AMERICA'S RESPONSE

IN THE United States, as elsewhere, the Eichmann trial (April 11 through August 14) commanded exceptional attention. The following summary outlines this response as exemplified in the editorials of about 100 major newspapers, in a few significant editorials and articles published by the largest general magazines, on television, in films, and in the church press. Findings of opinion polls during the trial period are also included.

NEWSPAPERS AND GENERAL MAGAZINES

Thousands of newspaper editorials dealt with Eichmann between his capture, in May 1960, and the end of the court proceedings, in August 1961. The bulk of this comment was published at the opening of the trial (April 11). Few papers failed to print at least one editorial at this time, and many ran several in close succession—even though the ill-fated Cuban invasion and a spectacular Soviet space flight were competing for attention. Thereafter the volume fell off and only a minority of newspapers continued to comment regularly. A flurry of editorials appeared late in May, when Cuban Premier Fidel Castro offered to release captive invaders in exchange for American trucks; Castro was compared with Eichmann, whose offer to trade 1,000,000 Jewish lives for 10,000 trucks was then being reviewed in court. But neither this event, nor the beginning of Eichmann's defense (June 20), nor the end of the courtroom proceedings (August 14) produced an outpouring comparable to that in April.[1]

There was no consistent relationship between the political viewpoints of newspapers and their response to the Eichmann case. Opinion in conservative papers ranged from strong approval (as in the Philadelphia *Inquirer* and an advertisement in which the New York *Daily News* announced its coverage of the trial) to skepticism or opposition (as in the Chicago *Tribune*). The liberal press with conspicuous frequency took a critical attitude, at least in the early stages, some of the severest con-

[1] The verdict (see p. 104) was still pending as of the time of this report.

demnation coming from the Washington *Post* and the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch.* Perhaps the most consistently emphatic approval, on the other hand, was voiced by the liberal Republican New York *Herald Tribune.*

Most papers' opinions of the trial—e.g., the Hearst chain's favorable and the Scripps-Howard papers' critical or non-committal reaction—corresponded to their general attitudes toward Israel. But there were noteworthy exceptions. For example, the *Christian Science Monitor,* a stern critic of Israel's role in Middle East affairs, was full of praise for the trial, whereas the New York *Post,* despite its long-standing sympathy for Israel and large Jewish readership, initially expressed grave doubts.

Opinions followed no regional pattern, and papers in the same city often held opposed views. Neither does the volume of comment seem to have varied materially in different parts of the country; the supposedly isolationist Middle West showed as much interest as other regions.

A survey by AJCongress revealed that in many papers—e.g., the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*—editorial hostility was noticeably at variance with a favorable tone in news stories and features. Israel had never looked better in the news columns. Newsmen in Jerusalem were impressed with the seriousness of the proceedings, the freedom of access to officials and information sources, the openmindedness with which the Israeli public discussed the case, and the self-confidence of the young nation. Even in editorials, doubts about the trial were sometimes coupled with expressions of respect for Israel's proud spirit of independence (Omaha *World-Herald,* April 17).

With comment largely concentrated in April, opinion changes can be traced only roughly. Until early 1961 discussion centered on the legal and jurisdictional problems posed by Eichmann's capture and proposed trial, and the tone was predominantly critical. As the trial approached, these issues were not so much settled as laid aside. Discussion turned to the intent, significance, and probable effects of the trial, and press opinion took a decisively favorable turn. ADL, surveying more than 1,000 editorials, found that whereas comment at the time of Eichmann's capture had run about 7 to 3 against Israel, it now ran 10 to 3 in Israel's favor.

Legality

Israel's right to try Eichmann had been intermittently debated during 1960 and early 1961. Many highly qualified experts had remained firmly opposed, among them Telford Taylor, one-time U. S. representative at the Nuremberg trials (New York *Times Magazine,* January 22).

In April many newspapers, as well as the magazine *U. S. News and*

World Report (April 24), were still reviewing the negative arguments. The Pittsburgh *Post-Gazette and Sun-Telegraph*[2] quoted Oscar Handlin, professor of history at Harvard University: "There is no equitable basis for Israel's right to try crimes committed elsewhere before the state came into existence." The Hartford *Courant* stated:

> . . . There remains some doubt, after all the arguments and all the legalisms, as to whether what is called a trial is a trial. . . . It still remains true that two wrongs do not make a right. And the fact seems to be that Eichmann was kidnapped, not to say shanghaied, from Argentina to Israel by a strong-arm squad. And that is a crime in any man's league, even though its size, in relation to Eichmann's crimes, is as the atom to the earth.

The proceedings continued to be criticized for being of an *ex post facto* character. The Nuremberg precedent also was condemned, sometimes:

> We are sorry the Israelis have turned to the Nuernberg laws for precedents, because the Nuernberg trials were not a demonstration of 'legal progress.' They were a shocking turn backward to the morals and ethics of the Middle Ages. The purpose, as we said at the time, was to kill the losers [Chicago *American*, April 13].

A few papers repeated that an attempt should have been made to bring Eichmann before an international tribunal (Denver *Post*). Others asserted that Germany would gladly have tried him if given the opportunity:

> The Israelis should be given the privilege of unveiling Eichmann and his guilt for the world to see, then should send him where he belongs. The West German government is eager to point a moral. A trial there undoubtedly would give swift and sure death to the perpetrator of these horrible atrocities . . . [Dallas *News*, April 15].

A larger number of publications, however, rejected these ideas. *Newsweek* magazine (April 17) quoted nine experts who found the trial proper and expected it to be useful. Several newspapers made the point that whatever the theoretical merits of the case, no country except Israel had cared to do anything about it. "Did Germany, either East or West, ever make the slightest effort to bring Eichmann before a court of justice?" the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* asked. "Did anybody, aside from the Jews of Israel, make any move to find Eichmann?" Even if Israel had wanted to yield to a more certain jurisdiction, none would have been available, it was conceded by the Milwaukee *Journal*, which was otherwise critical of the trial. The Richmond *Times-Dispatch* (April 12) posed the alternative:

---

[2] Quotations from the general press date from April 9, 10, or 11, unless another date is given.

> Significant is the failure of any other country, or the UN, or other international body to put forward a rival claim to jurisdiction. The question arises whether Eichmann, as a symbol of genocidal mass murder, should have been allowed to go scot-free, without so much as sifting the evidence against him. No reputable jurist, to our knowledge, has suggested that alternative.

The trial was unconditionally accepted as legal, on the basis of the Nuremberg precedent, by a number of papers, including the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat* (April 17) and the Hearst chain. Others expressed a more guarded, *de facto* approval, on the ground that technicalities must not get in the way of trying unprecedented atrocities. "If there are legal doubts, there are far fewer ones of a moral nature," said the Baltimore *Evening Sun.* And the Cleveland *Plain Dealer,* after acknowledging the legal difficulties, concluded: "It may reasonably be asked whether Eichmann and his Nazi command ever gave the slightest consideration to fine legal points. . . ."

Intent of the Trial

At first the purpose of the proceedings evoked sharply opposed opinions. The allegedly extra-judicial role of the court had been attacked —significantly, in a Southern paper, the Richmond *News Leader*—as early as February 6. ("At a time when the sovereignty of states and nations is being eroded by courts that disregard the established framework of law in the human community, no nation can afford to serve the ends of ideologues. . . .") Later, the issuance of an official press kit by the Israeli government had called forth forebodings of a travesty of justice (Phoenix *Gazette,* March 28).

Similar objections were more widely voiced in April. The Milwaukee *Journal,* while acknowledging that the procedures would be "authentically judicial," likened their purpose to that of the Soviet purge trials; the Tulsa *Tribune* characterized the trial as "a new wailing wall—a show and spectacle carefully stage-managed to wring the maximum sympathy out of a dramatic exposure of Nazi genocide." Others expected an act of vengeance, not justice (Pittsburgh *Post-Gazette*), or asked whether Eichmann's real crime, like that of the defendants at Nuremberg, was to have been on the losing side (Hartford *Courant*). Some of the strongest condemnation came from the Washington *Post*:

> It is a mistake . . . to confuse the Eichmann trial with the processes of law or the administration of justice. It has little to do with either. . . . It is designed primarily to convey a message to the world. . . . Such utilization of the forms of law debases the high concept of justice. It reduces justice to what Socrates once called it long ago—"the interest of the stronger."

But the majority took a less negative stand. "Every criminal trial is in some degree a propaganda trial," the Boston *Globe* declared. The Hearst papers, the Chicago *Sun-Times,* the Philadelphia *Inquirer,* and others emphatically denied any element of vengeance.

One of Israel's avowed purposes in trying Eichmann was to document the evils of totalitarianism for the sake of present and future generations. As the case progressed, nearly all of the American press came to agree that such documentation was needed. Even at the outset, very few papers claimed that nothing new would be revealed (Syracuse *Herald-American*), while a great many asserted that the full story of the Nazi crimes was yet to be told. The historical value of the unfolding evidence was repeatedly stressed (*Christian Science Monitor,* May 18), though sometimes with the qualification that the criminals' psychological motivation remained obscure (New York *Herald Tribune,* July 30).

Americans until now had failed to face the full truth, many editorials acknowledged or implied. They had not been able to believe the horrors previously revealed (Akron *Beacon Journal*) or had been too quick to forget them:

> How many Americans since the end of the war have given a second thought to the victims cooked in brick ovens by the carload or shot and stacked like cordwood in trenches for the next victims to bury? . . . Not enough of us, to be sure, for these crimes occurred an ocean away. They left us with sorrow, but even it was short-lived [Jacksonville *Florida Times Union*].

At the outset the Dallas *News* (April 15), among other papers, discussed the significance of the trial for young people who know Hitler only from history books: "A new generation should be reminded . . . that the savagery of Attila was practiced in their generation with efficient factory methods." After the testimony ended, the same paper found (August 24) that this aim had been accomplished—that the "shocking revelation of a terror machine they never knew existed . . . hit the young people of the world in their idealistic hearts."

Israel's second aim—to set an explicit precedent that would make genocide technically a crime—evoked much less response. The Chicago *Sun-Times* (July 4) urged in a long editorial that the United States delay no longer in ratifying the UN Genocide Convention, but few papers echoed this thought or called for the establishment of an international criminal court.

Impartiality

It was recognized that the trial could be of immense value in demonstrating the impartial rule of law—"to affirm that the principles of

justice have endured, that even this wretched figure can have his full day in an Israeli court" (New York *Post*)—but there was widespread doubt whether Eichmann actually would get a fair trial.

Several papers, including the Chicago *Tribune* (April 6), questioned the judges' ability, though not necessarily their desire, to remain impartial, because they themselves were victims of Nazism. Others felt that Eichmann's defense would be crippled by Israel's refusal to grant immunity to German witnesses (Washington *Star*), or pointed out that Israel, otherwise a country without the death penalty, had enacted a law under which Eichmann might be hanged (Raleigh *News and Observer*). The trial was likened to a kangaroo court in the Scripps-Howard papers:

> Any court in the civilized world would be prejudiced. . . . Without doubt the Israeli judges are learned enough in the law to limit the record to a few of the pertinent facts and establish a plausible case for taking jurisdiction. But when it is all added up it amounts to policy on our own frontier when a horse thief was caught in the act: "Give him a fair trial and hang him" [Pittsburgh *Press*, April 14; the New York *World Telegram and Sun* omitted the last sentence].

Still, even before the court convened, the skeptical voices seem to have been a minority. "It is a tribute to the integrity of the Israeli authorities that the trial will be eminently fair," the New York *Daily Mirror* (Hearst) stated, and most other papers seem to have felt the same, many emphasizing that the judges were obviously aware of their historic role:

> Wisely, the Israeli judges recognize that important legal concepts, with immense implications for the future, truly are involved. . . . The world wants Adolf Eichmann tried with such scrupulous fairness that no suspicion of martyrdom ever can attach to the name of this monster among monsters. In its attention to learned defense argument, the Israeli court has made a proper beginning [Philadelphia *Bulletin*, April 15].

In the weeks that followed, satisfaction with the proceedings became virtually universal. On May 18 the *Christian Science Monitor* acknowledged that "despite some legal misgivings at the outset, the trial has proceeded with decorum and apparently with full regard for the rights of the defendant." For many editorialists, legalistic doubts were overshadowed, if not necessarily refuted, by the fairness of the court:

> If the state of Israel has not yet made a convincing show of its right to try this German refugee picked up in Argentina, it has impressed the world with the austere dignity of its court procedure. There has been no hint of a Roman circus . . . [Louisville *Courier-Journal*, July 28].

"Many Germans are convinced that Eichmann . . . has had a fairer trial than he would have got in Germany today," said the New York

Herald Tribune (July 30), because Israeli law, unlike the German, "leans over backward to protect the accused." The most inspiring aspect of the trial, in the *Herald Tribune*'s opinion, was that "protection for that fragile thing called justice has been maintained unwaveringly."

Wider Effects

In April much speculation centered on the possibility that the trial might reawaken hatred of Germany among the free nations, to the detriment of the Western alliance—a possibility that had been discussed, with great concern, by German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer. Germany had undergone a change of heart since 1945, many papers said. Adenauer's claim that Nazism in his country was dead was widely cited (e.g., in the Birmingham *News*), as was a statement by Premier David Ben-Gurion of Israel to the effect that today's Germany was not Hitler's (New York *Times*). The Phoenix *Republic* deplored current anti-Nazi films, articles, and broadcasts; the Richmond *Times-Dispatch* (April 12) quoted recent German expressions of contrition over Nazi crimes, and the Milwaukee *Journal* cited West Germany's prosecution of Nazi criminals and her acts of restitution to Jewish victims.

Skepticism toward Germany was much rarer than wholehearted acceptance. The New York *Post,* one of the few papers to sound repeated warning notes, discounted Adenauer's assertion of the absence of Nazism in Germany as a frantic attempt to win the confidence of nations reluctant to trust the Germans with nuclear weapons (April 12), and the New York *Herald Tribune* observed (April 4):

> It might be unjust to ascribe a cause-and-effect relationship to the Eichmann arrest and the newly disclosed plans to prosecute war criminals in Germany. The extent of the crackdown itself remains to be demonstrated. . . . With fifteen years of freedom behind them, and with advance notice of what is ahead, such criminals may be rather difficult to detect.

Frequently the atrocities of Communist regimes were equated with those of the Nazis ("Mankind should never be allowed to forget the horrors of Dachau and Buchenwald, any more than it should be allowed to forget Katyn Forest and the Hungarian Revolution," said the Phoenix *Republic*); but, not surprisingly, few editorials indicated how such crimes might be prosecuted—except for the Hearst papers, which suggested that organizations of Iron Curtain refugees might set up tribunals of their own, "even if lacking in legal status" (Los Angeles *Herald and Express,* April 15). The Soviet Union's anti-Jewish policy was noted

by the Richmond *Times-Dispatch* (April 17), in an editorial describing how the antisemitic aspects of the Nazi crimes were being played down in the Soviet press.

The probable effect of the trial on Israel and world Jewry evoked relatively little comment. A few publications feared a heightening of antisemitism; *Newsweek* (April 17) quoted Richard H. S. Crossman, a member of the British Parliament and friend of Zionism, to that effect. The Denver *Post* even asserted, without evidence, that a new wave of antisemitism had already begun. Later developments did not bear out these pronouncements.

A number of papers warned that Israel might be claiming the role of spokesman for all the world's Jews—an intention Premier Ben-Gurion had publicly disavowed, at the instance of the American Jewish Committee (see p. 284), following a controversy around the beginning of the year:

> Are crimes against Jews anywhere henceforth to be considered punishable in Israel? . . . The American Council for Judaism, a small group of non-Zionist Jews . . . has warned that the Eichmann trial will reinforce the charge of dual citizenship which has done Jews much damage already. And Premier Ben-Gurion of Israel hasn't helped any by his emotional charge that Jews who do not come to Israel are apostates to their race [Tulsa *Tribune*].

In a similar vein, the Pittsburgh *Post-Gazette* suggested that Israel's "excesses" in the Eichmann case might create an unfavorable reaction against Jews throughout the world, for whom Israel should not presume to act.

Actually, the distinction between Israel and world Jewry remained sharply drawn, at least in the American press. Not one paper seems to have identified America's Jews with Israel.

A salutary effect on Jewish-Gentile relations was forecast by the New York *Times* (". . . a healing catharsis that purges both nations [Israel and Germany] of a nightmare to the benefit of all free men"). T. S. Matthews, in a long, thoughtful article in the *Saturday Evening Post* (June 10) and another in the *Saturday Review* (July 8), speculated that Israel, by enforcing justice instead of demanding it hopelessly from God, might free non-Jews of a long-standing feeling of uneasiness and moral inferiority, and thereby pave the way toward better relations. One purpose of the trial, Matthews approvingly stated, was to establish the Jews in the eyes of the world as "a proud nation among other nations," and Jewishness as an admirable way of life.

Responsibility

Amid all this debate, Eichmann himself received only unqualified condemnation. Since his capture, he had inspired nothing but loathing and contempt in the American press—a reaction which his bureaucratic impassiveness in the face of the terrifying evidence did nothing to dispel. His self-pity, lack of dignity, and shirking of responsibility were censured, sometimes as typically German failings (Louisville *Courier-Journal,* July 28). His guilt was not questioned, and numerous editorials reiterated that no conceivable punishment could fit his crimes.

Eichmann's defense—that he had merely followed orders—was rejected out of hand by the overwhelming majority of papers, often before it was formally stated. A frequent comment was that a soldier must disobey orders contrary to moral or religious law, whatever the consequences—a principle laid down at Nuremberg, according to the *Christian Science Monitor* (April 18). The Washington *Post* (July 30), in discussing Eichmann's assertion that he might have risked death by disobeying, declared that certain conflicts of authority left no other way out. But only a few of the many papers that demanded this standard of conduct looked more deeply into the tragic choices it implies:

> Most Christian thinkers say a man has a higher obligation than to his military superiors—a duty to God's law before man's. But where does it begin? How about the men who dropped the A-bomb on Hiroshima, or the men who firebombed German cities? . . . How many innocents should a man be allowed to kill to win a war . . . or even to save soldiers' lives? Is there not something of "the end justifies the means" here? And, if so, are those fliers any better than the Nazis? [Wichita *Morning Eagle,* April 13].

In general, much of the voluminous comment on the problem of responsibility was marked by reluctance to come to grips with painful specifics. To be sure, there was a nearly universal consensus that the Eichmann case held a reproach for humanity at large. "In the Jerusalem courtroom, all mankind stands on trial," *Newsweek* said on April 17, paralleling the sentiment of many other publications. But the nature of mankind's guilt remained vague.

There was almost complete silence concerning the ways in which the failures of the free world had contributed to the catastrophe—with a major exception in *Life* magazine. As early as December 5, 1960, a *Life* editorial had recalled America's indifference to the fate of the Jewish victims, and had warned: "Anyone's wilful blindness to injustice anywhere makes him a conspirator with evil. . . . Let no citizen of any community use Eichmann as a scapegoat for his own sins of neglect and

unconcern." In a *Life* article by Harry Golden (April 21) the lesson was spelled out further:

> The revelations of the trial are likely to prove embarrassing to some of [Israel's] closest friends in the Western world. . . . All the doors were shut tight [to Jews who might have been released from German-occupied territory] and the only place where they could go, Palestine, was effectively sealed against them by Britain. . . . The roadbeds over which the daily boxcars of Jews traveled to extermination were never bombed—because the Russians said that these railroad tracks were too important to their advancing armies.

Eichmann as a Warning

For the most part, the American press saw in the trial less a review of past tragedies than a warning for the future—a warning against totalitarianism, demagoguery, and hate. This theme recurred in a great many papers, often in nearly identical words:

> Eichmann was a product of the state-controlled mind. There is no better moral for the decades to come: Man must ever remain the captain of his soul . . . [Dallas *News,* August 24].

> Eternal vigilance is required to safeguard individual liberty. . . . The blessing of freedom carries the responsibility of protecting it against the onslaughts of the mentally twisted and the morally misguided who would set race against race, creed against creed [Philadelphia *Inquirer*].

> What we need to watch out for is that other vicious madmen should not be permitted to rise to power and to bring disaster upon the human race [Los Angeles *Herald and Express,* June 24, and other Hearst papers].

That the world today is not proof against these dangers was often asserted. As early as February 5 the Providence *Journal* had emphasized that violent bigotry survived both in Europe and in the United States. "Let every people viewing either the victims or the sadists say to itself, 'There but for the grace of God stand we,' " the *Christian Science Monitor* (May 18) urged, warning that if a madness like Nazism were to recur, it might strike others than Jews and Germans. The Louisville *Courier-Journal* (July 28) elaborated on this thought:

> Couldn't any man's baser nature respond to so powerful a spell? And if Germany could debase her heritage as a civilized, cultured nation to wallow in such sickening excesses . . . is any nation sure proof against a double temptation of revenge for past reverses and power for a glorious future?

However, except for Communism, present-day sources of hate and totalitarianism were rarely named. Few papers were even as definite as the Providence *Journal,* which referred to "hate groups . . . ready to invoke the gun and the whip against minorities, ready to stir up group

hostilities, ready to subvert humanity itself to the purposes of self-appointed supermen." The New York *Post* was the most specific:

> Dachau and Buchenwald are the vilest caricatures of civilized man in the twentieth century. Are they unrelated to apartheid in South Africa, to the mass murder of freedom fighters in Hungary, to the indignities and oppressions inflicted on Mississippi Negroes, to the slave-labor battalions in Angola? The Germans achieved a certain record for the scope and depravity of their tortures, but let it not be said that they have no competition in our sad time. . . . What this proceeding can inspire is an agonizing reappraisal within the human conscience—not only with respect to antisemitism but to every form of bigotry, oppression and organized brutality.

Nor, finally, did many papers address themselves to the question whether the revelations in the courtroom would do more than momentarily jolt the world's conscience—whether they would succeed in leaving a lasting impress on the memory of mankind. One of the few to consider this subject was the New York *Times* (May 7), in a memorable editorial, "The Faces of the Dead":

> . . . This is the story, the mystery and the meaning of the trial of Adolf Eichmann. The nameless and faceless dead have received the blessing of remembrance and are again alive, vivid as a scream in the night, in the minds of men. . . .
>
> But how long will they live in the memory now so newly fresh? How long before they are returned to the final grave of the forever-forgotten, returned by man's desire to turn away from pain and by the very fact that their sufferings were so great and their numbers so many that sane men cannot—or will not—really retain comprehension of it all?
>
> How long before their resurrection ends? This will be the real verdict of the Eichmann trial and it will not be given by the judges in Jerusalem, but by each person who has read of the suffering and humiliation of the dead and heard their cries and seen their faces.

TELEVISION AND FILMS

Television news coverage of the trial was affected by Israel's decision to permit only one filming of the proceedings, by Capital Cities Broadcasting Corporation. American broadcasters disapproved of this procedure; yet, with the help of tapes flown in daily from Jerusalem, the networks reported the opening of the trial in exceptional detail. Substantial interest was sustained throughout the long proceedings. Thus, during the entire trial, one-hour summaries prepared by Quincy Howe and other leading correspondents were presented by the American Broadcasting Company once a week over 60 stations; in the New York area ABC gave commercially-sponsored half-hour summaries five evenings a week.

Numerous special programs on the television networks marked the be-

ginning of the court proceedings. On April 8 the National Broadcasting Company featured a debate, "Does Eichmann's Trial Serve the Cause of International Justice?" between Milton Katz of Harvard Law School (affirmative) and Herbert Wechsler of Columbia Law School (negative). On April 9 NBC devoted part of its Chet Huntley program to the trial, emphasizing the guilt of our civilization in letting the Nazi crimes happen. On the same day NBC began a two-part program, "The Trial of Adolf Eichmann," which included a recounting of Eichmann's capture, documentary films of the Nazi camps, interviews with Israeli officials, and a summary of the German reaction to the trial. In concluding the program, on April 23, the narrator, Frank McGee, interpreted the Eichmann case as an object lesson in group hate:

> Each of us who has ever allowed the shape of another's nose or the color of his skin . . . or permitted the way he worships his God . . . to poison our feelings towards that person has known a loss of reason that led Eichman to his madness. . . .

The mood of Israel on the eve of the trial was detailed on April 9 in a special ABC network program, "Israel and Eichmann," which included an interview with Judah Bakon, one of the prosecution witnesses. The next day "The Other Adolf," also an ABC network program, discussed current controversies over the impending trial, described the German reaction, and featured some captured Nazi films of camp conditions. German films were shown again on April 12, when the Columbia Broadcasting System's "Armstrong Circle Theater" reran a documentary on Eichmann's career, previously shown on September 28, 1960; and on April 14, on ABC's "Bell & Howell Close-Up," the meaning of the trial was discussed by a former concentration-camp inmate now living in the United States, Simon Gutter.

Other network programs occasioned by the trial included an appearance on NBC's Dave Garroway program of Pennsylvania Supreme Court Judge Michael Musmanno, an expert on the Nuremberg trials, who was scheduled to testify in Jerusalem (April 6); an "Eyewitness to History" program on CBS (April 14); a discussion of the moral issues, together with a "declaration of conscience," by representatives of the three major faiths, on NBC's "Chet Huntley Reporting" (April 23); a summary of the proceedings, including interviews with newsmen and Israeli citizens, by Martin Agronsky on NBC (May 9); and another Agronsky summary, assessing the impact of the trial, at the end of the court proceedings (August 18).

Few of the network programs were commercially-sponsored, which

could be interpreted as meaning that television officials and advertisers thought the public either reluctant or too little interested to sit through a recounting of the Nazi crimes. A different impression of the public's reaction was conveyed by ABC's experience in New York, where an offer to supply printed copies of the indictment evoked 24,000 replies in a three-week period.

Network presentations were frequently supplemented by local television programs. In the New York area, for example, WCBS-TV put on a documentary, "Eichmann and Israel" (April 5), which examined the meaning of the trial to Jews in Israel and the United States, featuring interviews with Israeli citizens as well as statements by John Slawson, executive vice president of the American Jewish Committee; Rabbi Joachim Prinz, president of the American Jewish Congress; Nahum Goldmann, president of the World Jewish Congress; and Rabbi Elmer Berger, executive vice president of the American Council for Judaism.

Also on local television in New York, the history of the concentration camps was reviewed by Quentin Reynolds in a program entitled "Remember Us" (WNEW-TV, April 9). The ethical and moral issues were discussed by General Telford Taylor, Dr. Goldmann and the Rev. Donald McKinney, a Unitarian minister (WNEW-TV, April 9); by the participants in "Youth Forum" (WNBC-TV, June 4 and 11), and by a panel of editors of Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish magazines (WABC-TV, June 14).

The film industry initially showed much interest in the case, but of approximately 10 Eichmann films announced by independent producers previous to the opening of the trial, only one materialized. This was Allied Artists' *Operation Eichmann,* a retelling of the man's career and capture, which was described in the New York press (April 13 and May 4) as "superficial", "a rush job", "standard melodrama", "tame in comparison with the documentaries", and "an obvious attempt to capitalize on a worldwide headline story."

A broader and more profound presentation of Nazism was offered in *Mein Kampf,* a European documentary on Hitler and his times assembled from contemporary films, which had aroused no interest among movie makers until the strong public response to the Eichmann trial. In April *Mein Kampf* began to be distributed in the United States by Columbia Pictures and proved highly successful. Later in the year production was going forward on at least two films in which Nazism was to be subjected to searching analysis: *Judgment at Nuremberg* (Stanley Kramer) and *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer).

CHURCH PRESS

The following summary of reactions to the Eichmann trial in church publications is based on an analysis of denominational and nondenominational Protestant journals, national Catholic publications, and selected Catholic diocesan newspapers, prepared by Judith Hershcopf of the American Jewish Committee. Statements apply to both Catholic and Protestant publications unless otherwise specified.

Religious publications, like the general press, initially voiced widespread reservations concerning the legal and jurisdictional basis of the trial. Possible adverse effects in the political, moral, and psychological spheres also were frequently emphasized. A few publications left the matter there, but many later went on to substantive questions raised in the course of the court proceedings.

Though a great many publications questioned Israel's right to try Eichmann, none denied that he should be tried. Some felt that the case belonged before an international tribunal and others before a German court; still others objected to Israel's actions, without suggesting alternatives. A few wondered whether anyone other than God could judge the case. For example, the *Gospel Messenger* (Church of the Brethren) stated on May 13 that "the largest actions are above the law and outside the law. . . . On the larger scale, law is a myth and justice only an ideal."

On the other hand some journals, including the Protestant *Christianity and Crisis* (April 3), warned that too legalistic an interpretation might spoil the moral effect of the proceedings. One publication, the Catholic *Providence Visitor* (June 30), firmly endorsed the trial in Israel even while asserting that an international tribunal would have been preferable. Others—among them the *United Church Herald* (May 4), published by the United Church of Christ—commented on moral aspects without raising the legal questions.

The proceedings were frequently branded in advance as a show trial or publicity stunt, and even more often as an act of vengeance—for example, in the Boston *Pilot* (April 15) and *Our Sunday Visitor* (April 30), both Catholic, as well as in the *Lutheran* (May 3). Earlier an article in the *Unitarian Register* (October 1960) had equated the "Nazi-pursuing Jew" with the "Jew-pursuing Nazi." Others voiced pleas for mercy, apparently inspired by the fact that Israel was conducting the trial. Thus the Protestant *Christian Century* (March 15) invoked the

Jewish faith in a plea for Eichmann's life. (The same magazine in 1945 had unreservedly endorsed the Nuremberg trials, including any death penalty that might be imposed.) By implication, Judaism was sometimes associated with revenge and Christianity with forgiveness, the *Lutheran* (June 7), for example, declaring that "vengeance for sins committed is 2,000 years out of date." Protestant publications were singularly preoccupied with the question of a suitable penalty. A great many (*Christianity and Crisis,* April 3, the *Lutheran,* June 7, the weekly *Mennonite Review,* May 25) assumed that a death sentence could be motivated only by thirst for revenge.

One effect of this approach was to concentrate critical attention on Israel instead of Eichmann and Nazism. Indeed, some publications—the Catholic St. Louis *Review* (April 21) among them—conveyed the idea that Israel was the real defendant. On the other hand, American church publications treated Germany more gently than did German religious spokesmen. Statements by Catholic and Protestant German churchmen acknowledging their nation's share of guilt in the Nazi crimes were widely reported or reprinted, but they found few echoes in editorial columns. The distinction between Eichmann and the German people was sharply drawn even where it was doubted whether today's Germans had fully confronted the significance of Nazism in their country's history, as in the Catholic magazine *Commonweal* (March 24).

Throughout the trial, discussion of the historical realities of the Nazi era remained vague. Allusions to the court testimony on Nazi genocide were usually kept in broad, general terms, and the question who was responsible for the rise of Hitler and the ensuing evil was rarely examined. The special nature of Hitler's anti-Jewish program was often ignored, and the total annihilation reserved for Jews (and Gypsies) was not distinguished from his lesser oppressions. The only historical subject treated in concrete detail was the aid given to persecuted Jews by Christian individuals and institutions. The Catholic press was particularly interested in this topic, devoting more space to it than to any other aspect of the trial.

The moral implications of the trial were discussed with great earnestness, and the lessons to be learned often were fully spelled out. Yet these lessons, stated as they were without discussion of the specific choices and conflicts which Nazism imposed on individuals, remained rather abstract. Most frequently the moral issue was presented simply as a clear-cut choice between divine and secular authority, Eichmann

being pictured as a man "who had not learned to obey God" (Pittsburgh *Catholic,* May 18).

But the Christian press did not make Eichmann a scapegoat on whom the self-righteous might unload their sins. On the contrary, it was careful to stress that mankind shared his guilt.

This discussion took place at two levels. One line of argument was that the ultimate cause of Eichmann's crimes, like anyone else's, lies in the inherent sinfulness of man. "Eichmann and the Nazis are viewed apart from any context of a fallen race which encompasses also the modern Israeli and in fact all mankind. . . . However great may be the guilt of this one persecutor of the many, the truth about all human beings is revealed by the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth," it was stated by Carl F. H. Henry, editor of *Christianity Today* (September 11). The publications which took this line—mostly evangelical—usually paid little attention to the guilt of particular individuals or groups.

Alternately, mankind was found guilty in the specific sense of having failed to live up to concrete responsibilities—a viewpoint expressed by *Christianity Today* in an article, published after the end of the period covered by this report (November 10), which commented on "the failure of the Christian community during the Eichmann era." A similar thought had been previously voiced by *Christian Century* (April 19). According to this interpretation, the Hitler generation was on trial with Eichmann; but so was the United Nations for neglecting to seek out Eichmann; so was the Western world, which closed the door on Hitler's victims, and so, ultimately, were all of us in so far as we had failed our fellow man.

Quite frequently, Eichmann was viewed as a symbol of the specific evil of group prejudice—for example, in the Catholic magazine *America* (April 15) and in an editorial by Raymond J. Baughan in the *Unitarian Register and Universalist Leader* (May 4). Some of the most thoughtful discussions centered on this subject, pointing to "the Eichmann [i.e., the racist] in each of us" (thus in the Catholic *New Mexico Register,* April 28) and seeking to relate Nazism to prejudice and discrimination today. There was ample emphasis on the links between polite discrimination and persecution, on man's obligation to combat prejudice and defend the rights of others, and on the necessity of preventing a recurrence of the horror. Indeed, a deep concern with these problems remained in evidence after the conclusion of the court proceedings—witness the *Catholic Star Herald* of Camden, New Jersey (December 15):

> As we recall that bitter and black memory of our age, let us recognize the duty to wash away any trace of anti-Semitism in the hearts of the young. A future

generation may forget such incredible cruelties if we are not at pains to instruct them in love for our Jewish brethren.

The religious press was generally slow to inquire into the historic relationship between Christendom and Jewry. Much of the comment on the trial sounded as if antisemitism were a horror originated by the Nazis, not an ancient evil in the Christian world. Most publications sought to dissociate Christian tradition from antisemitism. This desire was evident even in the choice of words: the term "Christian" usually was reserved for anti-Nazis, while Nazi followers—including the many church members among them—were called "Gentiles" or "pagans." In the bulk of the religious press, the call for soul-searching was directed solely at the personal morality of individual Christians; the opportunity for institutional self-examination was missed or evaded.

There were exceptions, however. Both *Commonweal* (May 12) and, later, *Christianity Today* (November 11) asked whether long-standing anti-Jewish attitudes among Christians had not contributed to the growth of antisemitism that culminated in the Nazi crimes. And here and there, articles on subjects other than Eichmann, appearing after the trial, reflected a strengthened awareness of the fate of European Jewry under Hitler, or called for an understanding of the anxieties of Jews (e.g., *Christianity Today,* November 10, and the fundamentalist monthly *Eternity,* December).

OPINION POLLS

A Gallup poll in May revealed that 87 per cent of the American public had heard or read about the Eichmann trial—an exceptionally large percentage for a public issue. The responses of this informed group follow:

—Eighty-eight per cent said they were "very interested" or "fairly interested" in the proceedings, although only 4 per cent stated that any of their opinions had been changed by the trial to date.

—Fifty per cent felt that Israel was the proper place to try Eichmann; 36 per cent would have handed him over to an international court, 7 per cent to a German court, and one per cent would have let him go free. Six per cent expressed no opinion.

—Seventy-one per cent thought it was a good thing, and 21 per cent a bad thing, for the world to be reminded of the Nazi concentration camp horrors. Eight per cent expressed no opinion.

—Seventy-one per cent thought the trial fair, 8 per cent did not, and 21 per cent expressed no opinion.

A reanalysis of the poll results by Benjamin B. Ringer of the American Jewish Committee indicated how persons of different educational backgrounds reacted to the proceedings. According to this reanalysis, the intent of reminding the world of Nazi horrors—one of the main purposes of the trial—found at least as much favor among educated respondents (those who had at least some college training) as among the less educated, but the former apparently were less ready to credit Israel with sufficient objectivity to conduct the trial in a way that would achieve this purpose, and therefore would have preferred to see Eichmann brought before an international tribunal. The less educated—in part perhaps out of a pragmatic acceptance of "things as they are"—did not appear to be so skeptical of Israel's ability to conduct the case impartially and effectively; a majority of them favored an Israeli court over an international one. The less educated also found it easier to accept the proceedings as fair and proper without necessarily endorsing their purpose. The findings generally suggested that the educated segment of the public took a rather abstract, moralistic attitude toward justice, with an inclination to stress detachment at the expense of feeling.

A subsequent Gallup poll, taken in July, found that the trial had not greatly affected the feeling of Americans toward the German people. Seven per cent reported they had become more sympathetic to the Germans as the result of the trial, 17 per cent had become less sympathetic, 55 per cent reported no change, and 21 per cent expressed no opinion.

A sampling taken at the end of the court proceedings by the New York *Herald Tribune* in collaboration with 21 newspapers in other cities (August 13–15) found that nearly everyone thought Eichmann had had a fair trial and had been proved guilty. Those few respondents who considered the trial unfair did so, in the main, simply because it had been held in Israel. Very few accepted Eichmann's defense of having acted under orders.

The *Herald Tribune* sampling found slightly more respondents in favor of life imprisonment than of the death penalty. This finding was confirmed by a Gallup poll about the same time, in which 43 per cent of the respondents favored life imprisonment (a figure including, presumably, persons opposed to the death penalty on principle), 31 per cent execution, and 4 per cent some other treatment. Five per cent thought Eichmann should go free. Vindictiveness and outrage were evident in many replies to the Gallup question. There were suggestions such as "burn him at the stake," and some respondents apparently interpreted "letting Eichmann go free" as "throwing him to the crowds." As for the anticipated

verdict, the majority of *Herald Tribune* respondents expected that Eichmann would be found guilty but that his life would be spared.

The Gilbert Youth Research Company, which specialized in market and opinion surveys among adolescents, reported in May that young people, like their elders, were much more interested in the trial than in the normal run of current events. Of 1,134 asked, 80 per cent said they were following the proceedings. Fifty-three per cent thought Israel had a right to abduct Eichmann, and 57 per cent approved of trying him in Israel; negative opinion in both cases was 37 per cent. A larger segment than among adults, 56 per cent, expected a death sentence, while 31 per cent expected a sentence of life imprisonment.

Only 44 per cent of the persons interviewed had been taught about Nazi war crimes in school, yet 78 per cent had been aware of them before the trial, and 83 per cent felt that schools ought to teach the subject. No sympathy for Nazism was found among the young people or their parents.

GEORGE SALOMON