹²¹ Bolton, p.7

¹²² Nicola Brennan 'Neo-Nazi thesis pulled by university,' *the Waikato Times*, 6 October 2008

¹²³ Interview with Dov B.

¹²⁴ Kerry Bolton, *Dreamers in the Dark – Exposed*, 2008, <http://www.freewebs.com/dreamers-of-the-dark/>. This website contains numerous pieces regarding the thesis supervision, general comments on the thesis, Holocaust denial, and attacks against van Leuween and the supervisors of the thesis.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Editorial, 'Varsity should explain itself,' *the Waikato Times*, 16 October 2008, p.6

pulling it.’¹²⁷ Roy Crawford, Vice-Chancellor of Waikato University, wrote a letter to the *Times* stating the university was committed to academic freedom and that removing the thesis form shelves while the inquiry took place ‘was the appropriate and best course.’¹²⁸ He also argued that van Leuween and his supervisors not being notified of this action ‘was an oversight and one we regret.’¹²⁹ The following month Roel van Leuween wrote a letter to the *Times* in response.¹³⁰ In the letter van Leuween argues that Crawford’s claim that his thesis was about a living person was ‘erroneous’ and that Kerry Bolton only featured ‘due to his prominence in the order as founder and leader and his role as chief ideologue.’¹³¹ The completion of the report regarding Bolton’s complaints was only made known to van Leuween through a website by Bolton, something which he labelled as ‘unconscionable’ in an article from the February 12 2009 issue of the *Times*.¹³²

In a letter to Vice-Chancellor Crawford dated 31 March 2009 Sharn Riggs, National Secretary for the New Zealand Tertiary Education Union (TEU), roundly criticised Crawford and the University for its handling of the entire affair.¹³³ Riggs noted ‘three key documents’ to the TEU’s complaint – the report of November 14 2008 which van Leuween and his supervisors were denied access to; the report dated January 27 2009 prepared by deputy Vice-Chancellor Doug Sutton; and the ‘statement of evidence’ dated March 5 2009 prepared again by Sutton.¹³⁴ Riggs criticises Crawford and the university for saying they would send the January 27 report to Bolton: ‘the position of the TEU is that under no circumstances should any of these three documents be provided to Mr Bolton or

¹²⁷ Ibid

¹²⁸ Roy Crawford, Letter to the Editor, *the Waikato Times*, 22 October 2008, p.6

¹²⁹ Ibid

¹³⁰ Roel van Leuween, Letter to the Editor, *the Waikato Times*, 28 November 2008, p.6

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Nicola Brennan, ‘Thesis report delay angers varsity student,’ *the Waikato Times*, 12 February 2009, p.5

¹³³ Sharn Riggs, *Letter to Professor Roy Crawford*, the New Zealand Tertiary Education Union, Wellington, 31 March 2009

¹³⁴ Ibid

to any one else external to the University investigation,' partly due to Bolton's and his far right colleagues' quest for 'academic legitimacy' the likelihood of them finding and receiving the documents is both high and a cause of major concern.¹³⁵ Riggs notes that two aspects of the investigation into van Leuween's thesis are of 'immediate concern,' the first being Professor Sutton's comment in the January 27 report that the thesis did not merit the first class honours it received, which Riggs argues 'effectively undermined the integrity of the whole process of supervision and assessment, the integrity of the thesis... and the integrity of the subsequent investigation process.'¹³⁶

The second criticism is the 'assault on academic freedom' seen in the March 5 2009 report by Sutton, regarding a 'potential conflict of interest' in the supervision of the thesis - Bing's views against neo-Nazism - as stated in the March 5 report 'could be seen as preventing him from being objective in relation to this thesis.'¹³⁷ Riggs argues that by extension supervisors could not supervise a number of theses depending on their personal background: 'Pakeha society for Maori activists; creationism for mainstream scientists; Western colonialism for Third World nationalists,' and so forth, thus Sutton's claim is 'effectively supporting Bolton's accusations by challenging the rights of persons with stated and known anti-Nazi views to 'objectively' conduct or supervise research on Nazi-related topics.'¹³⁸ Riggs writes that Waikato University should be aware 'of the substantial risks' that the statements above pose to the credibility of the University, and that members of staff at the University had been talking of withdrawing from supervision of thesis because of the 'unsafe' research environment that had been cultivated because of the affair.¹³⁹ The TEU requested that the University permanently withdraw all three reports

¹³⁵ Ibid

¹³⁶ Ibid

¹³⁷ Ibid

¹³⁸ Ibid

¹³⁹ Ibid

from circulation and also questioned why the University was so quick to accede to Bolton's 'unjustified demand for a full investigation.'¹⁴⁰

Some sections of the media paid close attention to the investigation's fallout, in particular the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle*, which in its August/September 2009 issue carried a story originally published in *Nexus*.¹⁴¹ The article states that 'in the course of the van Leuween affair, academic freedom came under attack at Waikato University as never before.'¹⁴² It also notes that the controversy has been compared with the Hayward and Kupka affairs, 'both of which had involved, in some way, factions of various far-right and Neo-Nazi organisations, Holocaust deniers, Waikato university, and Professor Dov Bing.'¹⁴³ The University pulled van Leuween's thesis 'all on the word of a man who once, in writing, compared Hitler to Jesus.'¹⁴⁴ Bolton himself, despite his objections to van Leuween's writing about his neo-Nazi far right inclinations, wrote various letters to newspapers and publications regarding the Hayward affair. In a letter published in the November 16 2002 *New Zealand Listener* Bolton claims that critics of Hayward are 'those who have a vested interest in perpetuating war-era propaganda.'¹⁴⁵ In an earlier letter, in the *Listener's* July 15 2000 issue, Bolton makes even balder statements, claiming that Fred Leuchter was forced from his engineering work by 'Holocaust mythologists,'¹⁴⁶ and labels the Holocaust 'a blood libel against an entire people.'¹⁴⁷

As for New Zealand university culture and the possibility of something unique influencing attitudes, Dov Bing states 'there's something, some awareness lacking there,

¹⁴⁰ Ibid

¹⁴¹ Joshua Drummond, 'Dark dreams lead to scandal,' *NZJC*, August/September 2009

¹⁴² Drummond, p.1

¹⁴³ Drummond, p.2

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Kerry Bolton, Letter, *New Zealand Listener*, 16 November 2002, p.8

¹⁴⁶ Kerry Bolton, Letter, *New Zealand Listener*, 15 July 2000, p.9

¹⁴⁷ Kerry Bolton, Letter, p.10

isn't there?'.¹⁴⁸ Regarding the Hayward affair, David Zwartz's opinion of Canterbury University's conduct is that 'it wanted to cover those things over really. Although it admitted that there were deficiencies in the way they handled it. But they didn't want to admit those things to the point of actually withdrawing his degree.'¹⁴⁹ As to whether there is a culture within New Zealand academia that cultivated the environments that led to these scandals, Zwartz notes 'I suppose in a way they reflected New Zealand society which is either cool or antagonistic towards Jewish things.'¹⁵⁰ This could possibly explain why the three affairs occurred in the manner they did. New Zealand's seemingly apathetic attitude towards the Holocaust as an event lost in history on the other side of the world could explain the opinions of many during these three university scandals. But there are deeper reasons that speak to New Zealand's attitude towards extreme right groups and how this is attached to attitudes towards freedom of speech. Walter Hirsh, former Race Relations Conciliator and child refugee from Nazi Germany, views freedom of speech as something to be cherished, but he also argues:

...a line has to be drawn... so that Holocaust denial is in fact a malicious mischievous thing to do. I'm not surprised that people advance that, what their motives are I'm not exactly sure, and it's very difficult to bend your head around.¹⁵¹

This kind of view is not unique to any particular group or person, and is shared with those who in some way directly experienced the Holocaust and those who did not. Denial of the

¹⁴⁸ Ibid

¹⁴⁹ Interview with David Z.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid

¹⁵¹ Interview with Walter H.

Holocaust can be linked to the extreme right and its existence and influence in New Zealand.

The extreme right has been a presence in New Zealand since the beginning of the twentieth century, and earlier. Many groups and organisations were heavily influenced by parent organisations that originated in other countries. The vast majority of extreme right publications originated elsewhere. Since the 1960s and 1970s the extreme right's ties to Holocaust denial have become increasingly apparent, with the growth in notoriety of people such as David Irving. By the time of the Hayward affair Holocaust denial was making news worldwide with the Irving vs Lipstadt libel trial, as it had in the 1980s with the Canadian trial of Ernst Zündel. The Hayward case, possibly helped by this, played a large role in bringing the Holocaust to the forefront in New Zealand. With the publicity the Hayward affair garnered it is not surprising that the Kupka and van Leuween affairs also gained some attention. The stance of many regarding these scandals was that freedom of speech must be championed even if something a person says is incredibly offensive to many. The *Bill of Rights Act* defends freedom of speech under the section titled 'democratic and civil rights,' which includes articles about freedom of religion, association and electoral rights.¹⁵² It is an important civic right for everyone, but it can also be argued that a line needs to be drawn. That freedom of speech is certainly a right everyone should have, but not when what the person is saying is based on untruths, such as saying the Holocaust never happened or there were no gas chambers at Auschwitz.

The response from the wider public is seemingly due to a degree of apathy and ignorance towards the Holocaust and Holocaust denial in New Zealand. This is not necessarily unique to New Zealand but it is perhaps through this ignorance and apathy that Hayward was able to write his *Masters* in the first place, and that the Kupka and van

¹⁵² *New Zealand Bill of Rights Act*

Leuween affairs played out as they did. The fact that Hayward was able to keep his Masters degree is in itself unique, as New Zealand is now the only Western nation to have awarded a degree for a thesis that allegedly denies the Holocaust. The fact that freedom of speech is championed so fervently in New Zealand is heartening, but the right to offend based on facts has been mixed with the ability to tell untruths and remain unaccountable. Freedom of speech covers any type of speech that may offend, and in the broad interpretation is one that includes the proliferation of untruths, but these untruths can be robustly countered with the facts. These controversies brought the Holocaust and consciousness of it to the forefront of the wider public for a time, but it is clear a certain level of ignorance about the Holocaust and Holocaust denial prevailed through the freedom of speech arguments in each affair and how each affair was approached.

All three controversies, especially the Hayward affair, display an interesting trend in the general attitude towards academic standards at universities in New Zealand, something which was overshadowed by the discussions surrounding freedom of speech. This perhaps had a detrimental effect because instead of focusing on how the academic standards of each university allowed such controversies to occur and in some cases continue, the argument was turned elsewhere, to an issue that should have in all probability been secondary in the greater scheme of the controversies. The fact that, especially in Hayward's case, academic standards were apparently completely let down means this should have been at the forefront of people's minds when addressing such a controversy. However, because freedom of speech was focused on speaks to the possible apathy towards and ignorance about the Holocaust and Holocaust denial within New Zealand. It is also connected to the strident defence of freedom of speech in any situation, which is not particular to New Zealand, but again, it is because of these failures and peculiarities in

such cases that New Zealand is the only nation to have awarded a degree for a thesis that allegedly denied the Holocaust.

Chapter Three

Holocaust Commemoration, Education, and Jewish Identity in New Zealand

The act of commemorating the Holocaust has been present within the Jewish communities of the world since the end of the Second World War, in the form of the annual commemoration *Yom HaShoah* and private family-oriented remembrance. Education about the Holocaust in the immediate aftermath of the War was also for the most part within Jewish communities. This is not surprising as so many Jewish families worldwide lost relatives in the Holocaust, and would naturally want to honour their lost loved ones' memories. The shift from remembrance and education being almost strictly within the Jewish community to the wider community came a number of decades later. Within New Zealand this shift took place from the mid 1980s onwards, for the most part later than in other countries, for example the United States and Australia. One explanation could be the size of the Jewish population in New Zealand compared with these nations, but it could also speak to a deeper rationale behind this late coming in commemoration and education when compared with the rest of the Western world. The acts of commemoration of and education about the Holocaust are important because it is namely through education that people become more aware of the reality of the Holocaust.

Arguably the turning point in this transition from the Jewish to the wider community within New Zealand was the 1985 fortieth anniversary commemoration of the Holocaust at the Michael Fowler Centre in Wellington. Since then commemorations have grown both in number and in attendance size. There have been commemorations for the fiftieth anniversary and the sixtieth, and in 2005 the United Nations voted to implement

International Holocaust Remembrance Day, set on the day the Auschwitz concentration and extermination camp was liberated by Soviet troops on 27 January 1945. Commemoration is tied to education, because it is through education that the public become not only more aware and knowledgeable of an event but also better able to commemorate it with this information in mind. Holocaust education has been present in New Zealand for some time through schools, and some survivors who were willing to speak to school groups as early as the 1960s. However, it was through the establishment of places dedicated to the Holocaust, and travelling exhibitions related to the Holocaust, that education spread throughout New Zealand. Holocaust education in schools and universities in New Zealand is present but somewhat insubstantial, though there has been a steady growth in Holocaust education that originates outside the classroom.

The main issues examined in this chapter include the state of Holocaust commemoration and education before 1985. Were there any particular events that encouraged further commemoration and education of the Holocaust, for example a major news event? Was Holocaust consciousness in New Zealand affected by this increase in commemoration and education? Or is it more complicated? Jewish identity in New Zealand is important because this may have shaped the role of Holocaust commemoration and education here. There is also a culture of memory in New Zealand, seen through the commemorations and public holidays such as ANZAC Day. This culture of memory regarding war participation could certainly play a role in how New Zealanders responded to commemoration of the Holocaust. New Zealand's unique history of remembrance of past wars could have helped shape the way the public approaches Holocaust remembrance, through the overall visibility of the Jewish community within the wider community. The consciousness of the Holocaust that comes from commemoration and education has had an arguable impact, especially in the later decades of the twentieth century up to the present.

Compared to other nations, such as Australia, New Zealand's approach to commemoration and education has been somewhat indifferent but also at times enthusiastic. Official documents and reports, interviews with people involved in commemoration and education, and newspaper items all play a significant role in the examination of the issues surrounding New Zealand's approach to Holocaust commemoration and education.

Though there are few scholarly works concerning Holocaust commemoration and education in New Zealand, there is a growing selection from Australia that are valuable for a comparative perspective. Judith Berman has written extensively about Holocaust commemoration in Australia, focusing on its growth from the Second World War to present. She pinpoints the 1970s as a major turning point in commemoration in Australia, when the Holocaust became a 'major component of Australian Jewish identity.'¹ Berman briefly examines New Zealand, arguing that generally Holocaust commemorations in New Zealand have been 'low-key affairs.'² She also argues that a growth in Holocaust remembrance in New Zealand was partly because of the social and cultural climate in the country from the 1970s and 1980s onward, particularly with regards to the Maori sovereignty movement and the move away from monoculturalism.³ Berman has also examined the *Yom HaShoah* commemoration in Australian Jewish communities from 1945 to 1996, and states that since the very early Warsaw Ghetto revolt commemorations, which later became *Yom HaShoah*, Holocaust commemorations have been used to 'provide a

¹ Judith Berman *Holocaust Remembrance in Australian Jewish Communities, 1945-2000*, Crawley Australia, 2001, p.9

² Judith Berman *Holocaust Agendas, Conspiracies and Industries? Issues and Debates in Holocaust Memorialisation*, Bodmin Cornwall, 2006, p.12

³ Berman, *Holocaust Agendas, Conspiracies and Industries?* p.17

forum for conveying insights into the meaning of the Holocaust to guide Jewish life in the present and the future.’⁴

Scholarship examining commemoration in a New Zealand context is not numerous but there are several articles and books which focus on this area. There are also a number of articles which focus on other nations such as Australia. Graham Hucker has written about New Zealand’s military past and heritage under Prime Minister Helen Clark.⁵ There has also been work published regarding particular places of remembrance and commemoration, such as Auckland’s War Memorial Museum.⁶ Some works focusing on Australia and war memory are relevant because ANZAC Day is a day shared by Australia and New Zealand. John A. Moses has considered the origins of ANZAC observance through Anglican Canon, David John Garland.⁷ There has also been scholarship focusing on the role of gender, through male and female forms, in ANZAC memorials in Australia.⁸ There are close ties shared between both countries regarding this very particular type of remembrance, which displays a particular culture of memory through ANZAC commemoration. The idea of a culture of memory points to the possibility of a unique culture of commemoration, carrying over into Holocaust commemorations and how they are approached and received.

There has not been a great deal of scholarship examining the New Zealand Jewish community’s identity and how they relate to their past. Ann Beaglehole’s work has

⁴ Judith Berman ‘The Lessons and Messages of the Holocaust as Conveyed through Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Day) Commemorations in Selected Australian Jewish Communities, 1945-1995, *The European Legacy*, vol. 4, no. 1, 1999, p.56

⁵ Graham Hucker ‘A Determination to Remember: Helen Clark and New Zealand’s Military Heritage,’ *the Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society*, 40, 2010

⁶ Scott Worthy ‘Communities of Remembrance: Making Auckland’s War Memorial Museum,’ *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 39, no. 4., Special Issue: Collective Memory, October 2004

⁷ John A. Moses ‘Anglicanism and Anzac Observance: the Essential Contribution of Canon David John Garland,’ *Pacifica*, 19, February 2006

⁸ Ken Inglis ‘Men, Women, and War Memorials: Anzac Australia,’ *Daedalus*, vol. 116, no.4, Learning about Women: Gender, Politics, and Power, Fall 1987

provided insight into assimilation and identity in the Jewish community, particularly among those who came to New Zealand as refugees and survivors of the Holocaust.⁹ Beaglehole argues that the Jewish community in New Zealand felt a strong sense of obligation towards those who were arriving from Europe.¹⁰ She also argues that the generation gap between refugee and survivor parents and their children meant that ‘barriers to talking freely about the past, as well as the compulsion to do so, were especially powerful.’¹¹ Suzanne Rutland has written about these issues from an Australian perspective, arguing that the Holocaust has been a ‘unifying force’ in the Jewish world, including in Australia.¹² This scholarship examines at least in part Jewish identity and community in the wake of the Holocaust. It also shows how the situation of these established communities, and indeed refugees and survivors, have influenced commemoration and education through their sense of connection to the Holocaust.

A major factor in the growth of Holocaust commemoration, and a major source of scholarship, has been the emergence of the second generation, children of Holocaust refugees and survivors. One, first hand, book from New Zealand’s second generation community contains a number of children of refugees and survivors sharing their family’s stories as well as some recipes from their parents’ families.¹³ There has been virtually no scholarship written about New Zealand’s second generation, although a second generation group is established in Auckland which has regular meetings. There have conversely been a number of works focusing on the second generation elsewhere, particularly the United States. Aaron Hass has examined the psychological issues the second generation have in

⁹ Ann Beaglehole *Facing the Past: Looking Back at a Refugee Childhood in New Zealand 1950s-1960s*, Wellington, 1990

Ann Beaglehole *A Small Price to Pay: Refugees from Hitler in New Zealand 1936-1946*

¹⁰ Beaglehole *Facing the Past*, p.23

¹¹ Beaglehole, p.108

¹² Suzanne Rutland *Edge of the Diaspora: Two Centuries of Jewish Settlement in Australia*, Sydney, 1988, p.376

¹³ Deborah Knowles ed. *Mixed Blessings: New Zealand Children of Holocaust Survivors Remember*, Auckland, 2003

dealing with their parents' traumatic pasts, how they come to terms with and in turn relate to the experiences of their parents.¹⁴ Eva Hoffman has written about the second generation, arguing that the Holocaust incites a 'sense of responsibility for the past...through a still lived bond, an intravenous transmission.'¹⁵ Esther Faye has also written about the ways in which the second-generation remembers the Holocaust.¹⁶ Faye argues that in the midst of the testimonies of some of the second generation something termed 'deep memory' is present, which connects the memories of second generation children to each other, and 'entitles their testimonies to be thought of as a kind of witnessing of the Shoah.'¹⁷

The issues surrounding Holocaust commemoration and education have been examined by a number of scholars, in many different languages and from different countries, the most prominent in English coming from the United States, with some from Canada and Great Britain. These works, when explored, provide information easily transferred to a New Zealand context. Geoffrey Hartman has written about the legacy the Holocaust left behind in terms of families and remembrance, and argues that once all the survivors have passed away 'education will have to replace all eyewitness transmission of those experiences.'¹⁸ Hasia Diner and Peter Novick have both addressed ways in which the Jewish community in the United States has dealt and still deals with the Holocaust and commemoration and education of it. Diner argues that 'wherever the opportunity arose, American Jews expressed their obligation and desire to remember the six million.'¹⁹ Novick argues that responses to the Holocaust from American Jews have varied: 'on the

¹⁴ Aaron Hass *In the Shadow of the Holocaust: the Second Generation*, New York, 1990

¹⁵ Eva Hoffman *After Such Knowledge: Memory, History and the Legacy of the Holocaust*, Cambridge MA, 2004

¹⁶ Esther Faye, 'Missing the "Real" Trace of Trauma: How the Second Generation Remember the Holocaust,' *American Imago*, vo. 58, no. 2, Summer 2001

¹⁷ Faye, p.526

¹⁸ Geoffrey H. Hartman, *The Longest Shadow: in the Aftermath of the Holocaust*, Bloomington ID, 1996, p.10

¹⁹ Hasia Diner *We Remember with Reverence and Love: American Jews and the Myth of Silence after the Holocaust*, New York, 2009, p.23

one hand, instances of psychic devastation verging on derangement; on the other, indifference verging on obliviousness.²⁰ He also mentions the belief among some that a push for Holocaust education in schools comes from a conviction that confronting students with the event would produce results.²¹ These are interesting perspectives on the state of Holocaust consciousness in the United States and the role the Jewish community played in its inception and promotion.

Scholarship regarding the role of the Holocaust in historical memory and representation in various countries is diverse, from the United States to Israel and various countries in Europe and elsewhere. Andrea Tyndall argues that Holocaust museums have come to serve as in part ‘a kind of space for collective Jewish mourning’ and that they also function ‘as gathering places for a mass audience...the more accessible the Holocaust museum, the less ‘Jewish’ it will be.’²² Robert Braun has written about the problems the Holocaust can represent in terms of proper historical representation, arguing that the ‘moment of transition between the existence of actual Holocaust memories and the Holocaust as a historical event were explicitly marked at Bitburg,’ where US president Ronald Reagan visited the graves of *Waffen SS* soldiers, sparking international outrage.²³ He also argues that the ‘singularity of the Holocaust is closely related to the debate over the “radical” or “banal” nature of Nazi evil.’²⁴ David MacDonald argues that a crucial date for Holocaust commemoration worldwide was the Six Day War in 1967, which ‘reinforced Israel’s tenuous position in the Middle East.’²⁵ These kinds of differing turning points display the fracture in scholarship in determining any one date or event that could pinpoint

²⁰ Peter Novick *The Holocaust in American Life*, New York, 2000, p.35

²¹ Novick, p.260

²² Andrea Tyndall ‘Memory, Authenticity, and Replication of the Shoah in Museums: Defensive Tools of the Nation,’ in Ronin Lentin ed. *Re-presenting the Shoah for the 21st Century*, London, 2004, p.115

²³ Robert Braun ‘The Holocaust and Problems of Historical Representation,’ *History and Theory*, vol. 33, no. 2, May 1994, p.175

²⁴ Braun, p.194

²⁵ David MacDonald *Identity Politics in the Age of Genocide: Holocaust and Historical Representation*, New York, 2007, p.19

a beginning in growth of Holocaust commemoration and education. The lack of a concrete date is evident in New Zealand, where commemoration and education have come even later than elsewhere in the world.

Scholarship examining how Holocaust commemoration ties in with national identity is helpful in its examination of how a culture of memory develops in a particular nation. Sharon Macdonald addressed the role of Holocaust Memorial Day in Britain, arguing that this day ‘articulates a reconfigured vision of national identity, legitimated through reference to the past and the iconic evil of modern times.’²⁶ Macdonald argues that Holocaust Memorial Day could be seen as helping define a particular vision of ‘Britishness,’ which is embedded in the British national identity.²⁷ New Zealand has its own form of national identity via its war experiences that plays a role in how it approaches the Holocaust and commemoration and education of it, which is worth exploration. This is where scholarship dealing with New Zealand’s collective memory regarding its military heritage is useful; like Britain New Zealand has a rich background of commemorating its’ military campaigns and personnel, especially through the annual ANZAC Day commemorations. Graham Hucker has written about the country’s military heritage and the role it plays in how we as New Zealanders remember our military past and honour the dead and still alive soldiers of wars and conflicts.²⁸

The Jewish community of New Zealand began recognising and commemorating the atrocities of the Holocaust very early on, before the Second World War had ended. The community was very small at the time. In the 1936 census the Jewish population stood at

²⁶ Sharon Macdonald ‘Commemorating the Holocaust: Reconfiguring National Identity in the Twenty-first Century,’ in Jo Litter & Roshi Naidoo eds. *The Politics of Heritage: the Legacies of ‘Race,’* New York, 2005, p.49

²⁷ Macdonald, p.66

²⁸ Hucker

2,653 and by the 1951 census this had risen to 3,661.²⁹ The October 1944 issue of the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle* carried a large piece regarding the fate of the Jewish people in Hungary, detailing stories of brutality, ghettoisation, and death.³⁰ In the November 1944 *Chronicle* a large article was published which reported on the murder of Polish Jews from Lublin and at the recently discovered concentration camp Majdanek, a photo of the ovens from the camp is published with the article.³¹ The April/May 1945 *Chronicle* mainly concerned the victory of the Allied powers in Europe, but there was also an article regarding the second anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943.³² Included in the article is a poem used in memoriam of the Ghetto fighters and victims.³³ Not only was commemoration beginning to occur through the Warsaw Ghetto commemoration, but advertisements appealing to those looking for missing relatives in Europe also began to emerge, detailing the establishment of a search bureau aimed at helping anyone with relatives in Europe who wished to trace them and their fate.³⁴

This trend of recognition and commemoration of the Holocaust in the New Zealand Jewish community continued throughout the 1940s. *Yom HaShoah* was established as a key date for remembrance, and the date for the commemoration was the date of the beginning of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising of 1943. Large articles would appear in the *Chronicle* every year around the time of the commemoration of *Yom HaShoah*, for example in the June 1954 issue an article appeared chronicling the commemorations in Auckland and Wellington.³⁵ In April 1955 the *Chronicle* published an article that observed the state of Polish Jewry ‘twelve years after the Warsaw Ghetto,’ written by a member of

²⁹ Levine, *The New Zealand Jewish Community*, p.37

³⁰ ‘The Fate of Hungarian Jewry,’ *NZJC*, October 1944, pp.32-33

³¹ ‘Polish Jewry Exterminated,’ *NZJC*, November 1944, pp. 56-57

³² ‘At the Second Anniversary of The Revolt in the Warsaw Ghetto,’ *NZJC*, April/May 1945, pp.170-172

³³ *NZJC*, p.171

³⁴ *NZJC*, p.191

³⁵ ‘Yom Ha’Shoa – the Martyrs Remembered,’ *NZJC*, June 1954, p.11

the British Parliament.³⁶ In the same issue an article examined the recent meeting of the World Jewish Congress and the dialogue concerning ‘repairing the cultural losses to the Jews in World War II’ through memorials and so forth.³⁷ Although this reportage is from overseas it nonetheless conveys a need from within New Zealand’s Jewish community, through the *Chronicle*, to bring the reality of the Holocaust to light.

Into the 1960s commemoration and coverage of the Holocaust continued. One of the most important years for Holocaust related news was 1961, when Adolf Eichmann, one of the key players in the Final Solution, was put on trial for his crimes in Israel. The wider New Zealand press, for example the *Evening Post*, covered this story, and the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle* carried some in depth coverage as well as personal notes regarding the trial and its importance in terms of Holocaust commemoration and education. The April 19 1961 issue of the *Chronicle* carried a long piece regarding the beginning of the Eichmann trial, as well as an editorial note stating the *Chronicle* would publish ‘as far as possible, only news which readers will not read in other sources.’³⁸ The May 3 1961 issue fulfils this promise with an ‘on the spot report’ from a *Chronicle* reporter who was at the trial for one day’s proceedings.³⁹ Coverage of the Eichmann trial continued through to 1962, when he was executed in Israel for his crimes. Throughout the period of Eichmann’s trial the *Chronicle* kept the Jewish community informed, and through this and analysis by reporters of Eichmann and his crimes, created a type of commemoration for and education about the Holocaust which was brought to the forefront of the New Zealand Jewish community.

The May 28 1962 issue of the *Chronicle* contained an article about ‘Warsaw Ghetto and Martyr’s Remembrance’ in London, New York, Auckland and Wellington, where a

³⁶ ‘Twelve years after the Warsaw Ghetto: the Jews of Poland today,’ *NZJC*, April 1955, pp.4-5

³⁷ *NZJC*, p.5

³⁸ ‘Eichmann Trial begins in Israel,’ *NZJC*, 19 April 1961, p.3

³⁹ ‘On the Spot of the Eichmann Trial,’ *NZJC*, 3 May 1961, p.3

memorial plaque to the victims of the Holocaust was erected at the entrance to the Wellington Synagogue.⁴⁰ This is one of the earlier instances of explicit remembrance through memorialisation in the New Zealand Jewish community. That it was placed in a synagogue is typical of memorials worldwide at the time; in the United States most of the physical markers of commemoration were in synagogues, the headquarters of Jewish institutions, and cemeteries.⁴¹ Throughout the years Holocaust related events and news continued to be covered extensively in the *Chronicle*. News relating to treatment of Jews in Europe was extensive when it occurred, such as a large article in the October 2 1967 issue of the *Chronicle* which looked at the discrimination of Jewish people in post-war Poland.⁴² This kind of interest in what was happening to Jewish communities worldwide, not only because of the Holocaust but also because of the large number of Polish Jews who had emigrated, and the subsequent connection these events have to the Holocaust, is a phenomenon not unique to New Zealand. Hasia Diner has pointed out Jewish communities in the United States took careful notice of these types of occurrences.⁴³

From this period into the 1970s, Holocaust education in New Zealand started to evolve. This was developed through some survivors and refugees talking to school groups and others outside the Jewish community about their experiences. Ruth Filler, a refugee from Germany in the 1930s, and her husband Sol, a Holocaust survivor who moved to New Zealand in the 1950s, began speaking to school and other groups around this time, both Jewish and non-Jewish. Ruth's recollection of when they started talking to groups is 'we started... mainly in the seventies onwards or maybe even earlier, '65 or so.'⁴⁴ Although she cannot remember the exact date Sol and she began speaking about their

⁴⁰ 'Warsaw Ghetto and Martyr's Day Memorial Service,' *NZJC*, 28 May 1962, p.7

⁴¹ Diner, p.36

⁴² 'Discrimination in Poland,' *NZJC*, 2 October 1967, p.5

⁴³ Diner

⁴⁴ Interview by the Author with Ruth Filler, Auckland, New Zealand, 9 November 2010

experiences, it was certainly before the major events of commemoration and education that began to take shape here. Sol himself became ‘very much in demand to clubs, to youth, to schools, to church groups and so forth to talk about his experiences.’⁴⁵ Once Sol, with Ruth accompanying him, began speaking to groups about the Holocaust, more and more people became interested in hearing his and Ruth’s story. This was the beginnings of a transition of Holocaust education and commemoration from the Jewish community to the wider community.

Another survivor who became involved in sharing their story with the wider community was Hanka Pressburg. Before 1980 (again the exact date is not clearly recalled), at the invitation of the Israeli Information Office in New Zealand, Hanka began speaking to school students about her experiences. Carol Calkoen, Hanka’s daughter, elaborates on how this worked:

...the Israeli Information Centre at the time, I can’t remember what year it was, actually had a package for schools, so the package involved coming to the community centre, visiting the synagogue, having a talk by the Rabbi, and included a survivor testimony.⁴⁶

This tie to Israel is important because it shows how connected Israel saw itself with the Holocaust, due to so many survivors settling there and it becoming the new Jewish homeland after the Second World War. After the Six Day War in 1967 and the Yom Kippur War in October 1973, Israel was roundly criticised worldwide for its treatment of the Palestinians. It could be determined that this animosity towards Israel and in some cases the Jewish people would have spurred the Israeli Information Office into action to

⁴⁵ Interview with Ruth F.

⁴⁶ Interview with Hanka P & Carol C.

educate New Zealanders not only about Judaism and Israel, but about the Holocaust as well.⁴⁷

Through the 1970s and into the 1980s commemoration of the Holocaust featured in the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle*. In the April 1981 *Chronicle* a large advertisement appears about children of Holocaust survivors in Israel who were working on remembrance of the Holocaust as ‘people around the world, and even in Israel have already started to forget.’⁴⁸ On the same page is an appeal for survivors in New Zealand to record their testimonies on tape for submission to the World Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, taking place in Israel later that year, by the New Zealand delegate, survivor Roma Herrmann.⁴⁹ The fact that the New Zealand Jewish community was participating in such a large event shows the beginnings of the growth and transition of Holocaust remembrance from the private realm into the public. Lottie Weiss, a survivor who came to New Zealand after the Second World War, was interviewed in 1978 for a Radio New Zealand documentary about her experiences entitled *Prisoner 2065 – Auschwitz*.⁵⁰ A radio programme such as this would have gained a large audience nationwide. Through the early 1980s Holocaust commemorations were advertised in the *Chronicle*, such as in the April 1984 issue.⁵¹ Holocaust commemoration and education within the wider New Zealand community was almost peripheral up until the mid 1980s. There was some education through a small number of survivors and refugees speaking to school and other groups, and Hollywood movies and mini-series also played a role, a major example being 1977’s

⁴⁷ There are other organisations in New Zealand with ties to Israel, such as a New Zealand branch of the International Zionist Organisation, the Wellington Zionist Society, and the Zionist Federation of New Zealand.

⁴⁸ ‘A Call to Action for Holocaust survivors’ children,’ *NZJC*, April 1981, p.5

⁴⁹ *Ibid*

⁵⁰ *Prisoner 2065 - Auschwitz*, Radio New Zealand, Wellington, New Zealand, 1978

⁵¹ Commemoration Notices, *NZJC*, April 1984, p.2

miniseries *Holocaust*. This transition of remembrance from the Jewish community to the wider community reached a major turning point in 1985.

In 1985, a large public commemoration was held at the Michael Fowler Centre in Wellington, commemorating forty years since the liberation of the concentration and death camps. The New Zealand Jewish Council began planning the event in 1984.⁵² The Wellington-based organising committee worked closely with Jewish communities in Auckland and Christchurch. Approaches were made to the National Council of Churches and the mayors of New Zealand's four main centres seeking their 'support and involvement in the commemoration.'⁵³ Television New Zealand even expressed interest in making a programme to be part of the commemoration ceremony.⁵⁴ Throughout 1984 and into 1985 the commemoration plans took shape. In April 1985 the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle* published details about the official programme for the commemoration and reported that Dr Edith Egar, a Holocaust survivor and author, was to be the keynote speaker at the event.⁵⁵ The commemoration itself took place on May 5 1985, very close to Victory in Europe Day (May 7), and drew a substantial crowd; guests included Prime Minister David Lange, Mayor of Wellington Ian Lawrence, Ambassador of Israel Zvi Zimmerman Boneh, members of parliament, leaders of various Christian denominations, and around 2,600 members of the general public.⁵⁶

Walter Hirsh was 'heavily involved' in the organisation of the event.⁵⁷ He recalls the commemoration as 'mammoth' and notes:

⁵² Walter Hirsh, 'Introduction,' *New Zealand Holocaust Commemoration: Reports and Papers*, New Zealand Jewish Council, Wellington, 1985, p.1

⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁴ Ibid

⁵⁵ 'Auschwitz survivor will be keynote speaker,' *NZJC*, April 1985, p.1

⁵⁶ *New Zealand Holocaust Commemoration: Reports and Papers*, p.16

⁵⁷ Interview with Walter H.

I guess the main thing... would be let's not forget and let's educate people in this far flung corner of the planet... Holocaust studies were not that much a part of the curriculum in school so I guess we wanted to take the opportunity for a large piece of education... Apart from the fact that forty years on at the time, we were thinking there are still survivors around in our community, some of whom may not be here on the fiftieth or sixtieth anniversaries, so let's honour them.⁵⁸

The fortieth anniversary obviously inspired Hirsh and others involved in organising the commemoration as an opportunity to educate the wider public about the facts of the Holocaust and also that a number of survivors had emigrated to New Zealand after the war and were still here. The May 1985 issue of the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle* was for the most part dedicated entirely to the Wellington commemoration and *Yom HaShoah* in general.⁵⁹ One such item is a timeline taken from the *Jerusalem Post* and reprinted, entitled 'the Fateful Years 1933-1945.'⁶⁰

The commemoration garnered some coverage from the wider New Zealand press, not only for the commemoration itself but for the Holocaust and survivors in general as well. The May 1 issue of the *Dominion* carried a small advertisement for the commemoration, inviting interested members of the public to attend.⁶¹ The *Evening Post's* May 11 issue contained an item by Tom Scott, who attended the commemoration, in which he states that 'we learned that some 200 survivors of the Holocaust live in New Zealand... we got a glimpse, albeit briefly and inadequately, of an incomprehensible hell on earth.'⁶² A letter to the Editor of the *Evening Post* congratulated the New Zealand Jewish Council

⁵⁸ Ibid

⁵⁹ *NZJC*, May 1985, pp.1-7

⁶⁰ 'The Fateful Years,' *NZJC*, May 1985, p.7

⁶¹ Commemoration Advertisement, *The Dominion*, 1 May 1985, p.27

⁶² Tom Scott, 'Tom Scott,' *the Evening Post*, 11 May 1985, p.6

on the commemoration, and thanked the Council for ‘reminding me’ of the atrocities of the Holocaust.’⁶³ Because of the publicity gained, articles also about Holocaust survivors appeared in various papers. In the May 6 issue of the *Dominion* an article appeared which included a short interview with survivor Roma Hermann and noted that there was a strong police contingent at the commemoration after the leaders of the New Zealand Jewish Council received threatening phone calls.⁶⁴ Although many members of the public took the opportunity to participate in the commemoration and become more educated about the Holocaust, there was always going to be a radical few who would take umbrage to what they perceived as special attention paid to the Jewish community.

After the commemoration, a number of letters were received congratulating the organisers. One letter called the commemoration ‘the most moving ceremony that I have attended in my life,’ and noted ‘we cannot forget and never again have the excuse of not knowing what depths mankind can descend to.’⁶⁵ The general theme amongst the letters is one of being supremely moved and wishing to offer thanks to those who organised the event. This feeling was shared in the letters religious congregations sent. One, on behalf of St Andrew’s on the Terrace, a Presbyterian church in Wellington, reiterated the points of the letters from the public, noting that the commemoration ‘was an occasion I felt honoured to attend’ and emphasising that the Holocaust ‘must never be forgotten.’⁶⁶ It can be concluded that the fortieth anniversary commemoration was a success because of the media and public response to it. The year 1985 was a watershed year for Holocaust commemoration and education in New Zealand, with a major memorial event drawing a large number of the wider New Zealand public, where before it had for the most part been limited to the Jewish community. After this event, a number of acts of commemoration and

⁶³ Letter to the Editor, *the Evening Post*, 10 May 1985, p.6

⁶⁴ ‘Death Camp Survivor Relives ‘Hell,’’ *the Dominion*, 6 May 1985, p.14

⁶⁵ Letter, *New Zealand Holocaust Commemoration: Reports and Papers*, p.29

⁶⁶ Letter, *New Zealand Holocaust Commemoration: Reports and Papers*, p.28

education took place in New Zealand, gaining nationwide attention and demonstrating in turn at least some growth in Holocaust consciousness here.

From the mid to late 1980s the Holocaust came further to the forefront of at least some people's minds. Through the act of commemorating draws people towards an historical event, and many in turn seek to educate themselves and others about it. With an event such as the Holocaust it is also an opportunity for the Jewish community to identify with the survivors and victims in solidarity and remembrance. With the late 1980s came the formation of the Auckland Second Generation Group, established for people who were children of Holocaust refugees and survivors. Deborah Knowles, a teacher and heavily involved with second generation activities in Auckland, recalls that 'it came about through Sara Navezie, who was a child of two survivors from Auschwitz... she started the group in... late '80s.'⁶⁷ By this time worldwide groups for children of refugees and survivors had already been established, especially in countries like the United States. The Auckland group according to Knowles is 'a support group, we have meetings, we have guest speakers, we have done events, we've gone to places of interest together, visiting exhibitions and things that came,' and Lilla Wald, a foundation member of the Second Generation Group, adds that the group also has 'an input in the organisation of the *Yom HaShoah* commemoration.'⁶⁸

Apart from the Second Generation Group there have been other instances which show a demonstrable growth in Holocaust commemoration and education in New Zealand. In 1987 the Auckland Jewish community honoured Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat credited with saving thousands of Hungarian Jews, with a memorial plaque and tree near the Symonds Street Cemetery.⁶⁹ The ceremony marked the fortieth anniversary of

⁶⁷ Interview by Author with Deborah Knowles and Lilla Wald, Auckland, New Zealand, 5 November 2010

⁶⁸ Interview with Deborah K. & Lilla W.

⁶⁹ Deborah Stone, 'Auckland honours Wallenberg,' *NZJC*, February 1987, p.5

Wallenberg's disappearance while in Soviet custody. The late 1980s also saw a growth in stories from members of the New Zealand Jewish community who travelled to Europe to explore their families' pasts. One such story was published in the February 1988 issue of the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle*, written by a refugee who fled Germany in the 1930s to come to New Zealand.⁷⁰ Articles of this kind appeared quite numerous in the *Chronicle* from roughly the mid 1980s onward, not only from refugees and survivors but also from their children. This may be because, as Aaron Hass explains, the second generation 'can choose to ask more, read more, think more about the Holocaust.'⁷¹ The responsibility felt by many within the second generation to carry on the memory of the Holocaust has not been lost in New Zealand, despite its small second generation community especially compared to Australia, where there are a number of second generation groups. The Auckland group is New Zealand's only second generation organisation which is perhaps reflective of population size, but could be related to the idea that many refugees and survivors who came to New Zealand did not want to mark themselves out as different, and many in turn did not really speak to their children about their experiences or hid their Jewish and European identities as much as possible.

From 1990, Holocaust commemoration and education experienced further growth in New Zealand, if one is to measure this by examining publicity gained from newspapers and other outlets. With the new decade a new form of consciousness seemed to come to the fore of not only the Jewish but also the wider community, especially in the larger urban centres where the majority of the Jewish community lived. This possibly stemmed from a realisation during the fortieth anniversary commemoration that survivors of the Holocaust were getting older, it may not be long before they would be gone and it would come down to the younger generations to carry on their legacy. In 1989 a small advertisement appeared

⁷⁰ 'Glimpses of Jewish Past,' *NZJC*, February 1988, p.7

⁷¹ Hass, p.164

in the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle* appealing for items for a small Holocaust display that was to be established in the Wellington Jewish Community Centre.⁷² The main organiser of this display was Hanka Pressburg: ‘we had an exhibit after the town hall commemoration, so we wanted to do something with it.’⁷³ In early 1990 the Holocaust display at the Wellington Jewish Community Centre officially opened and continued to appeal for relevant artefacts and items.⁷⁴ This display was an important marker in the growth of Holocaust commemoration, education, and in turn consciousness in New Zealand because there was now a permanent display for individuals and groups to learn more about the Holocaust and the survivors and refugees who made new lives here. Despite this development but the display was not widely advertised and remained confined to the Jewish community specifically for some time after its establishment.

The year 1990 also marked the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, and a celebration entitled *New Zealand 1990* took place. Individuals and communities could apply for funding for various projects to take place during the year, and the Jewish community applied for funding for a number of activities under the title *Jewish Community Week*. The funds were applied for in 1989 and although funding for some, such as a book about prominent Jewish New Zealanders was rejected, others such as a Jewish cookbook were approved.⁷⁵ One project was the Wellington Synagogue 1990 Historic Display, which included historical photos, artefacts, and tours of the synagogue for the wider public.⁷⁶ While this topic may not have been directly related to the Holocaust, tours of the synagogue and community centre would have no doubt included at this time the Holocaust display, due to it residing in the Wellington Jewish Community Centre and the

⁷² ‘Holocaust Museum,’ *NZJC*, June 1989, p.2

⁷³ Interview with Hanka P. & Carol C.

⁷⁴ ‘Holocaust Museum,’ *NZJC*, March 1990, p.24

⁷⁵ New Zealand 1990 Commission, Wellington Office [1990-1990] [Archives reference: ABLG W3781Box 59 Record number 5628] Archives New Zealand Wellington

⁷⁶ *Ibid*

Holocaust being a large aspect of modern Jewish history. As part of the *New Zealand 1990* celebrations, author Thomas Kenneally was invited to speak at the Wellington Jewish Community Centre about his book *Schindler's Ark*, which a few years later would be adapted into the Academy award winning film *Schindler's List*.⁷⁷

The year 1990 was also when the memories of a number of Holocaust survivors reached the wider New Zealand public. That year a documentary entitled *Holocaust Survivors in New Zealand* was produced, using interviews with a selection of survivors by journalist Kim Hill. Hanka Pressburg was one of those interviewed, among the three survivors that she recalls were interviewed for the documentary.⁷⁸ This desire to record testimony of survivors by the early 1990s was no doubt inspired by the realisation of time passing and survivors at some point all passing away and thus the need to record their experiences for future generations. Further into the 1990s more and more instances of memorialisation and education presented themselves. In 1990 a small article appeared in the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle* regarding the plan of Michael Paris, president of the Wellington Hebrew Congregation, to gather a list of names of those who perished in the Holocaust who have ties to Wellington through survivors or family to be presented in the form of a book or plaque.⁷⁹ In 1991 the Wellington Regional Jewish Council planned and advertised for submissions of ideas and concepts for a permanent Holocaust memorial in Wellington.⁸⁰

In 1993 a large oral history project began to record the experiences of women Holocaust survivors and refugees who had come to New Zealand. This coincided with the centenary of women's suffrage in New Zealand, and was entitled *Women Who*

⁷⁷ Advertisement 'Thomas Kenneally' *NZJC*, May 1990, p.28

⁷⁸ Interview with Hanka P. & Carol C.

⁷⁹ 'Hitler's Birthday saved Simon Wiesenthal,' *NZJC*, April 1990, p.23

⁸⁰ 'Holocaust memorial for Wellington,' *NZJC*, June 1991, p.24

Survived the Holocaust.⁸¹ Application for funding for the project was made in November 1992 to the 1993 Suffrage Centennial Trust by Sara Navezie, the coordinator of the Holocaust Oral History Project responsible for interviewing women who had survived the Holocaust.⁸² She argued the relevance of the project included the age of the survivors, the emergence and danger of Holocaust denial, and the parallels and understanding that could arise between the Jewish and Maori communities through understanding each other's struggles.⁸³ Navezie also argued the Jewish community had a unique understanding of the Maori community and should fully support the 'Maori quest for recognition as *tangata whenua*.'⁸⁴ Funding was approved and the project began in 1993 and took a few years to complete, during which time the organisers of the project had to submit accounts details for expenditure to the Trust, as well as brief reports on progress.⁸⁵ Twenty seven interviews were done and the tapes were stored in the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington.⁸⁶ The reasons Navezie gave for the project are in keeping with the issues of the early 1990s with regards to the age of survivors and the growth in prominence of Holocaust denial. In 1994 the *New Zealand Listener* carried a lengthy article by Diana Wichtel about a female Holocaust survivor Helen Erdos and how she, her daughter, and granddaughter, all confronted the Holocaust as part of their tangible past.⁸⁷

The second generation here has also played a role in collecting and preserving the memories of those directly connected to the Holocaust. Claire Bruell, a member of the Auckland Second Generation Group, has been collecting the oral histories of Holocaust survivors and refugees since the 1990s, and became involved in the Holocaust Oral History

⁸¹ Ministry of Women's Affairs [no date – no date] [Archives reference: ABKH 7357 W4788 Box 11Record number 1046/4/93] Archives New Zealand Wellington

⁸² Ibid

⁸³ Ibid

⁸⁴ Ibid

⁸⁵ Ibid

⁸⁶ Ibid

⁸⁷ Diana Wichtel 'The Holocaust – it's time for the stories to be told,' *New Zealand Listener*, Auckland, 21 May 1994

Project not long after its inception. She gathers that the group's founding was 'in response to David Irving and Holocaust denial, there was a group in the community who thought that maybe we should be bearing witness in the way that they were doing in other places.'⁸⁸ Bruell also reasoned that 'our community of survivors was getting smaller, they were dying and maybe we should be recording their histories.'⁸⁹ Apart from survivors, the project also interviewed others who had been touched in some way by the Holocaust experience, for example Tapu Hopkinson, a member of the Maori Battalion who took part in the discovery of a concentration camp in Italy.⁹⁰ Bruell recalls the reactions of the Jewish and wider communities to the oral histories as 'very positive,' especially because many of those interviewed are no longer alive.⁹¹ These interviews played an important role in tying New Zealand to the Holocaust in a way that had not been done before.

In 1993 a major Holocaust memorial was established in Auckland. It was unveiled at the Greys Avenue Synagogue in April during the annual *Yom HaShoah* commemorative service and was advertised in the April issue of the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle*.⁹² Ruth Filler organised the establishment of the memorial: 'What happened was somebody had come from overseas many years ago and said 'where is your Holocaust memorial?' and at that stage we didn't have one.'⁹³ A committee was set up that included Walter Hirsh: 'we felt that as the years slide by that if we didn't do something fairly soon that it may become too late because the people with the drive to do it would not be here.'⁹⁴ Money was raised and a memorial sculpture was commissioned and unveiled in 1993. The next year, during the 1994 *Yom HaShoah* commemoration, a second part of the memorial was unveiled:

⁸⁸ Interview with Author by Claire Bruell, Auckland, New Zealand, 10 November 2010

⁸⁹ Ibid

⁹⁰ Ibid

⁹¹ Ibid

⁹² Advertisements 'Yom HaShoah,' *NZJC*, April 1993, p.32

⁹³ Interview with Ruth F.

⁹⁴ Interview with Walter H.

several plaques containing the names of relatives of the Auckland Jewish community who had perished in the Holocaust.⁹⁵ The plaques themselves are a testament to the weight the Holocaust carries within the Jewish community here, as Hirsh states: ‘here you’ve got this tiny little Jewish community and you’ve blimmin’ panels, one after the other.’⁹⁶

In September 1994 Auckland’s Jewish community established another Holocaust memorial, at Waikumete Cemetery outside the city. A large granite monument was erected and the ceremony was attended by people from the Jewish community and others, including some city councillors.⁹⁷ Ruth Filler and Walter Hirsh were again involved in the organising committee for this memorial, which now houses ashes from Auschwitz that were brought to New Zealand by a survivor who gifted them to Filler to be used as deemed appropriate.⁹⁸ The ashes were interred in 1997 and the ceremony was covered by the wider press, such as the *Dominion*.⁹⁹ In 1995, the Wellington Jewish community established a memorial stone in the Jewish section of Makara Cemetery. David Zwartz recalls that the main thought was ‘that there should be something more visible in the Wellington community, to be a focal point for commemoration.’¹⁰⁰ The memorial stone was officially unveiled on January 27 1995, the fiftieth anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, in a ceremony attended by members of the Jewish community.¹⁰¹ Zwartz states: ‘I think for many things there needs to be a focal point. Like the cenotaph and war memorials up and down New Zealand for ANZAC day.’¹⁰² The connection Zwartz makes is very important

⁹⁵ ‘Dedication of Memorial Plaques in Auckland,’ *NZJC*, May 1994, p.1

⁹⁶ Interview with Walter H.

⁹⁷ ‘Memorial Unveiled,’ *NZJC*, November 1994, p.19

⁹⁸ Interview with Ruth F.

⁹⁹ ‘Auschwitz ashes laid to rest in Auckland,’ *The Dominion*, 24 November 1997, p.11

¹⁰⁰ Interview with David Z.

¹⁰¹ ‘Wellington Auschwitz Commemoration,’ *NZJC*, March 1995, p28

¹⁰² Interview with David Z.

as he links Holocaust commemoration with war commemoration, aspiring to the same kind of national status. This event was also covered by the wider press.¹⁰³

Establishing permanent memorial sites for the Holocaust is in keeping with the New Zealand tradition of war memorials and cenotaphs, and connects with New Zealand's tradition of memorialising the past. The New Zealand war experience has been inextricably linked to memorials both here and abroad, for example at Gallipoli, the Somme, and Crete. This is also the case with site of Holocaust memorialisation, such as the concentration camps and mass graves of Europe, memorial museums such as Yad Vashem, as well as memorials like that at Makara cemetery in Wellington. Sites of commemoration both at home and at the actual location of the events commemorated reinforce already strong connections to the past. New Zealand's culture of memory towards its experiences in war can be linked to the culture of memory in commemorating the Holocaust. Over the past three decades this has become more obvious, as the Holocaust has moved from an almost exclusively Jewish commemorative event to something that has shifted increasingly into the wider community.

Up until this point the major permanent memorials to the Holocaust and its victims in New Zealand were situated within the spheres of the Jewish community, within synagogues and Jewish sections of cemeteries. However, in 1997 this changed when the Holocaust Gallery opened at the Auckland War Memorial Museum. Once again, Ruth Filler was involved in the planning and organising of the gallery. She sought financial support through sponsorship from a man who was originally from the Netherlands and 'was hidden like Anne Frank, behind walls during the persecution... we approached them and asked if they would be able to sponsor a room, we had got permission from authorities

¹⁰³ 'Auschwitz,' *The Evening Post*, 24 January 1995, p.3

at the museum.’¹⁰⁴ The gallery opened in October 1997 to some publicity and a statement from the museum director that the exhibit showed not only the impact of the Holocaust on New Zealand Jews but also carried a ‘larger warning about racism in general.’¹⁰⁵ The exhibition came with an educational booklet for school children to learn more about the events surrounding the Holocaust and its New Zealand connections.

Exhibitions relating to the Holocaust were numerous in the mid to late 1990s. The first of these was an exhibition of drawings by children who were interned at Theresienstadt, a concentration camp and ghetto situated in what is now the Czech Republic, which opened in 1996.¹⁰⁶ With this exhibition came a booklet, containing facsimiles of some of the drawings as well as some poems written by children, and factual information about Theresienstadt and the Holocaust.¹⁰⁷ In 1997 the first touring Anne Frank exhibition came to New Zealand, and gained publicity throughout the country.¹⁰⁸ In 1998 an exhibition entitled *Precious Legacy: the Nazi Confiscation of Jewish Treasures* came to Auckland Museum. The exhibit contained treasures from the Jewish Museum in Prague, which was saved from destruction when the Nazis invaded the city and seized the items, hoping to establish a museum displaying the treasures of an extinct race.¹⁰⁹ The exhibition opened on July 31 and ran for three months.¹¹⁰ Exhibitions reach a wide audience throughout the country, people not only travelled to some of the exhibits such as the Holocaust Gallery but other exhibitions, such as the Anne Frank exhibit, travelled throughout New Zealand itself.

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Ruth F.

¹⁰⁵ ‘Gallery looks at Holocaust,’ *The Press*, 28 October 1997, p.6

¹⁰⁶ ‘Children’s Exhibition Opening,’ *NZJC*, April 1996, p.3

¹⁰⁷ Information Booklet, *Children of the Holocaust: Drawings from the Terezin Concentration Camp New Zealand Tour 1996-1997*, Auckland, 1996

¹⁰⁸ Hank Schouten ‘Anne Frank Remembered,’ *The Evening Post*, 19 March 1997, p.3
‘Exhibition on Anne Frank,’ *The Press*, 20 October 1997, p.4

¹⁰⁹ Michele Hewitson, ‘Rare glimpse of a persecuted people,’ *New Zealand Herald*, 25 July 1998, p.H7

¹¹⁰ ‘Confiscated treasures on display,’ *The Press*, 3 June 1998, p.38

From the late 1990s through to the present, there was also an emergence of stories appearing in newspapers and magazines about survivors living in New Zealand, as well as others with ties to the Holocaust. In 1997 an article appeared in the *New Zealand Herald* regarding a 200 year old Hebrew scroll from Prague which was given to Beth Shalom Synagogue in Auckland and was dedicated in a ceremony to remember the Holocaust.¹¹¹ The July 25-26 1998 issue of the *Weekend Herald* carried a large article published to coincide with the *Precious Legacy* exhibit, and contained the reflections of a member of the second generation, Kirsten Warner, about the impact the Holocaust has had on her life.¹¹² In 1999 an obituary for survivor and prominent Jewish community member Sol Filler appeared in the *New Zealand Herald*, lauding his contributions to Holocaust education and chronicling key points of his life story.¹¹³

In 2003 the book *Mixed Blessings: New Zealand Children of Holocaust Survivors Remember* was published. It was a compilation of reminiscences from people whose parents were either refugees from Europe or survived the Holocaust, and also included recipes from each contributor.¹¹⁴ The book was edited by Deborah Knowles, herself a member of the second generation through her father. Knowles recalls that the idea for the book came from a member of the Auckland Second Generation Group who suggested everyone bring in their favourite recipes.¹¹⁵ Knowles had been thinking about writing a book about the New Zealand second generation for some time: 'I thought recipes was something that was not confrontational and might be of interest to the wider

¹¹¹ Mary Jane Boland 'Hebrew Scroll and Holocaust Survivor reunited,' *New Zealand Herald*, 2 May 1997, p.A14

¹¹² Kirsten Warner 'Survivors: living with the past,' *Weekend Herald*, 25-26 July 1998, p.H4

¹¹³ Michele Hewitson 'Holocaust survivor famed for bread and life,' *New Zealand Herald*, 10 September 1999, p.A13

¹¹⁴ Knowles ed.

¹¹⁵ Interview with Deborah K. & Lilla W.

community.¹¹⁶ The release of the book garnered publicity both in the Jewish and wider press, with interviews with Knowles and reviews of the book appearing.¹¹⁷ A book such as this was the first of its kind in New Zealand and demonstrated a certain amount of growth in Holocaust commemoration and education through the stories of New Zealanders directly linked to the event itself. There have been numerous memoirs and interviews with refugees and survivors in New Zealand but the children of this group were never really the focus of any kind of attention until now.

For the rest of the 2000s the Holocaust made more appearances through commemorative and educational events. These included Holocaust seminars at universities, such as one held in 2003 at Auckland University.¹¹⁸ In 2005 the sixtieth anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz was marked with several news articles.¹¹⁹ The year 2007 was an important year for Holocaust education in New Zealand with the opening of the Wellington Holocaust Research and Education Centre.¹²⁰ The Centre was an outgrowth of the original Holocaust Gallery at the Wellington Jewish Community Centre. Steven Sedley, a child survivor of the Budapest Ghetto, refugee from Europe and one of the founders of the Centre, recalls that after the 2005 Holocaust commemorations:

...there were so many people there for whom the Holocaust had meaning, and after that I tapped a number of very able people on the shoulder and we formed a committee to set up the Holocaust Centre, persuaded the Jewish community to give us this room, and two years later, we existed.¹²¹

¹¹⁶ Ibid

¹¹⁷ Catherine Masters 'Awful past reaches into the present,' *New Zealand Herald*, 26 April 2003, p.A10
'Lessons for New Migrants in *Mixed Blessings*,' *NZJC*, August 2003, p.14

¹¹⁸ 'Auckland Holocaust Seminar,' *NZJC*, April 2003, p.23

¹¹⁹ Colin Patterson 'Lest we forget Auschwitz,' *the Dominion Post*, 27 January 2005, p.5

¹²⁰ Lane Nichols 'Life and death in exhibition,' *the Dominion Post*, 13 April 2007, p.5

¹²¹ Interview by Author with Steven Sedley, Wellington, New Zealand, 16 November 2010

Inge Woolf, a refugee from Vienna and current Director of the Centre, believes those involved thought that the Centre 'was really important that this [the Holocaust] is not forgotten and that we developed it into... a real centre for research and education in New Zealand.'¹²² The Centre now welcomes roughly eight hundred school students per year, mostly from the Wellington region but also from New Plymouth and the South Island.¹²³ Governor-General Anand Satyanand attended the grand opening of the Centre and stated that the Centre 'will place the memory of the Holocaust before New Zealanders in very real terms.'¹²⁴ He also stated that people who visit the centre will 'derive respect from the many histories which together form the wider story of New Zealand and New Zealanders.'¹²⁵

Since the opening of the Centre there have been other events that have drawn attention to the Holocaust within the wider public. In November 2008 a Concert of Remembrance took place on the seventieth anniversary of *Kristallnacht*, the Night of Broken Glass, at the Michael Fowler Centre in Wellington.¹²⁶ In 2009, after a group of students from Auckland Grammar school posed for pictures at the Auckland War Memorial Museum giving the Nazi salute, and kissing the swastika, the opportunity arose for the students to be educated about the Holocaust by survivors. Inge Woolf wanted a meeting between the students and Holocaust survivors, and Race Relations Conciliator Joris de Bres encouraged schools to visit the Centre in Wellington to educate students about the Holocaust.¹²⁷ This displays the Centre's use as a corrective educational institution, where students who have displayed ignorant behaviour can be educated in the

¹²² Interview by Author with Inge Woolf, Wellington, New Zealand, 17 November 2010

¹²³ Interview with Stephen S.

¹²⁴ Anand Satyanand, *Opening of Wellington Holocaust Centre*, 15 April 2007, <http://www.govt.govt.nz/node/633>, last accessed 25 August 2010

¹²⁵ *Ibid*

¹²⁶ Advertisement, *Concert of Remembrance: 70th Anniversary of Kristallnacht*, Wellington, 2008

¹²⁷ Michael Foxc 'Talk to us Holocaust survivor tells boys,' *the Dominion Post*, 20 October 2009, p.3

history of the Holocaust. With the Wellington Holocaust Research and Education Centre, a permanent place of learning and commemoration is now available in New Zealand.

In February 2010 the Anne Frank exhibition *Anne Frank: a History for Today* came to New Zealand and is touring here until mid 2012.¹²⁸ The exhibition garnered nationwide publicity. When it opened at Te Papa in Wellington the *Dominion Post* published an article chronicling the exhibition's journey to these shores and the man who brought it here, Boyd Klap.¹²⁹ Letters were sent to various newspapers concerning the exhibition. One, published in the *Dominion Post*, argued that the grant the New Zealand Lotteries Commission gave to the Anne Frank exhibition was part of a political whitewashing campaign by the New Zealand government to 'engender sympathy for the Israeli Government' and argued the exhibit 'has nothing to do with this country directly.'¹³⁰ Another letter, to the *Waikato Times*, argues that a new law implemented by the government regarding the screening of unborn children for birth defects and abnormalities is a programme of eugenics, and while remembering the Holocaust through the Anne Frank exhibition is important 'let us acknowledge that the brutal and inhuman practice of state-funded eugenics is alive and well in New Zealand.'¹³¹ This year, 2011, a biography of Clare Galambos-Winter, Hungarian Holocaust survivor and former member of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, was published, entitled *the Violinist: Clare Galambos Winter Holocaust Survivor*. The biography traces Winter's life from her childhood and teenage years in Hungary through to her experiences in the Holocaust, her emigration and subsequent life in

¹²⁸ Exhibition Itinerary, *Anne Frank Exhibition*, <http://issues.co.nz/annefrank/Exhibition+Itinerary>, last accessed 31 March 2011

¹²⁹ Hank Schouten 'Anne Frank's poignant tale comes to Te Papa,' *the Dominion Post*, 9 February 2010, p.5

¹³⁰ Letter, *the Dominion Post*, 13 February 2010, p.4

¹³¹ Letter, *the Waikato Times*, 29 May 2010, p.6

New Zealand, and how she has spoken about her experiences and shared them with the wider public over the years.¹³²

It is clear that there has been a substantial growth in commemoration and education of the Holocaust in New Zealand in the past three decades. The 1980s were a definitive turning point, leading the way to a great number of exhibits and establishment of memorials in the 1990s and into the new millennium. What does this growth say about New Zealand's consciousness of the Holocaust and how it approaches commemoration and education of it on a wider scale? The Jewish community here was painfully aware of the persecution in Europe from very early on, and has worked on commemorating and educating the community about it since the 1940s. Unlike other nations this awareness did not shift to the wider New Zealand community until much later in the twentieth century. The fact that the Jewish community here is so small, and its survivor population is even smaller, could mean that the way in which it commemorates the Holocaust is slightly different to elsewhere. There is also the fact that Jewish identity in New Zealand is somewhat unique. This stems from the fact that, as Ruth Filler points out, 'New Zealand is so remote from Europe.'¹³³ Also, as Deborah Knowles and Lilla Wald state, New Zealand at the time of the Second World War and for a number of decades afterwards was very monocultural in its outlook, as Wald points out: 'In New Zealand they had to assimilate, they had to blend in... in New Zealand there were so few, and so spread out.'¹³⁴ This can be seen in the size and character of the Jewish community in New Zealand, which is unique in that certain distinguishable groups, such as the ultra-Orthodox, 'have little relevance in the New Zealand Jewish setting.'¹³⁵

¹³² Sarah Gaitanos *The Violinist: Clare Galambos Winter Holocaust Survivor*, Wellington, 2011

¹³³ Interview with Ruth F.

¹³⁴ Interview with Deborah K. & Lilla W.

¹³⁵ Levine, *The New Zealand Jewish Community*, p.21

Survivors and refugees within the Jewish community did not begin speaking about their experiences until decades later, for example Ruth and Sol Filler and Hanka Pressburg. There could be any number of reasons for this, for example the survivors were now in a new country and some would have certainly wanted to focus on their new lives and to rebuild, in some cases to escape their terrible memories.¹³⁶ Many refugees and survivors in New Zealand tried to look to the future - nostalgia and homesickness were seen as self-indulgent.¹³⁷ These feelings were similar to those seen in other countries. However, it took longer here for survivors and refugees to start speaking out than elsewhere, in all probability because the community was so small, New Zealand was so monocultural at the time, and there would have been a strong desire to fit in with the established Jewish community. Commemoration of the Holocaust was for some time a private matter dealt with within the family and at times community sphere, and some did not begin speaking about their experiences until the 1980s onwards.

Not only was the mid 1980s onward a time when people within the Jewish and some within the wider community began to realise that survivors were getting older and preserving their memories was important, but it was also the 1985 commemoration that tapped into the connection New Zealand had with the Holocaust. This brought the Jewish and survivor community more into focus in the wider public sphere and helped the Jewish community to identify with the Holocaust as an important part of modern Jewish history. A significant way in which commemoration of the Holocaust touched the wider community from the mid 1980s onward was through the way in which New Zealand commemorates and deals with its own past, especially with regard to ANZAC Day. This commemoration is an important annual event that reminds New Zealanders of their connections to the past,

¹³⁶ Barbara Engelking *Holocaust and Memory*, Emma Harris trans., New York, 2001, p.308

¹³⁷ Beaglehole *A Small Price to Pay*, p.123

just as the *Yom HaShoah* and International Holocaust Memorial Day commemorations remind people of their connections to the Holocaust. The period of the First and Second World Wars played an immeasurable part in shaping New Zealand's identity as a nation; as with nations like Britain, revisiting the past through commemorations affirms the legitimacy of nationhood.¹³⁸ Bringing the Holocaust into the picture through the aforementioned commemorations could potentially help reaffirm New Zealand's ties with the past and the reasons why so many soldiers went to Europe and elsewhere to fight the Axis powers in the Second World War.

With Holocaust consciousness in New Zealand, these two aspects have played a very valuable role especially in the decades since the 1980s. Now that many survivors and refugees within New Zealand have either died or are very old, it is through testimony many of them have left behind that Holocaust education and commemoration continues. The Holocaust and by extension genocide in general are not extensively taught in New Zealand. This means ignorance on a certain level continues and that in turn commemoration and education of the Holocaust are more important than ever before, despite the smaller number of survivors and refugees here and our isolation geographically and in time span. Inge Woolf has some valuable words regarding the importance of education and commemoration in New Zealand: 'we have to make people aware that this is an issue for everyone no matter how remote they are or where it happened. Because it can happen anywhere.'¹³⁹ Commemorations have played an enormously important role in the growth of Holocaust consciousness in New Zealand; but with the passage of time it has become clear that more education is needed, to combat the ignorance that seeps into communities after those who were witness to terrible events can no longer speak for themselves.

¹³⁸ Macdonald, p.65

¹³⁹ Interview with Inge W.

Conclusion

There are common threads that tie each of the issues examined in this research together, and which provide possible reasons for the apathetic, at times piteous, and sometimes interested responses of the wider community to Holocaust related issues. One is the isolation of New Zealand and its Jewish community from much of the rest of the world. New Zealand is very far from Europe, which is one of the reasons why those who came here as refugees and survivors chose this country, along with family ties and immigration quotas. Not only is the country geographically isolated but it is also isolated culturally. There has at times been a tendency to be unaware of the wider world. The obvious exception to this rule is the influence of Australia, being our close ally with a shared history in terms of colonisation and also military campaigns from which originated ANZAC Day. With the isolation of the nation comes a level of ignorance that would perhaps not be there, were it not for this remoteness. The size and nature of New Zealand's Jewish and survivor community is also a thread that connects the issues examined. The Jewish population of New Zealand has always been exceptionally small, especially when compared to other Western nations. In the 2006 census the number of those who identified as Jewish numbered 6,858.¹ The community is very assimilated into wider society. The Jewish community, because of this assimilation, also has a tendency to not speak out about issues that may concern it directly, sometimes due to concern over negative reactions.

¹ 2006 Census, Religious Affiliation, Statistics New Zealand

The Holocaust refugee and survivor population within New Zealand is extremely small by the standards of other nations. In the 1930s and 1940s, though many Jewish people from Europe applied, only a tiny minority were granted entry into the country. This meant that there would be no large enclaves of for example Hungarian Jews or German Jews as seen elsewhere. The refugees and survivors who came to New Zealand had only a tiny population with similar experiences to their own, and the already established Jewish population within the country was so assimilated that the refugees and survivors were faced with adapting to a completely new way of life. This adaptation to new cultural conditions was compounded by the fact that after arriving many did not want to speak openly about their experiences before coming to New Zealand. This kind of silence is not unique to New Zealand and has occurred elsewhere, to varying extents and sparking numerous debates.² However, it is the singular makeup of the Jewish and refugee and survivor community within New Zealand and the role it played in the new refugee and survivors' lives that is important to New Zealand's unique brand of Holocaust consciousness.

The concept of New Zealand's geographic isolation, and at times historical isolation and ignorance of history, playing a role in how Holocaust consciousness has developed may seem a misnomer in some respects. New Zealanders are prolific travellers and the Overseas Experience (OE) is a rite of passage for many young people. Despite this there is a thread of cultural isolation and at times apathy that runs through the country. Anthony Hubbard mentioned this regarding the war criminals controversy and it applies to all aspects of Holocaust consciousness explored. When a culture of isolation exists it is not surprising that consciousness or awareness of an event, no matter how significant, is not as strong as elsewhere. The impact the Holocaust has had in countries such as the United

² Novick

States and Australia is larger for a number of reasons, most relevantly because of the size of their Jewish communities, and in turn the refugee and survivor communities. Although the geographical isolation of other countries varies, for example the United States is closer to continental Europe than New Zealand, the size and outspokenness of the already established Jewish populations meant that there was almost certainly more Holocaust awareness from the outset than in a small isolated nation with a very small Jewish population. Australia is also geographically isolated from the events of the Holocaust, but with a much larger Jewish and survivor population that is more diverse in some ways and also more outspoken about Holocaust related issues than New Zealand.

The possible reasoning behind the somewhat apathetic attitude towards the war criminals controversy could be explained by the aforementioned reasons. New Zealand's own record regarding the Displaced Persons Programme after the Second World War could also explain the way in which the war criminals controversy played out. New Zealand immigration policy was very harsh before and even after the Second World War. British migrants were preferred, and the preference regarding continental European migrants swayed towards Caucasians. Jewish refugees and migrants were not favoured, partly because of their perceived difference, compounded by the fact that many of them were of German origin or from territories occupied by Nazi Germany, making them so called enemy aliens. In the decades following the arrival of Displaced Persons apathy towards the Holocaust and the possibility of war criminals settling here grew. This could have stemmed from the fact that only a very small number of Holocaust refugees and survivors emigrated here, therefore there was no large community that was able speak out when the issue of war criminals arose, as the Jewish community did in Australia. This is where the quietness and assimilation of the Jewish community in New Zealand plays a role in explaining at least in part why the war criminals controversy occurred in the manner it did.

Regarding colonial comparisons with the Holocaust, the main issue is New Zealand's attitude to and history with the United Nations Genocide Convention and its colonial past. When the Genocide Convention was first introduced in the late 1940s New Zealand was reticent to either sign or ratify the Convention. Some thought it might set a dangerous precedent; others thought there were more pressing issues at hand. A number of groups and individuals pressured the government over decades and eventually it relented and ratified the Convention, but it took such a significant period of time to produce this result that it is certainly possible that this ambivalence towards the Convention stemmed from ambivalence towards the Maori sovereignty movement and the issues the movement raised. New Zealand has in the past and even now had a certain amount of trouble confronting the realities of the colonial period and the treatment of Maori then and for a number of decades afterward. This ambivalence flowed over into the issue of using a term such as 'holocaust' when describing the Maori experience. What also comes out of this issue is that like other nations confronting a painful colonial past the use of a term such as 'holocaust' draws heated opinions and emotion from both sides. Perhaps the attitudes shown towards the Genocide Convention and the colonial past show a lack of understanding about the Holocaust on both sides.

The most important theme related to sporadic Holocaust denial in New Zealand is that of freedom of speech. Freedom of speech is enshrined in the 1990 *Bill of Rights Act*, and it is clear from the public responses to the Hayward, Kupka and van Leuween affairs that most overwhelmingly supported freedom of speech in all cases, even when it concerns Holocaust denial. The fact that freedom of speech seemed to be championed over academic standards is indicative of the responses and reactions seen especially towards the Hayward case. What does this say about New Zealand's consciousness of the Holocaust? When placed within the frame of freedom of speech it appears that a certain amount of ignorance

and apathy exists here. There also seems to be a critical misunderstanding of what exactly Holocaust denial is by many, especially within the press and general public. With this misunderstanding comes a certain indifference towards the offence that Holocaust denial causes. This indifference is combined with the wish to defend freedom of speech and it is therefore not hard to see how so many people could come to the defence of something that upon closer inspection should not be defended. All three controversies share the freedom of speech theme, and freedom of speech is something to be cherished and defended. Many people, within the Jewish and non-Jewish communities, argued when hate speech is involved, or speech based on untruths, the argument in a case such as Hayward's is left null and void. In New Zealand it would seem that the aforementioned lack of Holocaust consciousness and misunderstanding of Holocaust denial played a large part in all three controversies.

New Zealand has a culture of memory regarding commemorations and memorials. ANZAC Day, when the public pays its respects to the fallen of numerous wars, including the Second World War, and those who currently serve in the armed forces, is the best example of this. New Zealanders are reminded of their connections to the past and national identity and nationhood is asserted, just as Holocaust commemorations remind people of their connections to the Holocaust. How Holocaust commemoration and education has come to fit into this paradigm says something about how the Holocaust has in recent decades shifted from being commemorated within the Jewish community to the wider community. As stated the Jewish community of New Zealand is highly assimilated and in general not as outspoken as other Jewish communities, for example in Australia. The movement of Holocaust commemoration from within the private Jewish community sphere into a wider public sphere is interesting in that it occurred that much later here than elsewhere. By bringing Holocaust commemorations to the wider public sphere there was a

chance to make the wider public more conscious than they had been in the decades beforehand. It also showed to a sometimes apathetic wider public that there are indeed connections between New Zealand and the Holocaust through the survivors and refugees who came here, to the members of the Jewish community who lost relatives or friends, and to New Zealanders who were touched in some capacity by the Holocaust.

Education about the Holocaust in secondary schools and universities has been slow to grow, but today it is clear that there have been some improvements. Teachers now have access to a curriculum for teaching the Holocaust in schools, with the Wellington Holocaust Research and Education Centre providing through their website a full curriculum with lesson plans and ideas for methods to encourage student participation and thought about not just the Holocaust but its wider implications for human rights.³ At the university level the Holocaust has also become a module of study not just within the subject of history, but also within other subjects such as religious studies. For example Victoria University in Wellington has a third year history paper about the Holocaust and Genocide in general, along with politics papers about human rights and dictatorships, and religious studies paper examining Judaism, with some reference to the Holocaust. The University of Auckland offers a history paper examining Nazi Germany and its legacies, Otago University offers a history paper about totalitarian regimes, and Canterbury University offers a paper in its languages and cultures department which studies the Holocaust and its legacies. The Holocaust is clearly becoming increasingly part of the curriculum in universities and secondary schools. These education modules have come later than those in many other countries, such as Australia, but it is a promising signal that consciousness of the Holocaust is being raised within New Zealand, at least to an extent.

³ Wellington Holocaust Research and Education Centre, *The Holocaust and the New Zealand School Curriculum*, <http://www.holocaustcentre.org.nz/index.php/education/teaching-the-holocaust/57-the-holocaust-and-the-new-zealand-school-curriculum>, last accessed 20 June 2011

Even given these changes over the past three decades in the way New Zealand has approached and been conscious of the Holocaust, there is still a level of ignorance and apathy within the wider community. What could be done in the coming years to counter this and improve Holocaust consciousness in New Zealand further? Most of the interviewees for this thesis agreed that education is the best possible way to combat ignorance and to help stimulate interest in not only the Holocaust but also other genocides around the world, their origins and how to combat and prevent such atrocities happening in future. In a country such as New Zealand, so geographically and in certain ways culturally isolated, that tends to look at events of the past as long gone history, with such a small Jewish community and even smaller refugee and survivor community, the idea of education about the Holocaust may seem difficult. However, this could be made easier if the connections New Zealand has with the Holocaust are clearly demonstrated. New Zealand may have been late in its Holocaust consciousness, and perhaps the country's type of consciousness is not as developed or comprehensive as in other countries, but there are particular aspects to this consciousness which make the possibility of further education and consciousness a fascinating prospect.

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