

THE UNIVERSITY OF WINCHESTER

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Using Lies: Holocaust Denial by the British Far Right 1942-2001

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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This thesis provides a detailed and nuanced analysis of how Holocaust denial was absorbed into British far-right thought and how it was disseminated by different individuals and groups found within that political composition. Drawing on the work of historians and academics who have examined Holocaust denial, I explore both the internal and externalising use of denial within British far right parties and movements and how it served as a 'history' for the far right. A 'history' which allowed the far-right to make sense of a changing world; serving its ideological belief that a worldwide Jewish conspiracy controlled the past and present. By empirical examination of different publications of far right individuals and groups over a period of nearly sixty years I highlight that while the presentation of denial, and sites of attack on the Holocaust, evolved and changed, the basic sentiments of denial remained fixed. In doing so, the thesis supports the findings of other historians who have studied denial and demonstrated how it is an ideologically driven and mendacious reconstruction of the past. Yet in supporting these findings the thesis questions why - when Holocaust denial has been demonstrated as a false history - Holocaust denial has been presented as such a threat to the historical understanding and memory of the Holocaust by historians and academics. This thesis suggests that new approaches and debates over understanding and studying Holocaust denial are needed. By tracing the progression of denial, in a specific movement, since the end of the Holocaust new, insights are gained by understanding how denial supports the individual ideologies of the groups which propagate it. As such, this thesis makes a timely contribution to both existing knowledge of Holocaust denial and of place of Holocaust denial in academic discourses.

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Graphs in Thesis

The graphs below indicate the responses and year of those responses to The British Institute for Public Opinion's commissioned survey on feeling towards the Jews in society.

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Fig. 2: Results for 1940 74

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Fig. 5: Years combined 76

The graph below indicates the responses given to the following question: Do you think the persecution of Jews in German is an obstacle to good understanding between Britain and Germany?

Fig 6: 1938 German persecution of Jews 77

Abbreviations

ANP	American Nazi Party
BFF	British Freedom Fighters
BM	British Movement
BNP	British National Party
BPP	British Peoples Party
BUF	British Union of Fascists
GBM	Greater Britain Movement
IFL	Imperial Fascist League
JHR	Journal of Historical Review
LEL	League of Empire Loyalist
NF	National Front
NNF	New National Front
NS	National Socialist League
NSM	National Socialist Movement
NWM	National Workers Movement
RPS	Racial Preservation Society
SPL	Scottish Protestant League
UM	Union Movement
WDL	White Defence League
WUNS	World Union of National Socialists

Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in this Thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

I confirm that this Thesis is entirely my own work.

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Introduction: Finding Clio, Postmodernism, History and Holocaust denial

The study of Holocaust denial has been marked by a tendency to examine it as one cohesive and collective movement. It is clear that Holocaust deniers are united in their desire to mendaciously rewrite history. This desire stems from a need to provide epistemological support to underpin the ideological assumptions of different extremist groups. This reformulation of the past has, as Stern argues, become an international phenomenon:

Holocaust denial, in fact, may be the single most potent ideological force tying together a variety of extremists from around the globe—including old Nazis, neo-Nazis, anti-Israeli Arab governments, American black separatists and others.¹

While denial and antisemitism make up a significant proportion of these ideologies, other ideas and elements within them render them incompatible: the ideological perspectives of neo-Nazis and American black separatists cannot be ‘tied together’ on the basis that they share a predilection for Holocaust denial. Holocaust denial is therefore the shared use of a mendacious past by *different* ideological groupings to make sense of the past and validate the assumptions on which they rest. The global aspect to denial is clearly evident; the material which is produced (and shared) rests on the same assumptions that the Holocaust did not take place. Yet, while there is cross-pollination between the different political movements in regards to the conclusions which they reach on the Holocaust, their use of denial varies in accordance with differing ideological, cultural and political imperatives. The notion of a unified global movement also presupposes that memory and an awareness of the Holocaust is universality global, however the substantial body of research on individual nations, be they perpetrator, victim, bystander or ‘neutral’, demonstrates that each have developed individually and responded to their own internal political, historic and social imperatives.²

In order to understand the ways in which a particular group uses denial this thesis will study Holocaust denial in a specific geographical, political and ideological context: the British far right.

¹ K. S. Stern, ‘Lying about the Holocaust; National Borders Don’t Mean Much in the International Holocaust Denial Business, but America Is Playing a Special Role’, *Southern Poverty Law Centre’s Intelligence Report* (No. 103: 2001), p. 50.

² For examples, see: M. Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford, Stanford University Press: 2009); J. B. Wolf, *Harnessing the Holocaust: The Politics of Memory in France* (Stanford, Stanford University Press: 2004); I. Zertal, *Israel’s Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2005); T. Lawson and J. Jordan, *The Memory of the Holocaust in Australia* (London, Vallentine Mitchell, 2008); C. Sharples and O. Jensen (eds), *Britain and the Holocaust: Remembering and Representing War and Genocide* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan: 2013); P. Novick, *The Holocaust and Collective Memory: The American Experience* (London, Bloomsbury: 1999); B. Niven and C. Paver (eds) *Memorialization in Germany Since 1945* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan: 2010) and F. Haig, ‘Holocaust Representations Since 1975’ *Modernism/modernity* (Vol. 20, No. 1 : 2013), pp. 1-13.

Wider global denial narratives and texts from other movements will be part of this study when they interact with or influence British far-right thought. The primary focus of the thesis will, however, remain on Holocaust denial in the British far right. The texts of this group will be scrutinized to understand how Holocaust denial was incorporated into British far-right 'histories' and ideologies which saw the world as in the grip of a Jewish world conspiracy. It will measure how these 'histories', and the arguments contained within them, changed with shifting political, cultural, historical and social changes. It will also examine how Holocaust denial in the British far-right has responded to the growth in Holocaust memory and the British dimensions of that memory.³

The thesis focuses on the key figures and movements within the British far right. The thesis predominantly examines how these groups used Holocaust denial to recast the history of the Second World War and as a means of perpetuating a belief in Jewish conspiracy. The main parties examined are the National Front, the British National Party, National Socialist Movement and the British Movement. These parties are used to provide a widespread selection of the different types of movements found in the British far-right. They range from groups which seek power by democratic means and to extreme revolutionary and terrorist movements. The main characters that are explored are the leaders or editors of the journals of these groups. Alexander Ratcliffe, A.K Chesterton and Arnold Leese, Leaders of pre-war Fascist groups provide explanations of how Holocaust denial emerged and became embedded in the far right. Readers may have expected to see a stronger presence in the thesis of Oswald Mosley, while his denial is well documented, his influence was relatively muted in influencing the course of Holocaust denial in the main far right parties of the 1960s to 2001. As Hillman opines, though Mosley's views placed him well within the neo-fascist mainstream, 'his influence on post-war British fascism fell a long way short of the impact of Leese and Chesterton' and that in the main, far right travellers (even when agreeing with his policies) denied being influenced by Mosley.⁴ While Mosley's name is indelibly linked to pre post-war British fascism, key post-war far right figures regarded Mosley with derision. Focus centres on Arnold Leese because of his influence over Colin Jordan and John Tyndall leaders of prominent far right parties. This does not mean that Mosley's denial in the thesis is ignored; he is discussed in detail in chapter two, but not treated as one of the main influences over the role of Holocaust denial in the British far right in which Leese played a far greater role in influencing

³ For current academic discussion on British memory and remembrance of the Holocaust see: C. Sharples and O. Jensen (eds), *Britain and the Holocaust*, pp. 1-12.

⁴ N. Hillman, 'Tell Me Chum, in case I got it wrong. What was it we were fighting during the War? The re-emergence of British Fascism, 1945-58' *Contemporary British History*, (Vol. 15. No. 4: 2001), p. 13.

the next generation of far right leaders. Jordan and Tyndall are of central to understanding the ways in which far-right denial became embedded in the landscape of such movements. Tyndall dominated democratic attempts to achieve power (leading the National Front and later the BNP) while Jordan (leading the White Defence League, National Socialist Movement and later the British Movement) spoke in more radical terms and favoured armed insurrection and revolution in order achieve his political aims. David Irving is addressed in relation to his connection with far right, he spoke with key members of at BNP, and spoke at rallies from 1980 to the early 1990s.⁵ Furthermore his connection rabid antisemite, H. W. Wicks affirms a connection between Irving and Arnold Leese.⁶ While not an active member of far-right parties (in the sense that he did not hold party positions), his works and record as a published author of military history and biographies of the Nazi elite provided the far right with a mainstream author which the subscribed to a mendacious far right rewriting of Hitler and the Holocaust. This lineage provides the spine around which the thesis explores the British far right and demonstrates how the different groups in the far right are connected.⁷

In this thesis I do not see my role in any way to be about countering the arguments of Holocaust deniers. The Holocaust is a historical certainty and therefore there is no need to waste ink on 'proving' it. Rather I see my role in this thesis as exploring the lies and distortions found in the British far right's construction of the past. Investigating why and how these narratives were made; how they were communicated and disseminated and what this tells us about their extreme and conspiratorial ideologies. This thesis will argue that denial was not only imperative in rehabilitating past tarnished and repugnant ideologies to attract the public to their movements; but that denial was also a constructed past or far-right 'history' (or seen

⁵ For evidence of Irving's communications with the BNP during this period see the evidence presented by the defence at the Lipstadt libel trial in 2000: <http://www.hdot.org/en/trial/defense/rwe/005.html>.

⁶ 1936 W. H Wicks was imprisoned for seditious libel against an insurance company - Sun Life Canada - for letters he had published about the company. This obsessive and conspiratorial outlook was nurtured and developed by Arnold Leese, who was in prison at the same time as Wicks. Leese taught him about the Jewish Conspiracy. As a result, Wicks became convinced that a conspiracy was directed at him. In 1939 Wicks wrote: 'when I met Arnold Leese in prison I became enlightened as to the part played by the Jews, and from then on worked with our Fascist friends for peace and understanding with Germany.' In 1939 Wicks and his family moved to Germany and claimed to be political refugees from 'Jew controlled England'. During the war, he remained in Germany and wrote broadcasting scripts for the Nazi Government. Irving met Wicks in the early 1960s when he arrived at his home. Irving stated, that for him, Wicks was a tragic figure and served as warning to him about the danger of the Jewish conspiracy being turned on him. Irving stated that in his own autobiography Wicks would be given his own chapter because of the effect he had upon him. For a more detailed analysis of Wick's life and Irving's meeting with him, see: R. Griffiths, 'Antisemitic Obsessions: The Case of H. W. Wicks' *Patterns of Prejudice* (Vol. 48, No. 1: 2014), pp. 94–113.

⁷ Appendix One illustrates the internecine nature of the far right. It is a flow chart demonstrating the connections between the deniers and antisemites discussed in the thesis.

from a historians perspective, an anti-history). The thesis will also explore how the 'histories' deniers' constructed were connected to the ways in which they perceived the present(s) in which they lived and how such 'histories' not only helped them to make sense of the present, but also created a binding 'history'; a consciousness and identity, around which leaders, members and believers in far-right ideology could unite.

The introduction will analyse and detail the different contexts which operate in the thesis. It will define the specific terms used within and outline the methodologies and historiographies which are employed throughout. The questions asked in this introduction are: What is Holocaust denial? How can it be defined? What arguments are contained within Holocaust denial? What conclusions in the historiography have been reached about why deniers deny the Holocaust? What place does Holocaust denial occupy in the British far right? How do we define 'the far right'? How do we define the Holocaust? Does Holocaust denial relate to history, or more specifically, why is Holocaust denial not history?

These questions will enable a clear understanding of the larger questions which will be asked in the thesis itself, these include: How did British far-right thought respond to the Holocaust? Does Holocaust denial in the far right change over the period under study? What is the relationship between Holocaust denial and the ideological concerns of the far right? Does the growing impact and awareness of the Holocaust in British society change the way in which Holocaust denial is disseminated? How does denial respond to legitimate Holocaust historiography? How does it attack that historiography and what, if any, historical debates are appropriated by deniers to fit their agenda? How is Holocaust denial used and presented in the historiography of the Holocaust, and what does this tell us about the study and place of the Holocaust in society? Finally, what 'history' is created by far-right Holocaust denial and what purpose does it serve?

In order to address these questions, the introduction will be broken down into three sections each looking at a different aspect of the contexts involved and how they are applied in this thesis. The first will define how the Holocaust and history is understood and employed in thesis; the second will define Holocaust denial and the third outline how 'the far right' is used to describe the groups and individuals examined throughout. However before these contexts are defined and explored I will explain the assumptions on which this thesis rests, the structure through which it is organised and the sources that will be used throughout.

Holocaust denial has been approached by a number of historians and academics of varying disciplines. The trajectory of this research has focused on its place and development in a global setting and as such it has been studied as a global phenomenon.⁸ These studies have analysed how Holocaust denial has been distributed; the disseminators of denial; what the deniers say and why it is not history. Research on Holocaust denial has focused primarily on direct or indirect comparisons with traditional Holocaust scholarship, either to show how denial is a product of radical ideological agendas or a conspiratorial way of viewing the world; how denial seeks to destabilise the established history of the Holocaust.⁹

Research on Holocaust denial has also encompasses wider debates on historical practice, historiography and methodology. These studies have explored the great esteem in which history is afforded in culture and society; the conventions which construct history and how deniers attempt to mimic the academic conventions of history to obtain legitimacy for the ideas they promote.¹⁰ The trajectory of these arguments tends to use Holocaust denial as a conduit to demonstrate what makes the discipline of history distinct from denial and a legitimate way to understand and present the past. Denial has also been used as tool to dissect postmodernist thought in relation to the discipline and the practice of the historian.¹¹ In these studies Holocaust denial has also been treated as a product of the influence of postmodernism on history and society at large.¹²

This thesis will consider Holocaust denial in the light of postmodern arguments. However rather than viewing postmodernism as a seedbed for denial, as much of the current scholarship on Holocaust denial has done, it will demonstrate that Holocaust denial and far-right thought was a distinctly anti-postmodern movement which saw itself as holding 'objective truths' about the past, the world and society. It will posit the idea that far-right

⁸ S. E. Atkins, *Holocaust Denial as an International Movement* (Westport, Praeger Publishers: 2009)

⁹ M. Shermer and A. Gorbman, *Denying History: Who Says The Holocaust Never Happened and Why Do they Say It?* (Los Angeles, University of California: 2009); M. Shermer, *Why People Believe Weird Things: Pseudoscience, Superstition, and Other Confusions of Our Time* (New York, Saint Martin's Press: 2002); M. Billing, 'The Extreme Right: Continuities in Antisemitic Conspiracy Theory in post-war Europe' in R. Eatwell and N. Sullivan (eds), *The Nature of the Right* (London, Pinter: 1989); R. Eatwell 'The Holocaust Denial: A Study in Propaganda Technique' in L. Cheles, R. Ferguson and M. Vaughan, *Neo-Fascism in Europe* (London, Longman: 1991), pp. 120-146.

¹⁰ R. Eaglestone, *Postmodernism and Holocaust Denial* (Cambridge, Icon Books: 2001); S. Fish, 'Holocaust Denial and Academic Freedom', *Valparaiso University Law Review*, (Vol. 35, No. 3, 2001).

¹¹ R. Evans, *Telling Lies About Hitler: The Holocaust, History and The David Irving Trial* (London, Verso: 2002); D. E. Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (New York, The Free Press: 1993); D. E. Lipstadt, *History on Trial: My Day in Court with David Irving* (New York, Harper Collins: 2005 and J. C. Zimmermann, *Holocaust Denial: Demographics, Testimonies and Ideologies* (Maryland, University Press of America: 2000).

¹² M. Shermer and A. Gorbman, *Denying History*, pp. 26-27; D. E. Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust*, pp. 17-18.

systems of thought were content to use postmodern debates to see the deconstruction of opposing metanarratives, but only with the ultimate aim of establishing its own grand-narrative. Therefore while deniers may use postmodern debates in an attempt to attach academic weight to their claims, Holocaust denial is not a symptom of postmodernism rather it is employed and used by deniers as a tool to gain a form of academic validity to their mendacious narratives of the past.

The thesis treats the debates over postmodernism in history as part of the dialectic nature of the discipline. It accepts that a universal, Ranken, objective reading of the past is not entirely possible. It recognises that the past is constructed and filtered through the ideological concerns and discourses of the present. It acknowledges that constructing the past is subject to the sources and information that are available to the historian in the time they write. It admits that different historians produce different conclusions and as such historical debate is subject to division and schisms over certain historical phenomena (the intentionalist and functionalist debates of the 1970s and 1980s being a prime example and pertinent to this thesis). This does not mean that because there is debate between historians that the events in question did not take place. For example, a divisive figure like Margaret Thatcher maybe lionised by a historian on the right of British politics and demonised by another on the left, yet there is no question that she was Prime Minister of Great Britain from May 1979 to November 1990. While these facts are elementary the discourses they produce are far from congruous, but within the debates produced lay the strength of history as a discipline. This strength is found in knowing that debates about how the past is constructed are as equally important as the events themselves. This does lead to a postmodern conclusion where there is not *one* definitive history of an event or the past but this too has always been evident - we know that history is made up of differing discourses. This does not mean that 'anything goes' or fact and fiction are the same as history and Holocaust denial is a clear example of the limits of postmodern thinking.¹³ As Tom Lawson opines, 'we are, to a certain extent, all postmodernists now.'¹⁴ Historians cannot reject the influence of postmodernism on how we construct the past, or ignore its impact; we need to be 'comfortable with [the] knowledge' that the 'past and present collide in their markedly provisional narratives' and to a large extent we are.¹⁵

Examining historical documents and claiming that, since there is no written order from Hitler, the Holocaust did not take place does not create a historical discourse about the actuality of

¹³ K. Jenkins (ed.), *The Postmodern History Reader* (London, Routledge: 1998), p. 17.

¹⁴ T. Lawson, *Debates*, p. 3.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

the Holocaust. Rather the absence of such a document focuses the historian to question the nature of power structures in the Third Reich and the role of Hitler in the Final Solution, in essence engage in a historical discourse. The absence of the written order for the denier creates a discourse fuelled on mendacious ruminations, which sees the world as in the grip of a Jewish conspiracy; enables them to dismiss the vast amounts of evidence which shows the Holocaust took place to protect their preconceived ideological and conspiratorial vision of the present and the past. As the thesis will argue Holocaust denial has been used to show the limits of reconstructing the past in response to postmodern arguments and to a large extent serves this purpose well. However, historians also need to be aware of the type of narratives that they construct to countermand denial and whether in evoking denial as an example of what is not history, wider debates stimulated by postmodernism go unanswered or unconsidered in the reconstruction of a historical past.

The main purpose of the thesis is to understand the diachronic nature of Holocaust denial in the British far right. In order to achieve this outcome the thesis studies how far-right groups and individuals organised and presented themselves to the public and how this changed overtime.¹⁶ In doing so, this thesis will add an original contribution to the scholarship on denial current studies of Holocaust denial, which has so far not explored the role and place of Holocaust denial in relation to specific movements, or more specifically, how Holocaust denial responded and changed over time and in relation to wider national or international contexts. The thesis will argue that denial needs to be viewed in conjunction with the ideological concerns and needs of individuals and groups which propagate it as well as the current methodological practice of historians who have demonstrated why it is not history; what deniers have said and the individuals who subscribed to this conspiratorial way of thinking. This will involve examining Holocaust denial in relation to the currents, trends and problems found in the British far right; how the British far right responded to the changes in British society, both in relation to its presentation and dissemination of Holocaust denial to a wider audience. In essence this thesis will look at both the *internalising* and *externalising* factors which shaped Holocaust denial in the British far-right. This facilitates a wider and more detailed study of how a specific group (or groups), located in a geographic local, sharing a common far right ideology, responded to the history of Holocaust in relation to its own

¹⁶ Note on tense: Holocaust denial is obviously a continuing movement and still very present and active, in this thesis on the history of Holocaust denial in the far right Holocaust denial will be spoken of in past tense, except where it is referring to current trends in the movement. It should not be read that the Holocaust denial has faded out of existence.

ideological concerns, and to the British understanding and development of Holocaust memory they fought to deconstruct.

Structure of the thesis

The lineage and connection between of post-war figures, from Alexander Ratcliffe to Nick Griffin and David Irving, provide the backbone through which the far right in Britain is examined. Each chapter in this thesis is a case study and centres on a specific individual. The character under study will be indicative of the context in which they published and the forms in which their Holocaust denial was presented. The denial will be examined in relation to contemporary historiographical understanding of the Holocaust. The individual's work will also be compared to the publications of other deniers operating at the time. This will provide an understanding of the different methods and publications in circulation in the particular context. The individual serve to provide a wider scope for exploration of the movements and debates active in any given period by exploring their given approach to Holocaust denial. As with any periodisation of the past there are problems in creating well-ordered bundles of time in which to study, therefore in some of the chapters time frames will overlap, and individuals will fade in and out of significance according to other contextual and political factors within the far right. The figures used in each of the chapters therefore represent a 'way in' to understanding the different shapes and forms the far right and its Holocaust denial took.

The thesis is itself divided into five chapters and three subsections. Chapters one and two, under the subtitle 'initial far right responses to the Nazi persecution of the Jews', reviews the careers and publications of Alexander Ratcliffe and Arnold Spenser Leese. The section examines responses to the Nazi persecution and genocide of the Jews of Europe before the 'the Holocaust' was conceptualised. As Samuel Moyn has demonstrated the formulation of intellectual thought in regard to Nazism and the Holocaust has never proved simple. Initially intellectuals drew on traditions of conceptualising the nature of the Nazi Ideology and Adolf Hitler in pre-war frames of reference: anti-fascism and anti-totalitarianism; these theories 'influenced how intellectuals identified what was worst about what had occurred'.¹⁷ As Holocaust memory crystallised and more research on the particularity of Jewish suffering surfaced, a greater understanding of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Agenda was formulised. This did not mean that the pre-war frames of reference were supplanted by Holocaust memory and, as

¹⁷ S. Moyn, 'Intellectuals and Nazism', in D. Stone (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 2012), p. 671.

Moyn demonstrates, they remained surprisingly long lasting. The two explanations made room for each other.¹⁸

It therefore seems that without a fully crystallised concept of the Holocaust it is not possible to talk of Holocaust denial. There are two points which counter this argument. First, it presupposes that without the monolithic label of 'the Holocaust' that dialogues over what had happened to the Jews of Europe under Nazism were nonexistent or that there was a 'silence'. As David Cesarani has established,

Between 1945 and 1960 an awareness of the Nazi persecution and mass murder of the Jews was maintained through a variety of discourses and disciplinary fields beyond the commemorative activity of the Jewish community, refugees, and survivors... A breadth and depth of understanding that is easy to miss if we look only for something that resembles 'the Holocaust' as it exists today in public discourse, popular cultural representations, literature, or historiography.¹⁹

These discourses may only have been a 'dim awareness', but contained within them was enough to know that something terrible had happened under the Nazis as a result of which six million Jews were dead and that a new state, Israel, had been formed.²⁰ While it is not feasible to talk of 'Holocaust denial' it is possible to examine how the discourses, which were available, in relation to the Nazis' final solution were rejected and denied by far right writers.

Second, since these writers had a predilection for writing antisemitic tracts, they ironically conceptualise and focus upon the specific Jewish dimensions of the Nazi crimes, rather than the universalising narratives of suffering preferred by the British government.²¹ This was because they shared the same redemptive antisemitism which had significantly contributed to the genocide. Their ideological outlook was predisposed to seeing Jews as the 'enemy'. They asserted that the Second World War had been launched against Germany by 'international Jewry'. This rejection of the atrocities was emblematic of the paradox which dominates the explanations of denial in this thesis. In essence it is a rejection, or failure to understand, that their ideological convictions led to a genocidal outcome. An outcome which, after rejection, is then re-assimilated and processed through their ideological filters and provides a 'new'

¹⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 671-72.

¹⁹ D. Cesarani, 'How Post-war Britain Reflected on the Nazi Persecution and Mass Murder of Europe's Jews: A Reassessment of Early Responses', *Jewish Culture and History* (Vol. 12, No. 1-2), pp. 123-124

²⁰ *Ibid*.

²¹ T. Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice: Antisemitism in British Society, During the Second World War* (Manchester, Manchester University Press: 1989), p. 191.

ideologically based conclusion: that the enemy, 'the international Jewish conspiracy', has falsified the accounts of the atrocities in order to discredit far right ideology.

Alexander Ratcliffe was active in rejecting the initial reports of Nazi atrocities as early as 1943, when news of the Nazi murder of the Jews of Europe were first appearing in the British media. His fanatical antisemitism, pro-Nazi stance and fanatical Protestantism would have led him to be interned under defence regulation 18b, as his other colleagues on the far right had been, had it not been for withdrawal from active politics. Ratcliffe therefore was able to publish his antisemitic views and denial of the events of Nazi persecutions and murder of Jews while other members of pre-war fascist groups were interned. Ratcliffe's associations with Arnold Spenser Leese, (Leese's publications were published by Ratcliffe after he was released from his internment) demonstrate the definite personal and intellectual link between the two men's views on reports of Nazi atrocities against Jews in Europe. Leese was much more radical than Ratcliffe and continued a strong pre-war Nazi enthusiasm and movement in 1945. Leese's response to the Holocaust was more confused. The arguments which he developed against the unfolding news of Nazi atrocities on the liberation of the death camps allude to the difficulties and differences which the far right had in the immediate aftermath with processing and explaining the news of Nazi atrocities. These two men and other movements will be explored in these two chapters. They represent the preliminary models of British far-right and antisemitic thought in relation to the crimes of Nazi Germany. This section will show how these initial responses, as well as the influence of Leese on the next generation of far-right groups and activists, influenced how and antisemitic conspiracy theories became imbedded in far-right thought and ideology.

The second section entitled 'Building Holocaust Denial in the Far Right' examines the place of Holocaust denial in the far right after 1960 to the late 1990s. It focuses on the two paths over which the far-right divided in order to achieve political power. The first was a 'radical' 'revolutionary' road to power, which sought control by revolutionarily means: the use of underground terror organisations, overt National Socialism and overt antisemitism. The second path was the more 'considered' 'populist' and 'recidivist' approach which focused on gaining power through democratic means and bringing about a far-right revolution by parliamentary election. This second path meant appealing to the general public for support and thus tended to tone down the overt and extreme messages it preached in order to attract a wider base of public support. The section demonstrates that despite division and infighting the arguments put forward in relation to denial were still indelibly linked to the Ratcliffe and

Leese traditions. The two individuals focused on in this section are Colin Jordan, leader of the radical National Socialist Movement who advocated the revolutionary path and John Tyndall, leader of the National Front from 1971, who favoured a democratic path to power. By analysing the literature of each movement and drawing conclusions on the way each movement sought to present its ideas and 'history' regarding the Holocaust, a framework for comparisons between the movements will be possible. In comparing the movements of the far right and the way they presented their 'histories', these chapters will show how the fundamental ideologies and 'histories' they constructed remained static. Yet, as the chapters will argue, that the presentation of these ideas and 'histories' manifested in accordance with the different political or revolutionary imperatives and examines how the far right responded to British social contexts: A Britain which was predominantly aware and diametrically opposed the totalitarian makeup of the far right and its views on the past.

The final section, 'fighting the present using the past' contains one chapter on the libel trial brought against Deborah Lipstadt by David Irving in January 2000. The chapter reviews and analyses the career of Irving and his interactions with Holocaust history and historiography. This chapter differs from chapters one to four because its central focus are the events and debates which were taking place over the Holocaust inside and outside the courtroom. It questions why media responses to the trial were so numerous and why 'the David Irving trial'²² has entered the lexicon as a touchstone in the fight against Holocaust deniers, when earlier and similar trials against deniers or institutes which propagate denial went largely unnoticed by the general public.²³ It locates the responses to the trial in the wider debates taking place within the British government, British society and academic forums in regard to the shape and priority of Holocaust memory and memorialisation in Britain - most notably the discussions concerning the establishment of an annual Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD).

²² 'The David Irving trial' is a label which is frequently used to describe the trial which took place at the Royal Courts of Justice between 11th January and 15th March 2000 (with the verdict was pronounced on the 11th April 2000). Irving was not on trial, Deborah Lipstadt who was accused of libelling Irving and yet this description of the trial is frequently evoked. For an example in current scholarship see: C. Sharples and O. Jensen (eds), 'introduction', *Britain and the Holocaust*, p. 5.

²³ For example, two trials involving Holocaust deniers took place in 1985. In the first, Mel Mermelstein's took the Holocaust denial organisation, the Institute for Historical Review (IHR), to court for breach of contract because the IHR refused to pay a fifty-thousand dollar reward they had offered for proof that Jews had been gassed at Auschwitz. Mermelstein proved his two sisters and mother were gassed in the Birkenau camp with the judge ruling in his favour. The second trial was of Ernst Zündel, a German born Holocaust denier living in Canadian at the time, who was prosecuted for the distribution of false news in the form of Holocaust denial material. Zündel was found guilty, but the verdict was over tuned on a legal technicality, at the retrial in 1988 he was found guilty again, but the verdict was again overturned when the law he had been charged under, reporting false news, was ruled unconstitutional by the Canadian Supreme Court. The 1988 trial is significant because Irving appeared in Zündel's defence.

The trial therefore serves as a prism through which to investigate the debates which took place in relation to the memory of the Holocaust in Britain, and how the British-far right responded to these debates. The events surrounding the trial were emblematic of a point when political debates over the course of Holocaust memory coincided with Irving's far right attempt to deny the Holocaust and have these views ratified in British Law. The paradoxical nature of this conflict over the past was demonstrated on the 26th January 2000: a day on which, Tony Blair, at the Anne Frank Trust exhibition in London, was publically committing Britain to talking a leading role in Holocaust commemoration and contemporary Holocaust politics,²⁴ while less than four miles away, in the Royal Courts of Justice, David Irving was using the British legal system to air his view on the Holocaust and arguing against Professor Robert Jan van Pelt about the feasibility of gassing humans at Auschwitz Birkenau.²⁵

Essentially, as the chapter argues, the Holocaust was being used by two different blocs, in two very different ways, yet both for political ends. The First of these blocs was the British government which wanted to harness the memory of the Holocaust and use that memory to prevent further or future genocide thus reinforcing the 'building blocks of a civilised society'.²⁶ The Second bloc, consisting of Irving and his supporters on the far right, wanted to use a trial to promote their ideas that the Holocaust had not taken place with the aim of publicising their wider notions regarding a supposed Jewish propaganda and a Jewish conspiracy.

How the past is constructed is expanded further in the chapter. This is not examined in reference to over memory of the Holocaust or how deniers constructed their mendacious version of the past. Rather it seeks to question how the history of the Holocaust is constructed by historians in response to the arguments of deniers, specifically the way the Holocaust was presented in the courtroom by Lipstadt and her defence team. In this regard, the chapter will argue that in order to defeat Irving a linear historical narrative was employed. This narrative was bound by the circumstance in which it was developed: at the service of defeating the arguments of Holocaust deniers and amidst historical and academic debates over the impact of postmodernist thought on history as a discipline. It will argue that Lipstadt, and her key defence expert witness Richard Evans, employed an 'objective' historical reading of the past and the Holocaust in order to defeat Irving (a reading which was necessary in the context of

²⁴ For discussion of this event see: A. Pearce, 'Britain's Holocaust Memorial Day: Inculcating "British" or "European" Holocaust Consciousness?' in C. Sharples and O. Jensen (eds), *Britain and the Holocaust*, pp. 190-211.

²⁵ Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 10 Wednesday 26th January 2000.

²⁶ Tony Blair cited in: A. Pearce, 'Britain's Holocaust Memorial Day: Inculcating "British" or "European" Holocaust Consciousness?' in C. Sharples and O. Jensen (eds), *Britain and the Holocaust*, p. 200.

the courtroom). However by constructing this narrative the complex history (and histories) of the Holocaust were silenced in favour of a universal narrative which served a political and pedagogical end: a narrative of the Holocaust about the technical, political and organisational processes of destruction not the experiences of the victims.

The structure of the thesis therefore provides the space to examination of the shape, pace and changing pseudo-intellectual arguments made by the far-right since the early 1940s to the early 2000s and how this responded to the changing societal make up of Britain and developments in Holocaust historiography and collective British memory. The use of individual case studies gives appropriate room to explore the distinctive divisions between different expressions of denial found in the varying factions of the far right. The historical connections to Leese and early post-war far right movements demonstrate the continuity and interconnected relationships of the individuals and groups which disseminated Holocaust denial. Close comparisons between individuals and groups can therefore be made in order to understand the relationship between denial and the British far right.

The time period of the thesis (1942 – 2001) also has a methodological rationality. There are obvious reasons for beginning in 1942. It was the point at which mass extermination of the Jews of Europe was taking place, the reports of which had reaching Britain. The atrocities against Jews and were reported in newspapers and the House of Commons had stood in silence to commemorate the murdered Jews of Europe. It therefore seems pertinent to begin the thesis at this point, especially given that news of these atrocities were being responded to in mass observation diaries and denied by Alexander Ratcliffe. The reason for ending the thesis analysis in 2001 is twofold. First, it is emblematic of a point at which Holocaust denial was very much in the public area due to the Lipstadt trial in 2000. Second, the turn of the twenty-first century saw the decline of influence of the figures which had a lineage back to Leese. John Tyndall had lost control of the BNP to Nick Griffin in 1999 and Colin Jordan, due to failing health, directed his activates to publishing far-right fantasy novels, although he is seen by some on the radical right to remain its 'spiritual leader'.²⁷ Tyndall died in 2005 still trying to reclaim the leadership of the BNP. Jordan died in 2009, and continues to be lionised by the radical right. It therefore seems that the turn of the new millennium therefore seems particularly pertinent time to the historical examination of Holocaust denial in the far right.

²⁷ Colin Jordan's *The Uprising*, is discussed below in chapter five. The British Peoples Party claims Jordan as it spiritual leaders see: <http://www.bpp.org.uk/> (Accessed 20/11/13).

Sources²⁸

The study of the history of Holocaust denial in the British far-right is problematic because Holocaust deniers are notoriously difficult to 'pin down' on their views; their arguments have changed constantly when challenged in the public arena or questioned directly by historians. Interviewing Holocaust deniers therefore tells us little about their past arguments or the development of the movement, or the place of denial within their movements. Deniers have constantly reformulated their own pasts to validate themselves in the present in which they find themselves.²⁹ As Robert Eaglestone has established, the arguments of deniers are rarely fixed 'as they demand too much constancy from a world of bigotry'.³⁰ Eaglestone rightly points out, 'deniers find it hard to keep their stories straight and when challenged, change their approaches and alter their theories and shift their emphasis.'³¹

A textual analysis of the documents produced by deniers in the period under study will allow for greater understanding over how the arguments and presentation of Holocaust denial in the British far right have altered. It will allow for an insight into how Holocaust deniers have 'revised' their own vision of the past, even if they are not prepared to admit it. The sources used do have their limitations, they are often attempts to reach a wider (non-far-right) audience and convince them that their arguments are valid.³² Therefore the *internalising* purpose of denial is at times hard to access. There was not an internal 'historiography' within Holocaust denial. It is precisely this point which demonstrates that denial is not history. It is rather a mendacious perceived reformulation of the past, it constructs the past *wholly* in the present and in service of the needs of that present. Yet the absence of such internal dialogues in documentary form does not mean that one is not present. Rather the fact that denial remains a constant in various guises in the far right shows that a dialogue was taking place, and is evident in the fact that the *presentation* of denial did change even though the

²⁸ For an excellent review of the sources available to historians studying the far-right see: R. C. Thurlow, *Fascism in Modern Britain* (Stroud, Sutton: 2000), pp. 12-30.

²⁹ This point will be explored more in detail in the thesis itself, but obvious examples would be David Irving's changing positions on the Holocaust; British National Party leader Nick Griffin's publications of Holocaust denial in the early and mid 1990s - which he now tries to distance himself from - and National Front leader John Tyndall's constant revision of his own past as well as his views on the Holocaust and Holocaust denial.

³⁰ R. Eaglestone, *Postmodernism*, pp. 8-9.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² It is hard to know exactly how many pamphlets and books were published in order to reach the widest possible audience. This is because the far right are notoriously secretive about their influence and seek to inflate the number of publications they have disseminated to suggest a larger readership than they had. Many pamphlets also were published privately in the individuals own homes or with private printing facilities. When figures can be accurately established and verified, they will be discussed in the thesis.

epistemological position of the Holocaust deniers did not. There were some publications which expressed the prevalence of denial within the British far right, and these come in the form of biographies from individuals in the far right. These individuals either remained steadfast supporters of far-right ideology or became political converts who became 'moles' in the organisations and reported what they found to various anti-fascist and official institutions. These documents need to be treated with a degree of caution as they are often self-serving, or attempt to rehabilitate authors' roles in a murky, neo-Nazi, fascist, extreme and even criminal past.³³

Assessing the *internal* and *external* purposes of denial will allow for conclusions to be reached about its use and function in the far right. In order to understand the *internalising* purpose of denial, it is necessary to understand that the *external* representations of denial mirrored the ideological agendas and debates which took place within the different groups of the far right. These agenda took on many different forms: steadfast radical denial of the Holocaust, with violent and radical language or a more 'balanced' approach which emulated traditional academic conventions in an attempted to deny the Holocaust in a 'rational' pseudoscientific way.

Documents from non-deniers will also be part of this thesis. These include British Government Cabinet Papers; Home Office reports into the activities of groups and individuals in the far right; British news and media publications as well as articles from organisations such as *Searchlight* which seek to combat Holocaust denial and far-right ideologies. These documents will be employed to understand how official and public responses to Holocaust denial have shaped the way in which denial was expressed and how the far right was portrayed in British social, political and cultural life. These documents will be used in conjunction with the sources from deniers to ascertain the effect societal pressures had on the shape of denial in the British far right.

The Holocaust, History and Histories of the Holocaust.

The exponential growth of Holocaust scholarship means that, as a field of study, no one individual can have *complete* mastery over it.³⁴ Holocaust historiography has created a

³³ For example: J. Bean, *Many Shades of Black: Inside Britain's Far Right* (London, New Millennium : 1999); M. Collins, *Hate: My Life in the British Far Right* (London, Biteback Publishing: 2011); R. Hill and A Bell, *The Other Face of Terror: Inside Europe's Neo-Nazi Networks* (London, Grafton Books: 1988), pp. 225-249; J. Tyndall, *The Eleventh Hour: A Call for British Rebirth* (London, Albion Press: 1988).

³⁴ This statement was made by Michael Marrus in 1987 and repeated again in 2006 by Dan Stone, giving an indication of the sheer volume of scholarship which encompasses historical study of the Holocaust.

plethora of debates over how, why and when this genocide of the Jews took place. The field has explored a range of questions in regard to who was responsible for the Holocaust; nature of Nazi antisemitism; the relationship between the Holocaust and modernity; role use of victim testimony in historical narratives of the Holocaust; the role of gender; the role of bystanders. Historians have also examined wider debates about the nature of remembrance, memory and education. Historiographical literature has also explored the impact that the Holocaust had on the disciplines of philosophy, theology, literature, music, art, politics, sociology and the historical enterprise itself: the very nature of western thought, ethics and society has been impacted by the Holocaust.³⁵

The methodological problem for this thesis rests on what aspects of Holocaust historiography need to be addressed. Holocaust denial rests on the assumption that the Holocaust, as described in the historiography and by historians, did not take place. Holocaust denial is therefore only interested in areas which can be harnessed to facilitate this end. Deniers' focus in terms of the historiography of the Holocaust is directed towards the decision making processes, the involvement role of Hitler and the Nazi ruling elite the history, and technical abilities, of the death camps. The reason for this is twofold. First, these are the areas which relate to the actual process of destruction. They are, to the deniers' mind, key to undermining the history of the Holocaust; if the evidence and arguments which pertain to these processes is removed then the historical legitimacy of the Holocaust is undermined. This also means that eyewitness testimony can be dismissed on wholesale and the evidence of the witnesses dismissed without having to deconstruct the accounts of each individual survivor, bystander or perpetrator.³⁶

See, M. R. Marrus, *The Holocaust in History* (London, Penguin: 1987), p. 5; D. Stone, 'The Holocaust and Its Historiography' in D. Stone (ed.) *The Historiography of the Holocaust* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan: 2006), p 374-375.

³⁵ Clearly a footnote which tries encompass a field which no one individual can have mastery over is an impossibility, the following texts offer a detailed analysis of current scholarship on Holocaust historiography: D. Bankier and D. Michman, *Holocaust Historiography in Context: Emergence, Challenges, Polemics and Achievements* (Jerusalem, Yad Vashem: 2008); D. Bloxham and T. Kushner, *The Holocaust Critical Historical Approaches* (Manchester: Manchester University Press: 2005); C. Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939- March 1942* (Jerusalem, Yad Vashem: 2004); P. Hayes and J. K. Roth, *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies* (London, Oxford University Press: 2010); I. Kershaw, *Hitler, The Germans and The Final Solution* (Jerusalem, Yad Vashem: 2008); P. Longerich, *Holocaust: The Nazi Persecution of the Jews and Murder of the Jews* (London, Oxford University Press: 2010); T. Lawson, *Debates on the Holocaust* (Manchester, University of Manchester Press: 2011), D. Stone, *Histories*; D. Stone (ed.) *The Historiography of the Holocaust* and D. Stone, *Constructing the Holocaust: A Study in Historiography* (London, Valentine Mitchell: 2003).

³⁶ David Irving employed this method during the 2000 Lipstadt trial. See below, pp. 228-229.

Second, the narratives which deniers seek to deconstruct have a very close correlation with ways in which Holocaust narratives are presented to the public. These narratives tend to flow in a very linear way in which the complexities of the academic historiographies of the Holocaust are formulated into one all encompassing narrative which largely rests on seeing the Holocaust an 'industrial genocide, as if it were a clean, smooth technical matter'.³⁷ Holocaust deniers therefore have tended to attack these simplified narratives because the public are more familiar with them, which in turn, means that their narratives become one-dimensional. Public perception of the Holocaust also means that specific sites which have become embedded in the public imagination are attacked than other sites or events. The most prominent is Auschwitz. As Peter Hayes explains it has become the 'capital' of the Holocaust because it is most 'indelibly linked with all of the multiple dimensions.'³⁸ And in Western Europe, our image of the Holocaust very much centres on this 'icon of evil'.³⁹ Deniers therefore seek to attack the history of the site in order to deconstruct the historical narratives most familiar to the public. In *Selling the Holocaust*, Tim Cole demonstrates a concern that public Holocaust narratives have the 'streamlined simplicity of a Hollywood movie'.⁴⁰ Cole's argument is that the complexities of the Holocaust are reduced to form the 'simple lessons' from a complex past in which the Holocaust which is 'sold' to the 'consumer' bears little relation to the actual events of the past. The centrality of these basic Holocaust narratives are expressed largely through specific totems, for example, Auschwitz, Anne Frank, Oskar Schindler (specifically Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's list*) and the sight of tattooed numbers. It is these totems which Holocaust deniers seek to dismiss most fervently.⁴¹ These symbols which are so imbued with meaning that, for the Holocaust denier, disproving them would deconstruct and dislodge the Holocaust as a historical certainty and facilitate the deconstruction of the 'Holocaust-consciousness' in society, in short a collective bring about their desired aim: a Holocaust-amnesia. This demonstrates why denial tracts tend to follow a linear trajectory in the narratives they tell and seek to deconstruct (see below section on Holocaust denial). This link between popular understanding of the Holocaust and Holocaust historiography will provide a central component of understanding what aspects are being denied at any given time.

³⁷ D. Stone, 'Beyond the "Auschwitz Syndrome": Holocaust Historiography After the Cold War' *Patterns of Prejudice* (Vol. 44, No. 5: 2010), p. 457.

³⁸ P. Hayes. 'Auschwitz, Capital of the Holocaust' *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* (Vol. 17, No. 2: 2003) p. 331.

³⁹ D. Stone, 'Beyond the "Auschwitz Syndrome"', p. 456

⁴⁰ T. Cole, *Selling the Holocaust: From Auschwitz to Schindler: How History is Bought, Packaged and Sold* (New York, Routledge: 2000), p. xi.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, Introduction.

The narratives produced by deniers also manifest themselves in the form of simplifying the complex histories of the Holocaust and the Third Reich. These simplifying narratives may, at times, have the appearance of an academic framework and contain vast amounts of detail, but they are designed around single liner narratives. These narrative state that the Holocaust did not take place or that the positive aspects of Third Reich has been grossly understated by historians. These narratives are also time and context sensitive and only respond to historical narratives in accordance with contemporary understandings of the Holocaust and the Third Reich.

This is particularly significant in regards to far-right depictions of the Third Reich as a state. These far right depictions and hinge on two factors; the first is based on the ways in which they see the Third Reich as an ideal political state and one they may wish to emulate so the 'positive' aspects of the state stressed (For example, economic stability after the wall street crash, reduction in unemployment, the strength through joy programme). The second is that the state is also represented as a totalitarian regime, in which order and the police state are presented as ubiquitous, but for the good of the nation. This representation builds a foundation for the narratives that they want to have about European history. The former depiction allows deniers to construct an account in accordance with their political objectives, presenting fascism or Nazism as a viable political alternative. It also allows for a recalibration of the Second World War and fames allied war crimes as an attack on a state which provided an economic and social bounty for its citizens. The later depiction of the Third Reich also has political imperatives for the far right, but is largely used to discredit narratives about the Holocaust: that, in such an organised political system, orders pertaining to the murder of millions of Jews from Hitler must exist, and if they do not then no order was given and no murders took place. Legislation against the Jews in Nazi Germany is also accounted in both the former and the latter; by stressing its importance as a 'lawful' activity and justifying its implementation as a benefit for the German people and the protection of the Aryan race it validates their own antisemitic arguments. The evident discord between these two far-right accounts echoes Eaglestone, comments regarding the lack of consistency in a world in which bigotry is the main agenda.

Essentially these assumptions provide the basis of the 'history' which deniers want to present: Hitler and the Nazi state sought to destroy Jewish influence and the Jewish international conspiracy for the benefit of Europe, the Aryan race and the German people. The 'international Jewish conspiracy' fought back, and by using its 'influence' and 'power', it was

able to direct Europe into a war against Germany. During Second World War 'atrocities stories' against Jews were a propaganda tool used by the Jews to gain support for crusade against Germany. After the Second World War, the Holocaust was used to gain Jews the state of Israel, and to prevent neo-Nazi or ultra nationalist governments from returning to political power by serving as an inoculating reminder of the dangers of Nazism and far-right ideologies. In this sense the Holocaust which deniers refer to is *Sui generis*; it is mendacious reading of the past which become ideological truths and it is because these truths are ideological that they remain remarkably stable and do not deviate from this antisemitic and conspiratorial narrative.

The polarity between the epistemological position of the Holocaust historian and far-right Holocaust denier is therefore strikingly obvious. Holocaust deniers are only centred on deconstructing the (publicly and popularly embedded) monolithic concept of the Holocaust and this is very different to the more complex and nuanced interpretation enshrined in Holocaust historiography. The areas which they do seek to extrapolate from a historical context, in order to 'prove' their accounts are valid, are located in the central debates on the processes by which the genocide occurred.

The decision making processes which led to genocide is one such area; deniers have attempted to infiltrate this area in order to disprove a notion of a planned extermination of the Jews of Europe, and cast any Jewish death as part of a wider global war and as part of the universal suffering of war. This is of particular relevance to material which is examined in this thesis because the far right do not deny the 'years of Jewish persecution' suffered by the Jews from 1933-1939 by the Nazis.⁴² They admit that Jews were removed from office and certain professions; they acknowledge the Nuremberg laws; the anti-Jewish pogrom Kristallnacht, yet these are absorbed into a distinctly far right frame of thought. Deniers and the far right approve of these measures as either legitimate attempt to curtail what they perceive as Jewish power and control, or as genuine expressions of public frustration and anger at supposed Jewish domination of society, economics and politics. In this area the far right agreed with such measures and believed that Jews were a threat to society and thus Nazi anti-Jewish legislation was valid. Far-right thought however cannot accept that such measures possessed the redemptive qualities which led to genocide and that is why the 'years of extermination' from 1939 to 1945 and the historiography which outlines the destruction of European Jewry

⁴² S. Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, Vol. 1, The Years of Persecution 1933-1939* (New York, Harper Collins: 1997).

are refuted.⁴³ In this area deniers point to the lack of a written order for the murder of the Jews of Europe and a firm date when an order was given, and point to the 'discrepancies' in Holocaust historiography over the date(s) when mass murder was decided as the Final Solution of the Jewish problem and the nature of a pre-meditated and overall plan for the annihilation of European Jewry found in the functionalist versus structuralist debates of the late 1970s to the 1990s.⁴⁴

While deniers attempt to exploit these older, yet pioneering, Cold War historiographical debates, it is clear from the current historiography on the decision making process that historiography since the early 1990s has been transformed into 'multiple histories' of the Holocaust.⁴⁵ The context in which the Holocaust is understood has moved beyond metanarratives and (while still important and studied) the mechanics and instigations of death, to wider contexts about the place and role of structural explanations of antisemitism, agency, ideology, Nazism, modernity, the gender different experiences of the victims, colonialism and broader trends in western thought and culture. The Holocaust has moved from being locked into a separate context which was removed from wider western traditions and at times even Nazism.⁴⁶ While historiographical debates have moved on deniers still remain locked in debates which relate to metanarrative explanations of why the Holocaust did not take place, and remain entrenched in trying to keep attention focused on areas of debate that they feel benefit their cause. They seek to dwell on the areas in which historians have to admit that 'documents do not tell us all that we want to know.'⁴⁷ As a result, for the denier, subsequent historiography which has expanded the boundaries of research into the Holocaust becomes superfluous. Deniers' arguments are located in trying to disprove a planned and coordinated genocide of the Jews, in trying to equate German atrocities with those of Allied crimes, or denying the authenticity of eyewitness accounts or documents which disprove their version of 'history'.

⁴³ S. Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, Vol. 2, The Years of Extermination 1939-1945* (New York, Harper Collins: 2007).

⁴⁴ For synthesis of these debates see: P. Hayes and J. K. Roth, *The Oxford Handbook*, pp. 113-142; I. Kershaw, *Hitler, The Germans*, p. 29-138; D. Stone, *Histories*, pp. 64-97; T. Lawson, *Debates*, pp. 125-153.

⁴⁴ D. Stone, *Constructing*, p. 70.

⁴⁴ C. Browning, *Fateful Months: Essays on the Emergence of the Final Solution* (New York, Holmes & Meier: 1991); C. Browning, *The Path to Genocide: Essays on Launching the Final Solution* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 1995), pp. 86-122.

⁴⁵ D. Stone, *Histories*, Introduction.

⁴⁶ D. Stone, *Constructing*, pp. 66-70.

⁴⁷ T. Lawson, *Debates*, p. 128.

As this thesis will show, the Final Solution and the genocide of European Jewry remained incompatible with the political agenda and 'intellectual' discourse within the far right because it could not admit that its own agenda, world view and policies contained the same redemptive qualities that drove and led to the genocide of European Jewry. For the far right 'Hitler was right' in his analysis of the Jewish race and right in his confrontation and attack on Jewish domination in Germany (and later occupied Europe) but it stresses that this confrontation did not lead to mass murder.⁴⁸

It is clear that in outlining the historiographical debates which deniers have interacted with and the attacks they have made on representations of the Holocaust that defining the Holocaust is complex. The very word itself, which was coined in the 1960s in reference to genocide of Europe Jews, means that in using it we apply a teleological way of thinking about the events between 1941- 1945 (or 1933-1945); it places the events in an ordered parameter even when the historiography tells us that events were far from ordered. The term also wrenches the genocide of the Jews from wider contexts and places it a singular unifying event, which ultimately lead to the metanarratives of the 1970s and 1980s.⁴⁹ Still further the multiple representations of the Holocaust, as Tim Cole highlights, have lead to multiple 'myths' of the Holocaust. Yet for all the problems which such a term causes it does provide a unifying definition which demonstrates exactly what Holocaust deniers are railing against. It may be problematic to define the Holocaust against what deniers seek to 'disprove' or destroy but in a thesis on Holocaust denial we are left with little choice. It is the murder of six million Jews, the systematic genocide of European Jewry and the homicidal gas chambers, which far-right deniers wanted to attack and therefore this definition of the term is the one we must adhere to in order to understand what they were attacking and how they did so.

Simply put, we can say that the Holocaust was the murder of two thirds of Europe's Jews and one third of the world's Jewish population. Between five and six million Jews were murdered according to the Nazis' own accounts and the calculations of later historians. Six million murdered remains the popularly accepted toll which was established at the Nuremberg tribunal and Eichmann trial after the war. Yet debate remains over the actual number killed because Nazi documentation leaves room for conflicting calculations, because the Nazis

⁴⁸ The phrase 'Hitler was right' appears in many radical far-right publications for examples see: C. Jordan, *Gothic Ripples*, No. 20, (May 1989); A. Leese, *Gothic Ripples* No. 13 (21st March: 1946).

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 306.

meticulously recorded some deaths while others were left unrecorded.⁵⁰ Of this number around two million were murdered by shooting, in the Soviet Union, or as result localised pogroms instigated by the Nazis or the local populations, by starvation and disease in the ghettos of Eastern Europe, and four million died in the Nazi camps either victims of disease, starvation, medical experimentation, in the homicidal gas chambers or modified air tight vans, worked to death or victims of the grim death marches at the end of the war. These astronomical figures themselves are not the only facet which makes up the Holocaust; it is the deliberate, aggressive and planned system by which death was administered. The Jews were not only victims of the Second World War, but the victims of a genocidal war set against them by the Nazi government in Berlin. As Marrus explains:

The Holocaust was not an international conflict in any normal sense: it took place within the conflict of an international conflict, and to a real degree there was what Lucy Dawidowicz called “a war against the Jews”. But there was no war of the Jews against Nazism, save for the resistance of those targeted for murder. In most cases it was a war of the doomed.⁵¹

This definition is very simplistic but does lay out the basic parameters of what we know as the Holocaust in contemporary society. For the purposes of this thesis, this will be the definition employed, because it is this definition which Holocaust deniers attack. It is also a useful definition which can be applied in conjunction with the arguments made by Tim Cole and the established historiography of the Holocaust. Understanding that there are multiple ‘histories of the Holocaust’ does not mean that the fundamental nature of what is being discussed changes.⁵² As Michael Marrus reminds us, ‘the Holocaust is about murder, and no amount of imaginative reconstruction will ever change this fundamental reality.’⁵³ Yet Marrus is equally aware that in ‘using the customary tools of the [historical] trade ‘we simply do the best we can, knowing that our efforts are necessarily imperfect, incomplete, and inadequate.’⁵⁴

Defining Holocaust denial

Where does the boundary lie between history and pseudohistory lie? Christopher Browning has outlined the problem, ‘is there some scientific or positivist methodology that can delineate absolute boundaries [...] that can say here is where the bedrock, indisputable fact ends; here is where transparent politically motivated falsification begins [?]’ Browning answers his question

⁵⁰ For a summary of the historical debates regarding the numbers killed during the Holocaust see: *Ibid*, pp. 199-200.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 6.

⁵² D. Stone, *Histories of the Holocaust* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 2010).

⁵³ M. R. Marrus, *The Holocaust in History*, p. 6.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 7.

stating 'the issue of drawing a borderline for an "invalid" or pseudohistory remains uncomfortably unresolved.'⁵⁵

Browning's question is located with academic and historical discourse over what can and cannot be said about the Holocaust; how narratives about and around the Holocaust are disseminated rather than a more clear-cut Holocaust denial. As the section demonstrated identifying Holocaust denial and the arguments of denial are quite clear and easily delineated within the context of British far-right parties and individuals. Yet what constitutes Holocaust denial has been subject to change: this is in part due to two factors. The first is located in the changing academic discourses and contexts in which denial has been addressed and debated, the second in the way Holocaust deniers have tried to infiltrate historiographical debates about the Holocaust. This section will explore how denial has been defined by different historians and academics and the concerns raised by Browning's question and its relevance for this thesis.

Before examining the historiography of denial it is necessary to situate denial within the context of antisemitism, specifically the notion that a Jewish conspiracy controls the world and oppresses non-Jews. Historically depicting the Jews as an all-powerful, subversive and clandestine force dates back to antiquity and became transplanted into medieval thought. As Maccoby explains, 'religious antisemitism was transposed into a modern idiom and the crimes of which the Jews had been accused in the Ages of Faith found their modern equivalent.' The pliant image of the Jew as a signifier of conspiracy became a perceived sociological reality. Whenever 'a villain was needed, whether for aesthetic or social or political purposes, the Jew was at hand to play the part in the imaginative constructions of the intelligentsia and the demagogues.'⁵⁶

This malleability of the Jew and a clandestine conspiracy has proven resilient in both antiquity and modernity. The self-confirming nature of a conspiracy theory is provided by the vast array of functions it can facilitate. It makes possible a protean, and at times contradictory, worldview, the malleability of which allows any objections to the conspiracy to be defended and the target of the attack to be reconfirmed as the 'enemy'. Heins confirms this position explaining, 'it is this claustrophobic solipsism which drives human subjects into a paranoid search for meaning through the medium of conspiracy thinking ... provid[ing] relief to the ruled and the

⁵⁵ C. Browning, 'German Memory, Judicial Interrogation, Historical Reconstruction: Writing Perpetrator History from Postwar Testimony' in S. Freidländer (ed.), *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the Final Solution* (Cambridge Mass, Harvard University Press: 1992), pp. 33-35.

⁵⁶ H. Maccoby, *Antisemitism and Modernity: Innovation and Continuity* (New York, Routledge: 2006), p. 2

frustrated.⁵⁷ In essence the conspiracy theory not only provides the basis of a world view but also places the believer in a subordinate position, the victim of an all prevailing conspiracy which seeks to silence their views and freedom. In this thesis the far right perceive that Jews control politics, the economy and society and because they know this 'truth' they view themselves as the perpetual and primary victims of the conspiracy. This belief of a targeted antagonism is not without foundation; anti-fascist and anti-racism institutions as well as groups that fight antisemitism and Holocaust denial do attack and expose the false and prejudiced actions of the far-right.⁵⁸ The perception that these groups are part of an all encompassing conspiracy that controls society, economies and history are without foundation and the product of a paranoid world view. The groups which actively oppose far-right politics are diametrically opposed to the ideologies which drive far right politics and stress cultural pluralism or multiculturalism, egalitarianism and equality. These liberal principles are the antithesis of far right ideology and thought and are dismissed by them as a policies which: facilitate the description of 'native' cultural hegemony; dilute the national racial 'stock'; are a direct attack on patriotism; damage the economic prospects of the indigenous population. In accordance with this racial paradigm the enemy which perpetuates these views has to be an oppositional race: the Jews. For the far right these liberal principles become indelibly connected to a Jewish conspiracy and are seen as a device designed to facilitate the decline of all other ethnically 'pure' races which preserving Jewish identity and race.⁵⁹

Historically there are examples in which genuine conspiracies have taken place.⁶⁰ A pertinent example of this is the dissemination of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion.⁶¹ The document

⁵⁷ V. Heins, 'Critical Theory and the Traps of Conspiracy Thinking' *Philosophy and Social Criticism* (Vol. 33, NO. 7: 2007), p. 790 .

⁵⁸ For example in Britain *Searchlight Magazine*, established in 1975, gathers and analyses intelligence on the far right and publishes its clandestine activities in a monthly journal. Searchlight Information Services, informs governments and the police about activities within British far right groupings. The United States Anti-Defamation League (ADL) set up in 1913 to combat antisemitic prejudice. For a history of anti-fascism in Britain see: N. Copsey, *Anti-Fascism in Britain* (London, Palgrave: 2000).

⁵⁹ This argument is outlined by John Tyndall leader of the National Front and Later British National Party, see J. Tyndall, *The Eleventh Hour: A Call for British Rebirth* (London, Albion Press, 2nd Edition: 1988), pp. 108-110; Colin Jordan expressed these views in a Speech at Trafalgar Square in 1962, Jordan's speech is recorded in: T. Rowe, *Racist Movements: West Midlands* (University of Warwick, Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations: 1974), pp. 2-3. The connection between immigration and Jewish conspiracy is discussed below in chapters three and four. See, pp. 155-57, 166, 174, 179, 185-8, 192, 224.

⁶⁰ For detailed analysis of the difference between genuine conspiracy and conspiracy theory see: J. M Bale, 'Political Paranoia v. Political Realism: on Distinguishing Between Bogus Conspiracy Theories and Genuine Conspiratorial Politics' *Patterns of Prejudice* (Vol. 41 No. 1: 2007) pp. 45-60.

⁶¹ *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* was Russian forgery published in 1903, its intent was to portray Jews as conspirators against the state. It purports to describe a Jewish plan for global domination in 24 chapters, or protocols. These 'protocols' were allegedly minutes from meetings of Jewish leaders. The Protocols describes the secret plans of Jews to rule the world by manipulating the economy, controlling

pertained to be a genuine manuscript of a dialogue by Jews to control the world and was wholly false and proven to be a forgery. Yet, while a Jewish conspiracy was a fabrication, it was the product of real conspiratorial politics because it was forged by members of the Okhrana, the Tsarist secret police. The aim of the Okhrana was to stoke the fire of antisemitism in Russia and exploiting popular fears about the Jews in order to distract the population from the economic collapse and mismanagement.⁶² Thus, while constructing a conspiracy, the Okhrana was partaking in conspiratorial action. As Bale argues historians should not be blind to the idea, the genuine conspiracies have taken place in the past.⁶³ Yet we must not engage in what Hackett Fischer has dubbed the 'furtive fallacy': 'the erroneous idea that facts of special significance are dark and dirty things and that history itself is a story of causes mostly insidious and results in mostly invidious. The premise that reality is a sordid and secret thing: ... a naive epistemological position that things are never what they seem to be.'⁶⁴

Conspiracy theory differs from genuine conspiracy as the latter relates to specific events or individual and group action. Genuine conspiracy does not have the power to carry out significant historical change and is not capable of controlling the destiny of human civilisation. As Bale opines, 'broader social forces that are difficult if not impossible to control and deep-rooted structural and cultural constraints that place limits on how much they are able to accomplish.'⁶⁵ Conspiracy theorists however subscribe to a view in which an all encompassing clandestine group does possess the power to control and manipulate the world. For the far right this group is the Jews. The historical narratives of the Holocaust are a product of a Jewish conspiracy, an invention that seeks to discredit National Socialism and provide historical and political stability to Israel. The paradoxical nature of this claim demonstrates the malleability and self confirming nature of the conspiracy. As a Jewish 'invention' Holocaust deniers and far right politicians suggest that it is only 'the Jews' that are capable of imagining this genocide rather than the Nazi perpetrators themselves. The paradox of this thinking is further confirmed when we observe that in constructing an antisemitic, mendacious and politically expedient

the media, and fostering religious conflict. In 1921, the London *Times* presented conclusive proof that the protocols were a fake. Today antisemitic writers take the claims made within the document as genuine, even if they do accept that the original document was a forgery. For a detailed rebuttal of the claims made in the protocols see: S. L. Jacobs and M. Weitzman, *Dismantling the Big Lie: The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (Jersey City, NJ, KTAV Publishing House: 2003).

⁶² For a detailed description of how the Protocols of The Elders of Zion were forged see: S. E A Bronner, *Rumor about the Jews: Antisemitism, Conspiracy, and the Protocols of Zion* (Oxford, Oxford University Press), chp. 4.

⁶³ J.M Bale, 'Political Paranoia v. Political Realism', pp. 58-60.

⁶⁴ D. Hackett Fischer, *Historians Fallacies: Towards a Logic of Historical Thought* (New York, Harper and Row: 1970), pp. 74-75.

⁶⁵ J. M Bale, 'Political Paranoia v. Political Realism', p. 58.

reformulation of the past the disseminators demonstrate their own redemptive antisemitism which led to the Holocaust itself. In denying the Holocaust and subscribing to antisemitic conspiracy theories the far right remind non-denying audiences that such rhetoric contains the potential for political, racist violence and genocide.

The historiography on Holocaust denial has sought many explanations and definitions of Holocaust denial. Deborah Lipstadt's work in 1993 established the parameters for the study of Holocaust denial.⁶⁶ Lipstadt's work was not the first to investigate the subject, but the impact of the book has become the core text in any work that looks at Holocaust denial.⁶⁷ Both Lipstadt and the book's status grew due to the 2000 libel trial brought against her by David Irving. Lipstadt's work has therefore, despite its original intention of commenting on denial, become a significant part of the history of denial. Lipstadt makes key observations which are an integral part of this study. The first is the location of Holocaust denial in the radical right political groupings where it is integrated into racial and fascist ideology. The second is the danger inherent in modern forms of communication which allow (however negatively presented) denial to reach a wider mass audience. The third is the delicate balancing act of studying denial without making it seem like legitimate debate or the 'other side of the argument'.

Presenting Holocaust deniers as 'the other side of the argument' is avoided when the intentions of the deniers are presented and shown for who and what they really are. This is evidenced by the way which they construct a usable past out of an unusable past; completely in the service of the present. This thesis will therefore not argue with deniers in order to prove the Holocaust; such an approach would be futile because the Holocaust does not need to be proved. In any case, other academics and institutions have already counter attacked the deniers' claims.⁶⁸ Rather this thesis will show how and why far-right British Holocaust deniers construct a past which matches their political and ideological agendas.

This is methodologically prudent because, as the historiography of denial shows, attempting to apply a single monolithic label of 'denial' or 'Holocaust denier' is problematic. Browning's

⁶⁶ D. E. Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust*.

⁶⁷ For key texts before Lipstadt see: G. Seidel, *The Holocaust Denial: Antisemitism, Racism and the New Right* (Leeds, Beyond the Pale Collective: 1986); P. Vidal-Naquet, *Assassins of Memory: Essays on the Denial of the Holocaust* (New York, Columbia University Press: 1992).

⁶⁸ J. C. Zimmermann, *Holocaust Denial*, M. Shermer and A. Gorbman, *Denying History*. See: Emory University: Holocaust Denial on Trial: Using History to Confront Distortions: <http://www.hdot.org/> (Last Accessed 07/07/12); The Nizkor Project: Deceit & Misrepresentation the Techniques of Holocaust Denial: <http://www.nizkor.org> (last accessed 07/07/12).

comment about where the 'bedrock' lies in establishing denial is testament to this. As is the knowledge that in order to apply the label 'Holocaust denier' to David Irving in 2000 meant a lengthy and costly libel trial. Instead of trying to find a 'bedrock' or 'line in the sand' the complex arguments of the historiography surrounding denial are taken into account.

Holocaust denial has been divided into 'soft' and 'hard' varieties by a number of commentators on Holocaust denial literature.⁶⁹ The 'soft' variant has traditionally cast a type of denial which rejects the idea that there was a systematic genocide and that while Jews were imprisoned and died in limited numbers, the deaths were the result of extremist Nazi elements. 'Hard' denial argues that the whole genocide was a hoax constructed after the war. While these labels may on first glance seem applicable, there are problems with attempts at explaining with unifying signifiers. In dividing denial between 'hard' and 'soft' categories, it presupposes that we have identified what denial is: the bedrock. Yet, this is misleading. In *Denying the Holocaust*, Deborah Lipstadt claimed she could not accept that the Holocaust can be compared to any other forms of genocide, and accused historians who sought comparisons were as 'intent on obscuring the critical contrasts between Stalinism and Nazism [...] The Nazis did not borrow these methods from the Soviets. They were *sui generis*, and the refusal of these historians to acknowledge that fact reflects the same triumph of ideology over the truth that we have seen throughout this study.'⁷⁰ It should be noted that Lipstadt's conclusion was written during the historical debates over the uniqueness of the Holocaust and its place in comparative genocide studies.⁷¹ Lipstadt has since recanted this staunch uniqueness position, yet her work still demonstrates it the way in which historiographical debates can have an effect on the way in which we label denial.⁷²

Lipstadt's position on the use or absence of the Holocaust denial has also lead to her claiming that former United states of America President Jimmy Carter was promoting 'soft core' Holocaust denial in his book *Palestine Peace Not Apartheid*, stating: 'when a former president of the US writes a book on the Israeli-Palestinian crisis and writes a chronology at the beginning of the book [...] and in that chronology lists nothing of importance between 1939

⁶⁹ G. Seidel, *The Holocaust Denial*, pp. 115-128; R. Eaglestone, *Postmodernism*, p. 8; D. Lipstadt 'Denial' in P. Hayes and J. K Roth (eds), *The Oxford Handbook*, pp. 560-574; R. Eatwell 'The Holocaust Denial' in L. Cheles, R. Ferguson and M. Vaughan, *Neo-Fascism*, pp. 120-146.

⁷⁰ D. E. Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust*, pp 212-215.

⁷¹ For review of these debates see: G. D. Rosenfeld, 'The Politics of Uniqueness: Reflections on the Recent Polemical Turn in Holocaust Scholarship', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* (Vol. 13. No. 1: 1999), pp. 28-61.

⁷² M. Gerstenfeld, 'Denial of the Holocaust and Immoral Equivalence: An Interview with Deborah Lipstadt' *Jerusalem Centre for Public Affairs: Post-Holocaust and Anti-Semitism* (No. 11, August 1st: 2003), pp. 14-16.

and 1947, that is “soft-core” denial’.⁷³ Carter’s book attracted mixed reviews because of his position on the Middle East conflict and claimed that Israel should exchange land for peace. Lipstadt’s charge of soft-core denial at Carter is problematic, because it confuses the labels assigned to denial. In Lipstadt’s definition Carter is a ‘soft-core’ denier because he *omitted* reference to the Holocaust in his chronology. Carter did comment in the book on the ‘extreme’ and ‘obnoxious’ statements of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad who labelled the Holocaust a ‘myth’, but his omission of the Holocaust from the chronology still in the mind of Lipstadt was a form of denial.⁷⁴ Lipstadt’s labelling Carter of soft-core denial is problematic. Carter was not a Holocaust denier and his comments in his book demonstrate his criticism and abhorrence of denial. What this episode demonstrates is that the Holocaust is presented and employed in political arguments can alter the way in which denial is applied.

It is clear therefore that political and historiographical arguments can muddy the water over clear definitions of denial. Mark Levene has argued that because the Holocaust is, ‘vigilantly guarded, and treated like a shrine, the Holocaust has become a subject which, despite a huge scholastic industry which has grown up around it, seems often closed to examination and evolution except in previously agreed and authorised parameters.’⁷⁵ Levene indicates a key debate in the study of the Holocaust: that because of the reality, that six million people were murdered during the genocide, some Holocaust scholars, Holocaust survivors and national governments and politicians resist attempts to use the Holocaust in a particular way or historicise the Holocaust for fear of normalising it.

The danger in doing this is that labels like ‘denial’ are applied in contexts which that are not particularly helpful, and can in fact be harmful and run counter to the aims which such groups seek. In labelling individuals like Jimmy Carter a ‘soft-core Holocaust denier’, deniers gain a respectable public and political figure which they can claim subscribe to their reading of the past.⁷⁶ This does not mean that such debates and arguments over the Holocaust should not take place. The Holocaust is a hugely emotive subject and such arguments about how the Holocaust is used in literature must be had, but imbuing works with the label ‘denial’ should not be done lightly, for it will lead to a lack of clarity over the line between genuine academic and political debates and Holocaust denial. Denial should only be used in a context to which it

⁷³ Quoted in: J. Paul, ‘Holocaust Scholar Warns of New ‘Soft-Core’ Denial,’ *The Jerusalem Post* (February 6, 2007).

⁷⁴ J. Carter, *Palestine: Peace not Apartheid* (New York: Simon and Schuster: 2006), p. 18.

⁷⁵ M. Levene, ‘Is the Holocaust Another Example of Genocide?’ in S. Gigliotti and B. Lang (eds), *The Holocaust: A Reader* (Oxford, Blackwell: 2005), pp. 420-448.

⁷⁶ David Irving passed comment on Lipstadt’s comments on his web page, see: <http://www.fpp.co.uk/Auschwitz/Lipstadt/index.html> (accessed 02/02/11).

belongs, when the Holocaust is denied as genocide; the numbers murdered are lowered; it is claimed that homicidal gas chambers did not exist or that the Holocaust is marked by an overt and notable absence. This notable absence is not the same as Carter's omission of the Holocaust from a chronology, but rather a comment which alludes to the absence because of a political view. This will be seen in the thesis when deniers refuse to talk about their views on the Holocaust, but claim that Holocaust denial is no longer part of their ideology or policies.

Deniers use genuine debates that take place in academic and philosophical and ethical debates in conjunction with their own arguments about the truth of the Holocaust. In 2010 Lipstadt identified a number of bullet points regarding the arguments which Holocaust deniers make. In one point she stated that Holocaust deniers claim that 'after the war the Allies engaged in "Victor's Justice" at places such as Nuremburg, where they put innocent Germans on trial.'⁷⁷ There are genuine debates that historians have had over the Nuremberg trials. Dan Stone stated that the Nuremberg tribunals were, 'the modern equivalent of a victory march'.⁷⁸ Furthermore, debates over the use of the atomic bomb in Japan and allied carpet bombing of German cities are debates which have a legitimate place in the history of the Second World War. Yet these debates would not be used by historians to in any way suggest that the horrors suffered in the Holocaust can be negated by allied crimes. *Tu quoque* arguments are a key tactic used by Holocaust deniers, yet simply turning the charges of crimes back on the accuser or highlighting other crimes does not provide a serious retort to, or diminish the crimes, of the Holocaust. Deniers combine such arguments and debates with their own overarching agenda to diminish the Holocaust as well as imprinting their own views in the arguments. Deniers will point to the Nuremberg tribunals as an example of 'victor's justice' but also suggest that Jews were fabricating the evidence presented at the tribunal.⁷⁹ Deniers will report and falsify the number of German civilians killed in allied bombing, but use the fabricated (or sometimes real) number of victims of bombing to suggest that the numbers killed in these attacks were higher than the number Jews killed in occupied Europe.⁸⁰ Clearly allied crimes attract moral condemnation. The Allied bombing of Dresden is an important case because had an independent tribunal, with full international jurisdiction, been established in 1945 there would have been a strong case for the act to be considered a war crime.⁸¹ The crimes of the Allied powers are still a key component of reassessment in the history of the Second World War.

⁷⁷ D. Lipstadt 'Denial', pp. 560-574.

⁷⁸ D. Stone, *Constructing*, p. 83.

⁷⁹ D. Irving, *Nuremberg: The Last Battle* (London, Focal Point Publications: 1996), pp. 99-101.

⁸⁰ M. McLaughlin, *The Death of a City* (Deeside, Phoenix Publications: 1982).

⁸¹ D. Bloxham, 'Dresden as A War Crime' in P. Addison and J. A. Crang (eds), *Firestorm: The Bombing of Dresden 1945* (London, Pimlico: 2006), pp. 180-208.

Despite the continued controversy in the United Kingdom surrounding commemoration of Bomber Command, it is clear that in highlighting documented allied crimes the Holocaust does not become transplanted from its specific historical context, and does not become relativised against other horrors of war.⁸² The narratives of both Allied and Nazi crimes can coalesce alongside each other in the history of the Second World War even if the public debates which surround Allied crimes issues remain contentious. In evoking allied crimes in their narrative Holocaust deniers cannot simply transpose Jewish pain for German civilian suffering (although this is their aim) because the two narratives are located in their own specific, and established, historical contexts of the Second World War.

Labelling Holocaust denial is therefore not just a question of outright denial of the Holocaust, it is also about the intent behind the arguments which deniers employ. This 'active denial' is obviously overt in the far right's reformation of the past to fit their ideological concerns in the present. Yet before moving on to conclude this section, there are other forms of denial, and arguments which have been espoused by historians and commentators on Holocaust denial which must be considered.

Vidal-Naquet's collection of essays, *Assassins of Memory: Essays on the Denial of the Holocaust*, provides a comprehensive analysis of the *methods* of deniers. He, like Lipstadt and others, exposes the arguments that they employ in order to discredit the historical narrative of the Holocaust.⁸³ Vidal-Naquet, like Lipstadt, describes how deniers present data to cast doubt on the nature and extent of the Nazi crimes. Like Lipstadt he shares common assumptions about the methods and arguments employed by deniers: he also shows how they question the scope of the use of gas chambers as instruments of execution; and the technological and logistical impossibility of gassing victims *en masse*. Vidal-Naquet exposes deniers' arguments surrounding the numbers actually sent to their deaths; how they, like the Nazis before them, employ the same euphemistic language regarding the Final Solution, taking it at face value to demonstrate there was no order to 'kill' the Jews of Europe. Vidal-Naquet demonstrates how deniers vaunt their 'academic' journal, the *Journal of Historical Review (JHR)*, and flaunt their academic credentials to gain respectability. Nonetheless, Vidal-Naquet is quick to point out that these credentials are never in the discipline of history.

⁸² For a balanced account of the memory and debates surrounding Bomber Command in the United Kingdom see: M. Connelly, *Reaching for the Stars: A New History of Bomber Command in World War II* (London, I.B. Tauris: 2001), pp. 137-157.

⁸³ Vidal-Naquet provides a valuable list of the methods of deniers in his work see: *P. Vidal-Naquet, Assassins of Memory*, pp. 21-24.

Vidal-Naquet also highlights how deniers draw on the support of liberal professors (for example Chomsky) who, while not subscribing to their views, are nonetheless willing to defend their right to say them. Vidal-Naquet's work is more focused, as the title suggests, on memory: the implication of his argument is that historical interpretation cannot escape the politics of memory. Thus, Vidal-Naquet's argument is not centred entirely on the word of deniers or the function of their institutions: he questions how memory is appropriated and distorted, and the political motives and consequences of so doing. Vidal poses the question what is gained (or lost) by denial? But, more importantly, what impact is denial having on the memory of the Holocaust? Are victims and 'defenders' of the Holocaust having to (over)react and distort their 'memory' in order to compensate for denial? In other words, by turning the Holocaust into a 'football' in an adversarial match where the trophy is the 'truth', complex personal and collective memories are transformed into simplistic polemics.⁸⁴ Being cognisant of causes that generate intractable positions is vital for identifying motives.

Another work in relation to the psychological aspects of denial is Laurence Langer's *Admitting the Holocaust: Collected Essays*. Langer puts forward the idea of 'denial' as being an *emotional mechanism* for dealing with the horrors of the Final Solution. Despite its title, this book does not dwell on Holocaust denial as outlined by other historians engaged in the discourse. Langer's main thesis extrapolates on how Hollywood and Holocaust literature focuses too heavily on solace and consolation: by giving their 'stories' happy endings, according to Langer, such 'fictions' create an anodyne format which undermines the true nature, the true horror, of the Holocaust. In short, for Langer there is a form of 'denial' that simply refuses or cannot accept the sheer scale of the atrocities committed against the Jews by the Nazis.

His argument enters and highlights a 'grey area' surrounding the issue of denial,⁸⁵ one in which people are not, as Lipstadt and others have labelled, them *outright* deniers of the Holocaust. These 'actors' do not refute the Holocaust in a public or malicious way, and have no overt political agenda, but do so in an internal private, and unconscious, way. They are simply shielding themselves from acts of indecent humanity that they would rather not think about; to effect this they place the Holocaust into normalising and familiar contexts. As Langer states, 'we have finally begun to enter the second stage of Holocaust response, moving from what we

⁸⁴ This point has been raised by Heather Goodall in the context of the 'History Wars' debate in Australia. See: H. Goodall, 'Too early yet or not soon enough? Reflections on "sharing" histories as process not collection', *Australian History Studies*, (Vol. 33, No. 118: 2002), pp. 7-24.

⁸⁵ The term 'grey zone' is borrowed from Primo Levi. See: P. Levi 'The Grey Zone' in O. Bartov (ed.), *The Holocaust, Origins, Implementation and Aftermath* (London, Routledge: 2000) pp. 251-272.

know of the event, to how we remember it, which shifts the responsibility to *our own imagination* and what we are prepared to admit there.⁸⁶

Understanding that there is a variety in what individuals are prepared to 'admit' in their 'own imagination' could explain why there is a *zeitgeist* for placing the Holocaust into more comforting human frames of understanding. These frameworks often incorporate the Holocaust into existing familiar and sanitised narratives, where the 'fabric of humanity' is tested but ultimately redeemed by good deeds or depicted as tales of 'triumph over adversity.' These heroic tales privilege the micro-narrative over the meta-narrative, and in so doing obfuscate the value and significance of the latter, relegating the Holocaust to a backdrop or side issue. The result might create an *inadvertent* denial of the brutality which fails to appreciate the senselessness futilely of the Holocaust. However this 'type' of 'denial' has the echo of the earlier comments of Elie Wiesel who reminds us that who has not lived through the event can never fully reveal it and those who have lived through it can never fully communicate it.

Quantifying and qualifying what people understand by, or how they subconsciously manipulate, the Holocaust, is practically impossible as we cannot be sure what the general public's private thoughts on it are. Yet, awareness that denial is not necessarily overt and the reasons for it are more nuanced than antisemitism, is a concept which must be grappled with when examining what constitutes 'denial' and how it is defined. Langer's theories on the 'grey area' and psychological dimension of a Holocaust 'denial' that dwells on the enormity and incomprehensibility of the Holocaust in the minds of the general public is significant question yet it is an empirically immeasurable one.

The themes raised by Langer have also been addressed by Berel Lang. In an article he asks six questions on (or about) Holocaust denial. In the article Lang meditates on this grey area and proposes a model that argues against a binary position of acknowledgement and denial because there is a large group which can be called 'unknowing'. Lang hypothesises that the community of people who occupy the 'unknowing' demographic worldwide is between three and four billion people. Lang demonstrates how these people are not in possession of information to know about the Holocaust at all; as such they are not in a position to react to the information. While a large proportion of the population of the world may not be in a position to know of the historical existence of the Holocaust, other groups also exist which challenge the binary model of 'acknowledgement' and 'denial'. Lang highlights a second

⁸⁶ L. Langer, *Admitting the Holocaust*, p. 13. (Italics are my emphasis).

category in which people are 'to some extent cognisant of the Holocaust but for whom its occurrence does not matter.' The reason for this apathy is due to personal or group suffering; or because the present distance from the Holocaust of almost seventy years 'blends into a view of the historical past so filled with war and atrocity that even another large instance adds nothing to their understanding or reaction.' Lang explains that this is 'not denial, not absence or ignorance but indifference' because from the perspective this group view the world and their place in it, the Holocaust 'might as well have not occurred.'⁸⁷

The 'grey area' is an essential component of labelling Holocaust denial, not because it can be seen as 'denial' but in fact because equally not be seen as 'acknowledgement'. Individuals positioned in the 'grey zone' are unaware that two binary positions – acknowledgement and denial - exist. This area it is found in the early stages of the development of Holocaust denial when many people were unaware, or had little information about, what was happening to the Jews of Europe. It is also imperative to recognise the way in which the Holocaust can be viewed primarily through the prism of antisemitism as to whether the Holocaust is acknowledged or denied.

The arguments of Lang, Lipstadt, Langer and Vidal-Naquet, all demonstrate the way in which different reactions to the Holocaust can be labelled 'denial' especially in relation to questions over the memory of the Holocaust and the way in which it is (or is not) incorporated into collective memories or expressed as a Holocaust 'consciousness'. While an understanding over the way in which the Holocaust is incorporated into the public sphere is important, it is also necessary to understand that this type of 'denial' is more of a semantic definition which relates to questions over how the horror of the Holocaust is understood and transmitted. Attempting to capture an absolute representation of the past is impossible because of its incorporeity and its absence in the present. Therefore representing the full horrors experienced during the Holocaust is equally impossible and attempts to do so vary in their quality. Semantically 'denial' in this sense is therefore indicative of the inability to understand the Holocaust or have knowledge of it. It is not denial in an 'active' sense that is observed in British far-right publications; rather it is an observation that our ability to truly grasp the past and understand its horror is limited by the representations of the past that are constructed and by the responses to them.

⁸⁷ B. Lang, 'Six Questions on (or about) Holocaust Denial', *History and Theory*, (Vol. 49, May: 2010), p. 160.

To return to Browning's question, the historiography and debates around Holocaust denial reveals there is no finite definition of Holocaust denial, or the types of 'denial' which can be observed in relation to the Holocaust. The application of terms like 'soft' and 'hard' denial prove problematic because they serve to further confuse what denial is and create more complications over the political and historical historiographical debates over the Holocaust. Denial has unfortunately been used as a tool to suppress arguments or applied to works and arguments which some have felt do not pay the proper reverence to the Holocaust. There is a danger in this because, as Stanley Fish has noted, those who maintain the Holocaust happened and claim to 'have all the evidence on their side' and that the evidence is 'unequivocal' set the 'bar of validation too high'. Fish explains that:

If the standard of validation is the establishment of a truth that is invulnerable to challenge, no one ... could meet it; and, moreover, in the gap between that unrealizable standard of proof and what can be proven according to standards less severe, there is room for all the little manoeuvres deniers so skilfully employ-insisting that all points of view, and especially theirs, should have a fair hearing and not be discounted until they have been proven to be absolutely false (no such proof will ever be available); raising questions about autopsies, budgets, master plans, precise numbers, etc) that cannot be definitively answered, and arguing that until they are answered the issue must remain open.⁸⁸

In essence what Fish is demonstrating is that if claims that the Holocaust happened are housed in 'closed parameters' which are so strong and closed then deniers are given the ammunition to claim they have found evidence which attacks the 'unequivocal' evidence. The effect of this stance is that those who accept the reality of the Holocaust are subject to scrutiny for their 'unequivocal' claims.

Fish is not arguing that the basic truths about the Holocaust are in question, the systematic genocide of Europe's Jews; the murder of around six million Jews; the homicidal gas chambers; the mass shooting by the Einsatzgruppen. What he is arguing is that the ways in which historians explain how the Holocaust happened and are part of an ongoing historical debate and that no universal metanarrative exists to explain all the aspects of the Holocaust. As demonstrated by Lawson, 'we just have to admit that the documents do not tell us all that we want to know.' The same problems are found with labelling Holocaust denial, as we have seen with Lipstadt's 1993 conclusion, definitions of denial employed can be changed and affected by ongoing historical debates and can shift and change over time regarding who is included as a 'Holocaust denier'.

⁸⁸ S. Fish, 'Holocaust denial and Academic Freedom', p. 504.

In relation to this thesis the label of Holocaust denial is easier to define, because of the overt and 'active' nature of the denial found in the British far right. It is expressed in the publications because they are actively trying to prove that their interpretation of the past is valid. Deniers of the far right will call themselves 'revisionists' insert the word Holocaust in inverted commas and argue that historians do not have all the 'facts' and that a deniers rewriting of the past is as valid as those of Holocaust historians. Yet, it is important to identify the other areas in which denial can also be found and understand that denial is not always 'active', denial can be hinted at or signifiers employed to suggest that an individual is a Holocaust denier. Nick Griffin, leader of the British National Party from 1999, had previously published Holocaust denial pamphlets and material on denial, but later refused to speak about denial in public claiming that 'European laws' prevented from letting his views be known.⁸⁹ This is an example of how an individual cannot actively promote denial with words and references but strongly suggest that his views remain unchanged but not talk about them publically.

In essence the type of denial that is examined in this thesis is a direct and active denial, one which deals directly with the far right's search for a usable past in an unusable history. A denial which builds a past on lies, falsifications, and attempts to deconstruct the history of the Holocaust established by genuine historical research. It is unfortunate that defining denial is so problematic. This problem stems from denial being wrenched out of its context as a blatant antisemitic rewriting of history along ideological lies, and placed into more intricate debates about what can and cannot be said about the Holocaust. In these context the word 'denial' has lost some of its ascendancy. Defining denial now means entering with debates over how the Holocaust is used and represented, and this only serves to give deniers more opportunity to 'piggyback' on genuine academic debates.⁹⁰ Debates over how the Holocaust should be represented and employed are a valid endeavour and necessary, yet the words 'Holocaust denier' and 'Holocaust denial' should not be employed on historians who do not doubt the actuality of the Holocaust. As Stanley Fish notes 'there is no debate among historians about the actuality of the Holocaust'. As such diluting the term 'denier', or employing the word 'soft',

⁸⁹ This was nothing more than far-right language games; while a European law on Holocaust denial existed, Britain had never extradited individuals for the crime. It was, for Griffin, a convenient way to attack the European Union and the Holocaust. The point could be countered by the claim that if he could be prosecuted for his claims when he was in counties with Holocaust denial laws or those which enforced the European law, he would have had to know that his views were likely to see him prosecuted.

⁹⁰ R. Eaglestone, *Postmodernism*, p. 18.

weakens the power of the offence the term 'denier' can hold when what is at issue is the actuality of the Holocaust.⁹¹

The British 'Far right' or British 'fascisms'? : definitions, historiography and denial.

The last section showed how and why Holocaust denial should be defined as the rejection of the actuality of the Holocaust. The types of denial seen in the British far right from 1942 to 2001 were an overt rejection of this actuality. They were an attempt to find a workable past which served the ideologies of the far-right groups and constructed a history *wholly* in the service of the present. Yet to understand the need for such a past and the ideologies which drove it, it is necessary to define which groups and individuals made up the far right.

When reviewing the current body of academic scholarship on the far right Peter Merkl opines, 'we need to remember that we are still far from a universally agreed and detailed template of right-wing extremism, and that it would be highly misleading to generalize from any one country's experience to all the others.'⁹² Merkl was alluding to the growing debate among political scientist, sociologists and historians about how to define 'far right' groups and ideologies. As Cas Mudde has demonstrated this is not limited to the definition of far right groups alone but all parties across the political spectrum.⁹³ As alluded to by Merkl, the main area of contention and methodological conflict centres on how comparative studies of different groups in different countries can be made. Methodologically these debates and conflict are not of the upmost concern in this thesis. As study of British far right groups and their use of Holocaust denial international comparisons between different groups are not a prerequisite. It is clear that non-British far right movements and British far right groups interact and have an influence on the Holocaust denial they produce and explicit reference will be made and explored in the thesis when this occurs. It is not however necessary to compare international far right movements in this introduction. What is necessary is to create a working definition of the British far right. Merkl posits an pertinent question in regards to defining far right groups and ideology: 'the very nature of these different ultra-nationalisms, to name the most prominent feature, militates against universalising the striking diversities. With each national movement asserting its uniqueness so desperately, how dare we claim they are all the same?' In answer to his own question, Merkl points to the need for a workable framework for

⁹¹ S. Fish, 'Holocaust denial and Academic Freedom', pp. 499-524.

⁹² P. H. Merkl 'Introduction' in P. H. Merkl & L. Weinberg (eds), *Right-Wing Extremism in the Twenty-First Century* (London, Frank Cass: 2003), p. 4.

⁹³ C. Mudde, *The Ideology of the Extreme Right* (Manchester, Manchester University Press: 2000), pp. 1-5.

methodological assumptions based on the common characteristics found within the groups on the far right, and the need to differentiate between ‘subcultures of the extreme right—which produce its basic values and ideas—its social movements and, highest on the food chain (in a manner of speaking), its political parties.’⁹⁴

As Merkl has identified the most prominent feature of these groups is ultra nationalism. This is supported by Mudde, who states that nationalism provides the ‘coat hanger’ around which all other aspects of far right family ideologies hang.⁹⁵ Therefore in order to establish a workable frame work for the thesis ultra-nationalism will provide the main identifier of a far right group. A brief review of the language and arguments put forward in British far right party literature confirm the overwhelming presence of ultra-nationalism. This ultra-nationalism is expressed as the desire for the establishment of a political, social and cultural Britain based on ‘native’, ‘indigenous’, ‘white’ hegemony.⁹⁶ The result of which is a world view based on ‘a myth of homogeneous nation, a romantic and populist ultra-nationalism which is detected against the concept of liberal and pluralistic democracy and its underlying principle of individualism and universalism.’⁹⁷ From this combination of ultra-nationalism and rejection of individualism and universalism stems the racist, antisemitic and xenophobic rhetoric which are characteristic of far right ideology and world views. These characteristics are the main concern of this thesis in relation to the dissemination and use of Holocaust denial. The material examined in this thesis is therefore based upon the identification of this main theme and then examined to see how, and if, such rhetoric manifest itself in notions of a Jewish conspiracy of world domination and Holocaust denial.

The presence of Holocaust denial in such groups draws our attention to Merkl second requisite for a workable methodological framework: the need to differentiate between different sub-cultures of the far right. The main question to be answered here is: are all Holocaust deniers, *ipso facto*, members of the far right? The international dimensions of Holocaust denial are apparent, but this does not mean that the ideological groups using denial have congruous political and ideological goals. Other groups which do not support a ultra-nationalist ideology still promulgate denial, as do loan or politically independent individuals who subscribed to a

⁹⁴ P. H.Merkl, *Right-Wing Extremism*, p. 4

⁹⁵ C. Mudde, *Populist Radical Right*, p. 16.

⁹⁶ For examples of these terms in use in current far-right literature and manifestoes see: The British Peoples Party webpage <http://www.bpp.org.uk/policies.html> (Accessed 21/12/13) and the British National Party’s 2010 Manifesto: N. A, *Democracy, Freedom, Culture and Identity British National Party General Elections Manifesto 2010* (British National Party, Welshpool: 2010).

⁹⁷ A. A. Ellinas, *The Media and the Far Right in Western Europe: Playing the Nationalist Card* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 2010), p. 10.

conspiracy theories based on a predilection and paranoia that the world is not as it seems and that there are unseen forces at work.⁹⁸ Furthermore, it should not imply that to be considered a member of a far right party or follower of far right ideology an individual must subscribe to Holocaust denial. The aim of this thesis is to explore how Holocaust denial has historically been used by the far right, and how its use connects to wider the ideologies and antisemitic conspiracy theories and the extent to which this creates a 'history' to underpin their ideological epistemological positions.

These differentials between far right movements and lone individuals with far right tendencies are better understood when Merkl's three different subgroups are outlined. Merkl demonstrates that there are three different ways of understanding the manifestations of far right thought and ideology. The first is the 'subculture' this is best explained as a social and political outlook, a rather stable social world in itself. Merkl posits two ways of understanding this subcultures predilection for far right tendencies. The first, emerges from an antecedent mores (for instance families associated one way or another with former colonial empires, with prejudicial views towards their erstwhile colonial subjects— especially when the latter become immigrants or asylum-seekers in the mother countries). The second is the result of profound reactions to a historical crisis or social change (for example, middleclass or working-class families that find themselves increasingly impoverished or displaced by major economic changes over which they have no control) or the anomie of war and destruction.⁹⁹ As Merkl, explains 'people may also be socialised into these subcultural attitudes and never become political activists of the extreme right, merely sympathisers.'¹⁰⁰

The second group are far right 'social movements', which are 'the dynamic product of a right-wing subculture and exhibits some degree of organization, for example as an association devoted to the defence of certain salient issues, or the tribe's identity, or against threatened measures of antagonists or government agencies.' Merkl explains that there may be many different social movements within the same subculture and each may have either antagonist or complimentary aims, these groups tend to be made up of 'sympathizers', or 'occasional collaborators' within the subculture who may prefer not to get involved more deeply or share only some but not all of the issue positions of an organized movement. As these social movements tend to formulate around one particular issue their life-span tends to be limited

⁹⁸ M. Shermer, *Why People Believe Weird Things: Pseudoscience, Superstition, and Other Confusions of Our Time* (New York, Saint Martin's Press: 2002), pp. 205-210.

⁹⁹ P. H. Merkl, *Right-Wing Extremism*, pp. 4-5.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, p. 5

and the movement either dissipates if the issue is resolved or atrophies as the result of internal fractions.¹⁰¹

Both the far right subcultures and social movements are hard to access in terms of measurable historical documentation. Within the subculture it is hard to capture the dissemination or assimilation of Holocaust denial, as it is likely to be expressed oral or past from individual to individual in the form of pamphlets and therefore leaves little evidence for the historian.¹⁰²

Similarly social movements also leave little documentation for the historian to study, because they are short lived or centred on single issues as a result of which few well documented examples remain and therefore their connection, if any, to Holocaust denial is largely unknown. The thesis does attempt to try to find indications of these far right subcultures or social movements in the thesis through mass-observation diaries, opinion polls or memoirs of former far right activists, however it is recognised that they only give an intimation of what such groups may have made of Holocaust denial. The recognition of these subcultures do however give an indication of the types of people that Holocaust denial material from British far right groups was trying to reach. It is clear that Holocaust denial books, journals and pamphlets are created and disseminated with the aim of serving as a pedagogical tool. A tool from which to educate the populous about Holocaust denial and conspiracy theories concerning the Jews.

The lack of material in far right subcultures or social movements means that the primary focus for the thesis rests with the far right parties, groups and individuals affiliated with parties that publish and disseminate Holocaust denial. As Merkl explains, a far-right party 'is a highly specialized organization for electing representatives, or defeating opponents, and participating in legislation and administration at any level. Whether and how members of a social movement form a party depends mostly on the opportunities afforded by the existing political system and the electoral market place.' Merkl, provides further nuance to the relationship between the subgroups and the party explaining that 'it is very common that some members of the subculture and even of the social movement have serious misgivings about 'their party' and its activities.' In essence Merkl outlines where support for far right groups comes from, the subcultures and social movements, and how the parties themselves organise themselves.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² Some example can be found in the memoirs of former far right members, for an example of the form that the distribution of Holocaust denial material took see: M. Collins, *Hate: My Life in the British Far Right* (London, Biteback Publishing: 2012), pp. 16-17.

¹⁰³ P. H.Merkl, *Right-Wing Extremism*, pp. 4-5.

Merkl provides a framework for understanding the interrelationship between far right party supporters. There are, however, clearly organisational and ideological differences between the parties on the far right of British politics. Roger Eatwell has classified a way of viewing the different guises which the parties and groups of the far right have adopted which provide a more nuanced explanation of the different manifestations of far right movements.¹⁰⁴ Eatwell provides a methodological framework from which to identify differences between far right groups and will be adopted for use within this thesis. The three forms proposed by Eatwell are the recidivistic, radical and the 'hybrid' or populist. The 'recidivist form' was a group which looked nostalgically to the past but which in order to attract support might not publically declare its allegiance to past fascisms. In this thesis this would typically resemble a group like the National Front from 1966 to 1979 which tried to distance itself from their neo-Nazi origins in order to attract new members and votes from sections the electorate which were wary of fascists groups but were attracted to the concepts of strong nationalist values and anti-immigration measures. The second type would resemble organisations like Colin Jordan's White Defence league (1957-1960); National Socialist Movement (1962-1968); The British Movement under Jordan and later Michael McLaughlin (1968- 1983) or John Tyndall's Greater Britain Movement (1964-67). These groups would be labelled a 'radical form' of far right movements and had a strong predilection for neo-fascism/Nazism. These groups tried to re-interpret fascist and Nazi ideology and traditions and argued that there were sometimes critical errors made in past movements (For example, the Second World War was an patricidal war between Aryans and Germany should never have gone to war with Britain). The final group labelled 'hybrid' or 'populist' sought a synthesis of past radical and racial ideologies with other dogmas most notably populism and hid its fascist leanings to attract mass support. This type of group resembled the British National Party since 1999 under the leadership of Nick Griffin.

Application of a monolithic concept like 'the far-right' is extremely problematic when establishing the complex, and at times incompatible, contours of the individuals and groups studied in this thesis. However, I have chosen to define the groups under study as the 'far right' rather than as 'fascist' because of the inherent complications that a label like 'fascist' creates.

¹⁰⁴ These labels are taken from R. Eatwell. See: R. Eatwell, 'Towards a New Model of Fascism', *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, (Vol. 4 No. 2: 1992), pp. 161-194.

While the terms maybe seen as interchangeable, the overuse of the word 'fascist' in society, and the world in general, has imbued the term with a fluidity which is at times incongruous.¹⁰⁵

As Robert Paxton explained in his essay on 'the five stages of fascism', fascism fits 'badly into any system of universal intellectual principles' because 'each national variant of fascism draws its legitimacy [...] not from some universal scripture but from what it considers the most authentic elements of its own community identity.'¹⁰⁶ As Paxton argues, it is not enough to identify the 'plumage' (insignia, flags and symbols) of fascist groups and assume they are all singing from the same hymn sheet. There is no universal 'fascism', a fact which is obscured by the use of the term 'ism', as an 'ism' can often conjure up comparisons with other 'isms' of the long nineteenth-century in Europe - conservatism, liberalism, socialism. These 'isms' were associated with notable rule, philosophical underpinnings and characterised by deference to educated leaders, learned debates, and (even in some forms of socialism) limited popular authority.¹⁰⁷

Paxton also demonstrates the need to understand fascisms in relation to their context and longevity over time, especially if they achieve power, as the ideologies contained within early fascist movements will change and have to more pragmatic stances in relation to their earlier ideologies. Paxton identifies five stages from which to study fascisms and their ideologies: (1) the initial creation of fascist movements; (2) their rooting as parties in a political system; (3) the acquisition of power; (4) the exercise of power, and (5) radicalization or entropy.¹⁰⁸ It is clear that in Britain far-right movements either never got beyond the first stage, or if they did, they were constantly engaged in battle over how to achieve stages two and three.

By using Eatwell's subdivision of the groups found in the British far-right, a clearer understanding of the different ways such groups seek power and how their political agenda differ in relation to the first three of Paxton's five stages of fascism can be achieved. How this relates to Holocaust denial is central to this thesis. Ray Hill, a former far right supporter and leader who became a mole for the Searchlight institution, demonstrated in his book on the workings of British and European neo-Nazi groups that Holocaust 'revisionism' was present in all far-right groups.¹⁰⁹ The different groups each presented Holocaust denial in accordance

¹⁰⁵ R. Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (London, Routledge: 1993), pp. 1-4; R. O. Paxton 'The Five Stages of Fascism', *The Journal of Modern History*, (Vol. 70, No. 1: 1998), pp. 8-9.

¹⁰⁶ R. O. Paxton 'The Five Stages of Fascism', pp. 3-5.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p. 4.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 11.

¹⁰⁹ R. Hill and A. Bell, *The Other Face of Terror*, pp. 225-249.

with their political objectives and the pedagogical lessons it sought to teach its members and the wider general public.

The mendacious past constructed by the far right to explain the ideological concerns of the present was not just an expression of a shared technique. It is also an indicative factor which binds and identifies the British far right. Holocaust denial was integral part of the British far-right identity. Holocaust denial therefore adds an extra dimension which characterises the factors that bind the groups contained within the definition of the British far-right. Denial was not just a tool for political expedience; it was at the core of ideological belief, a point which is enumerated in the historiography of the British far right.

In the historiography of the British far right, Holocaust denial is seen as a factor in its political failure. Debates over the failure of the far right will not be rehearsed in the thesis, primarily because this is a thesis on Holocaust denial produced by far right groups not a thesis on the policies and actions of the far right. Yet it is worth examining what the historiography of the British far-right tells us in relation to denial's place in its failure. Roger Eatwell states that during the late 1970s one of the reasons why Britain's National Front were damaged as a political force was the fact that they sold Holocaust denial literature.¹¹⁰ The National Front's attempts at Holocaust denial were publicly conflated with the concept of violence and acted, for some, as a political repellent. Thus Holocaust denials association with the National Front did more harm to the name of Holocaust 'revision' than good.¹¹¹

Similarly, Nigel Copsey opines, the presence of denial in more populist movements 'fluctuated, and in all probability it followed strategic concerns [...] and when there was a prospect of success at the ballot box, Holocaust denial was conveniently buried.'¹¹² Some groups in the far right therefore were aware that Holocaust denial was a 'political repellent' in attempting to

¹¹⁰ Richard Eatwell also attributes the far rights' failure to violence and Margaret Thatcher courting the NF vote by playing on public concern over immigration. See: R. Eatwell 'fascism' in R. Eatwell and C. Mudde, *The Extreme Right in Modern Britain: the Long road to Modernisation* (London, Routledge: 2004). p, 164. For more discussion on the failure of the British far-right see: M. Cronin (ed.) *The Failure of British Fascism: The Far Right and The Fight for Political Recognition* (Basingstoke, Macmillan: 1996), especially R. Griffin, 'British Fascism: The Ugly Duckling' pp. 141-165 and M. Durham 'The British Extreme Right and the Problem of Political Space, 1967-1983'. R. C. Thurlow, *Fascism in Modern Britain*, (Stroud, Phoenix: 2000), pp. 157-161; N. Copsey, *Contemporary British Fascism: The British National Party and the Quest for Legitimacy* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2nd edition: 2008), R. Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain: A History 1918-1998* (London, I.B.Tauris: 1999), pp. 178-184; G. Macklin, *Very Deeply Dyed in Black: Sir Oswald Mosley and the Resurrection of British Fascism After 1945* (London: I B Tauris: 2007), pp. 1-8 and S. Payne, *Fascism 1914-1945* (London, Routledge: 1995).

¹¹¹ R. Eatwell, *Fascism in Contemporary Political Ideologies* (London, Continuum, 2nd edition: 1999), p, 197.

¹¹² N. Copsey, *Contemporary British Fascism*, pp 92-93.

gain votes and therefore hid this aspect of their ideology from the public. Yet for other groups in the British far right which sought power by revolution or armed uprising Holocaust denial remained unchanged and much more radical than those variants found in groups which courted power by the ballot box. Denial therefore was not always overt but it was an omnipresent presence in binding the ideology of the far-right. While Copsey demonstrates that denial was conveniently 'buried' at times of elections (for those groups which took part in elections), it was only 'buried' from the eyes of the public; it still remained a bedrock in the 'behind the scenes' discussion of the far right.¹¹³

Ray Hill's work demonstrates the inter-connected nature of the British far right. While there were divisions in the far right over how to achieve power and led to many splits in far-right alliances (splits which at times, Hill himself was instrumental in orchestrating)¹¹⁴, Hill demonstrates that 'revisionism' was a common ideology which bound the groups.¹¹⁵ Thus we can observe that denial did not just have an external purpose (a function which was, as Copsey and Thurlow have shown, in fact damaging to the groups' external perception) but a definite internal purpose which served to unify British far right ideologies of the far right.

Holocaust denial therefore is an essential component of defining the British far right, yet it is an area which has been, to a large extent, ignored in the historiography. Studies of the British far-right demonstrate denials link in the ideologies of the far-right such an observation is overt, yet very few studies have attempted to incorporate what purpose denial serves and how the presentation and representation of denial changed. This thesis will attempt to address this imbalance and demonstrate how denial links to wider ideologies expressed in the groups. It will show how denial was not just a tool for political expedience, but also part of a larger trend which look to the past to epistemologically validate the ideologies of the present. Denial was not just adopted because it 'solved' the problem of explaining and eradicating a past which was damaging to the public perceptions, it was also an intrinsic part of the far-right thought process.

¹¹³ For examples from BNP party discussions on the removal of public manifestations of denial but still teaching the 'truth' of far-right ideology to the 'hard-core' see: N. Copsey, 'Changing course or changing clothes? Reflections on the ideological evolution of the British National Party 1999–2006', *Patterns of Prejudice* (Vol. 41, No. 1, 2007), p 67-69.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 148-181.

¹¹⁵ Gerry Gable, the head of Searchlight, most probably working on the information from his source Ray Hill, makes similar points on the interconnected nature of the British far-right. See: G. Gable, 'The Far right in Contemporary Britain' in L. Cheles, R. Ferguson and M. Vaughan (eds), *Neo-Fascism in Europe* (Harlow, Longman: 1991) pp, 245-263, and G. Gable 'Britain's Nazi Underground' in L. Cheles, R. Ferguson and M. Vaughan (eds), *The Far Right in Western and Eastern Europe* (Harlow, Longman: 1995), pp. 257-271.

The roots of denial were located in wider ideologies, trends and practices which had been established before the outbreak of the Second World War. The far right believed in the policies of Hitler's Germany, they believed too that the war had been brought about by international Jewry, they also harboured the same redemptive antisemitism that was found in Nazism. Yet conversely denial had implicit and problematic implications: For parties which sought power through elections, in denying the Holocaust they also had to deny that their solution to their self imposed 'Jewish' or 'immigrant' 'problem' in anyway resembled the policies of the Nazis. When they talked of 'forced repatriation' of immigrants or 'expulsion' of the Jews, they immediately conjured up images of policies similar to those of the Nazi regime. In essence what took place was a strange phenomenon, in which the Holocaust was denied as 'Jewish propaganda' yet their 'solutions' to their own imposed problems bore strikingly similar parallels to those of the Nazi government. It was apparent that the redemptive nature of Holocaust denial and antisemitism in the far right contained the potential for ethnic cleansing and genocide. This paradox, between denying the Holocaust and advocating the very policies that created the conditions for genocide, remains at the centre of the interpretations of the understanding of Holocaust denial and the British far right offered in this thesis.

Identifying the British 'far right' in this thesis is achieved by observing the trends and policies of the groups and identifying those which exhibit ultra-nationalistic tendencies. The individual, groups, members, notable figures and parties are also identified in the vast historiography which exists on the British far right. Holocaust denial is a defining characteristic of the British far-right, so too are the ideologies and beliefs which underpin their political programmes- a 'world Jewish conspiracy', antisemitism and racism. In this thesis these characteristics mark the ideological demarcation point at which analysis begins. The presentation of denial and its public prominence in the groups will be explored in this thesis in order to see how denial is 'packaged' within the different variants found in the far right, whether that be the 'revolutionary', 'radical' 'recidivist' or 'populist' form. It will show that while the presentation of Holocaust denial may change and the policies expressed may change, the ideological basis from which it stems does not.

Part One: Initial Far Right Responses to the Nazi Persecution of the Jews

Chapter One: Holocaust Denial in Embryo, Alexander Ratcliffe and Britain 1942-45

This chapter explores Alexander Ratcliffe, a militant Protestant and antisemite. Ratcliffe's publications provide the historian of Holocaust denial with an explicit demonstration of Holocaust denial emerging from traditional antisemitic rhetoric, which existed prior to, what we now call, the Holocaust. In *The Truth about the Jews*, published in 1943, Ratcliffe categorically stated that the atrocity stories emerging from Europe in relation to the Jews were 'mere invention'.¹ He therefore allows the historian to understand how news of Nazi atrocities against the Jews of Europe was absorbed and then reconstructed to correspond with antisemitic and far-right mentalities. The use of mass observation diaries and Gallup Polls in the chapter demonstrates how traditional antisemitic stereotypes found in Ratcliffe's publications and in British society allowed for Holocaust denial to assimilate into pre-existing frameworks of far right and domestic antisemitism present in Britain at the time. By examining the forms that this antisemitism took, the chapter highlights how Ratcliffe attempted to adopt a 'populist' political and pedagogical rhetoric in order to attract support for their far-right views and antisemitic conspiracy theories.² Other far right deniers would adopt this technique as a means to attract support for political purposes in relation to immigration in the 1960 and 1970s.³ Ratcliffe's rhetoric and arguments in relation to Holocaust denial echo throughout the denial of the British far right. Ratcliffe's publications demonstrated that the epistemological position of Holocaust deniers did not change during period under study. The news of Nazi atrocities against the Jews was absorbed into pre-existing thought, and was based on the idea that a Jewish conspiracy controlled society and the world.

Ratcliffe's relationship to Arnold Leese is of particular significance to the development of Holocaust denial within the British far right. After Leese was released from his wartime internment in 1945, the two men would publicise each other's journals and publications and developed a professional and ideologically symbiotic relationship.⁴ Writing in independent

¹ A. Ratcliffe, *The Truth about Jews* (Glasgow: second edition, 1943), p 15.

² 'Populism' was a technique used by Ratcliffe in his political campaigns in his home city of Glasgow, he appealed to the 'simple man and woman' and attacked the corruption of politicians and local councillors. For discussion of Ratcliffe's populist approach see: C. Holmes, 'Alexander Ratcliffe, Militant Protestant and Antisemite' in T. Kushner and K. Lunn, *Traditions of Intolerance: Historical Perspectives on Fascism and Race Discourse in Britain* (Manchester, Manchester University Press: 1989), p. 204.

³ For examples see the below discussion on the introduction to R. Hardwood, *Did Six Million Really Die?*, pp. 195-196.

⁴ Ratcliffe gave advertising space to Arnold Leese's 'Anti-Jewish Interest and Information Bureau' in *The Protestant Vanguard* regularly from August 1945 to November 1946. Leese also wrote the obituary edition for Ratcliffe when he died in February 1947. See: *The Protestant Vanguard* February 1947.

journals, they shared a belief that findings of the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunals were invalid and part of a Jewish conspiracy because of the involvement of Jews in the proceedings.⁵

This symbiotic relationship demonstrates the lineage in the development of Holocaust denial in the British far right. Arnold Leese would leave his political legacy to Colin Jordan who worked with National Front Leader John Tyndall, who preceded Nick Griffin as British National Party Leader. Thus we can see how Ratcliffe had an indelible role in fostering the arguments made in relation to Holocaust denial. Ratcliffe's link to the British far right movements and deniers after the war are of the utmost significance. Ratcliffe's rejection of the atrocity stories, provided the far right with a workable epistemological framework. It sanitised Nazi crimes (and far right ideology) in line with the antisemitic conspiratorial theories. Ratcliffe therefore provided the main themes from which post-war far right 'histories' of the Second World War and the Holocaust could be re-written.

The ideas and messages Ratcliffe presents and the attitudes of the British authorities towards him are extremely illuminating and offer a contribution to the scholarly work into the British response to the Jewish plight. To ignore or to overlook him, as some historians have done, negates the importance of the context in which denial in Britain was forged. Ratcliffe has attracted little attention from academics who have studied Holocaust denial. Deborah Lipstadt fails to mention him and Shermer and Grobman provide only a passing reference to him stating: 'some evidence has come to light that the first person to deny the Holocaust may have been a Scotsman named Alexander Ratcliffe who [...] claimed in late 1945 and again in 1946, that the Holocaust was an invention of the Jews'.⁶ While Shermer and Grobman are correct, they fail to mention that Ratcliffe was denying the existence of atrocities against the Jews as early as 1942. Stephen Atkins, author of *Holocaust Denial as an International Movement*, also only makes passing reference to Ratcliffe, stating that he 'received little attention because most Europeans and the British in particular, devoted all of their energies to ending the war. One of the reasons was that there was little impulse among the British to rehabilitate Hitler and the Nazis. British neo-Nazis were fragmented and busy fighting among themselves.'⁷ However Atkins does not seem to have researched the full works of Ratcliffe and his reference

⁵ For Ratcliffe see: *The Protestant Vanguard* (December 1945) and for Leese see: A. Leese, *The Jewish War of Survival* (Gilford, Self-published: 1945).

⁶ D. Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (New York, The Free Press: 1993) especially chapter three: 'In the shadows of World War II: Denial's Initial Steps'. pp. 49-64. M. Shermer and A. Gorbman, *Denying History: Who Says The Holocaust Never Happened and Why Do they Say It?* (Los Angeles, University of California: 2009), p. 41.

⁷ S. E. Atkins, *Holocaust Denial as an International Movement* (Westport, Prager Publishers: 2009), p. 117.

to Ratcliffe's work is only via the footnotes of Shermer and Gorbman.⁸ Ratcliffe's role in the very early emergence of denial needs to be addressed in the historiography of Holocaust denial in order to understand the historical roots of denial and how it connected to the wider 'histories' and world views which governed far-right thought. Ratcliffe is also a significant figure because of the context in which he is writing: his specific focus on Jewish victims of Nazi atrocities is very illuminating because Ratcliffe was giving precedence to Jewish suffering at a time when the British government was trying to stress the plurality of suffering at the hands of the Nazis.

Defining terminology in relation to Alexander Ratcliffe and Britain during the Second World War.

The fact that some information [about Jewish suffering] has been mentioned once or even a hundred times in secret reports or mass circulation newspapers does not necessarily mean that it has been accepted and understood [...] big figures become statistics, and the statistics have no psychological impact. Some thought that the news about the Jewish tragedy was exaggerated; others did not doubt the information but had different priorities and preoccupations.⁹

Laqueur's, observation is an astute one and is particularly pertinent in tracing the origins of Holocaust denial and the contexts in which information regarding Nazi atrocities against the Jews was received and assimilated. Understanding the context in which we are working is paramount to grasping the problem of the origins of Holocaust denial in Britain.¹⁰ Today the study of Holocaust denial is fused with what we know about the Holocaust: the scholastic activity which began in the initial decades after the war and has grown exponentially ever since to a point at which today no individual can have real mastery over all its aspects.¹¹ The breadth and depth of knowledge on the Jewish tragedy makes Holocaust denial a fringe product of far-right radicals, individuals with warped agenda bent on manipulating the historical record for their own purposes which is totally incompatible with serious academic study. However as this chapter will demonstrate, the origin of denial in the British far right

⁸ Shermer and Gorbman, presumably only attribute his denial to 1945 because their reference to him rests on one article by M. Hannan, 'The Scot Who Claimed the Holocaust Was a Hoax', *The Scotsman* (1st June, 1998). See: M. Shermer and A. Gorbman, *Denying History*, p. 136.

⁹ W. Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret* (London, Brown: 1980), p. 208.

¹⁰ For current discussion on defining concepts and anachronism see: B. Mitrovic, 'Attribution of Concepts and Problems with Anachronism', *History and Theory*, (Vol. 50, No. 3: 2011), pp. 303-327.

¹¹ D. Stone, *The Historiography of the Holocaust* (Basingstoke, Palgrave: 2004), pp. 1-2. See also G. Prudovsky, 'Can We Ascribe to the Past Thinkers Concepts They Had No Linguistic Means to Express', *History and Theory*, (Vol. 36, No. 1: 1997), pp. 17-31.

(and the world) is more complicated and has to be viewed through different prisms from those of today.

While the antisemitism Ratcliffe presented is not in question and the way in which he reported Nazi crimes against Jews can be in no way defended, it is imperative to stress that during the Second World War information relating to Nazi atrocities was assimilated and understood in accordance with the contemporary attitudes of the day. The distinctly Jewish dimensions of Nazi persecution and brutality had not yet coalesce in the minds of the British public. As such, there is a need to comprehend that this study into the origins of Holocaust denial needs to free itself from (but not ignore) modern conceptions of Holocaust denial, and likewise, with modern understandings of the Holocaust and recognise them as concepts still in embryo. To impose the term Holocaust denial anachronistically on the period is fraught with danger as semantically the term 'Holocaust' (in relation to the Nazi genocide) would have not been understood, nor would its modern connotations. However this does not mean that nothing can be gained from the study of it, in fact quite the opposite is true. What emerges is information about how such views materialised, the context in which they were forged, and the ways in which such views became embedded in the far right ideology and identity. The chapter establishes how the denial of Jewish victimhood and Nazi brutality against Jews became absorbed into traditional far right, pre-Holocaust, antisemitic customs.

Before examining the writings of Ratcliffe it is necessary to provide an methodological outline how the term antisemitism is being used in this chapter and thesis. The term itself has an elasticity that encompasses any aspect of hostility towards Jewish populations. There is, however, a problem with the fluidity of the term and Ben Halpern's definition proves effective in highlighting the problem:

- Antisemitism is a :
- I. an attitude, belief or feeling of hostility or disposition towards the Jews
 - II. based on Christian tradition, Muslim or Greco-Roman traditions
 - III. and expressed as a very low or very high social economic or political threat
 - IV. minimally or maximally elaborated in racial, religious, nationalist or socialist terms
 - VI. by minor (lunatic fringe) groups or major (political) forces
 - VII. for extrinsic or intrinsic reasons.¹²

While Halpern's definition provides an enumeration to define what expression or actions can be defined as antisemitic, it is clear that individual acts of antisemitic writing, sentiments or

¹² B. Halpern, 'What is Antisemitism?', *Modern Judaism*, (Vol. 1, 1981), pp. 252-253.

expressions do not contain all these facets. In this chapter for example, Ratcliffe cannot be part of a minor lunatic fringe group while also being part of a major political force. As such the term antisemitism needs to be refined .

Shulamit Volkov's work *Germans, Jews and Antisemites*, addresses the problem before us. Volkov explains how the word itself, coined in 1879, was only the first stage of defining a new 'world view'. The second stage was the 'formulation and dissemination of new slogans' which offered 'a new term for old hatreds'. This in turn, provided a 'new term, reminiscent of other ideological positions associated with scientific progress and presumably compatible with modernity.' The consequence of which was 'entire corpus of social and political opinions: a worldview, an ideology'. The result of which led to 'slogan[s] replacing the reality.' The way in which slogans replaced reality is best understood in relation to the idea that there was a very real 'Jewish question' or a 'Jewish problem'. These slogans eclipsed the reality - there was no Jewish question to be answered and no Jewish problem to be solved. Volkov demonstrates how antisemitism, as a term, developed. She also ascertains how certain ideological positions and perspectives adopted this phrase, and associated slogans, into their movements during the late nineteenth century. For Volkov, antisemitism became a 'cultural code' and part of the prevailing culture.¹³

Volkov's 'cultural code' however is limited to the late nineteenth century, and the definitions surrounding the term since have expanded exponentially - as evidenced by Halpern's expansive definition of antisemitism in 1981. It is clear that in order to understand the kind of antisemitism that was prevalent while Ratcliffe was writing, along with his own individual perspective, a combination of Halpern's definition along with Volkov's approach to understanding the 'cultural codes' of British antisemitism during World War Two is required. In order to do this a working model and establish a framework is needed in order to understand the types of antisemitism this chapter is addressing.

Bryan Cheyette explains that difficulties of using 'a premeditated "system" that "explains" a given set of representations [because of] the protean instability of "the Jew" as a signifier.' Cheyette demonstrates that the 'Jew' can be both 'the embodiment of liberal progress *and* the vestiges of an outdated medievalism; as a bastion of empire *and* one of the main threats to empire.'¹⁴ Cheyette suggests using 'semitic discourses' instead of 'antisemitism' or

¹³ S. Volkov, *Germans, Jews and Antisemites: Trials in Emancipation* (New York, Cambridge University Press: 2006), pp. 82-90.

¹⁴ B. Cheyette, *Construction of 'the Jew' in English Literature and Society: Racial Representations, 1875-1945* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 1994), pp. 8-10.

'philosemitism' because it has the added advantage of eschewing the inherent moralising attached to these terms.¹⁵ While Cheyette is correct that semitic discourses remove the moralising attached to terms like antisemitism and philosemitism, the term only works in conjunction with ambivalent representations of the Jew in literature.¹⁶ Antisemitism is an expression of hostility, and while a scale for defining the reasons for the antisemitic expression have been varied, hostility and ambivalence are semantically and psychologically incompatible. As a result it is more useful for the purposes of this chapter to talk of *antisemitic discourses*.

The reason for this terminology relates to the complex sources and the motivation behind the sources that are under study in this chapter. For example consider the following hypothetical questions: is it possible to be antisemitic but still believe that the Holocaust happened? The answer is obviously Yes, however, is it possible to not be antisemitic and dispute the existence of the Holocaust? The answer today would have to be No, because by definition Holocaust denial is an antisemitic act. Therefore the label of antisemitism is already employed on the paper, article or diary. However, understanding denial in the context of wartime Britain may provide a different answer. Diarists from the Mass Observation archive do question the validity of the stories regarding the Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe, which, given the scarcity of information in comparison to the vast resources available today, is understandable. In this instance, we are dealing with denial of the events but without intentional malice: it was the scale of the atrocity that difficult to grasp not the atrocity itself. However, when a statement claims that the Jewish massacres were not taking place and is followed (or proceeded) by claims about the Jewish people as untrustworthy, or scheming, then we have a discourse that is antisemitic. This does not mean however that simply because the two components are present - denial of the atrocities and antisemitic stereotypes - that the individual is a denier. The information available at the time was not as prominent as today, but what is apparent is that a worldview was informing how the events were conceptualised. This conceptualisation corresponded to pre-existing ideological stereotype and 'cultural code'. Therefore when discussing antisemitism in this chapter and in the thesis overall it will be in the context of the cultural code. This code will contain multifarious extremes and dichotomies, some of which will follow 'mild' 'music-hall' joke telling and stereotypical associations against Jews, to more

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 8.

¹⁶ Cheyette, notes this point himself claiming that 'It is this Jamesian or Arnoldian ambivalence, and not crude "antisemitism", that will characterize the Jewish representations within the liberal cultural realm of this study [...] I prefer the term "Semitic discourse" as a way of seeing this Arnoldian ambivalence.' See: B. Cheyette, *Construction of 'the Jew'*, p. 8.

embedded actions like segregation¹⁷ through to more extreme behaviours of violence and even the forms of 'redemptive' antisemitism postulated by Saul Friedländer.¹⁸ These various *antisemitic discourses* are discussed in relation to the sources in this chapter and throughout the thesis.

The Publications of Alexander Ratcliffe

As an antisemite, fanatical Protestant, and Nazi sympathiser, Ratcliffe attracted the attention of the British government on several occasions. The government's response to Ratcliffe provides fresh material about the British government's attitudes towards the plight of the European Jews in Nazi Europe and antisemitism in the United Kingdom and supports the findings of historians Tony Kushner and Louise London.¹⁹ Similarly, Ratcliffe also attracted the attention of the Jewish community.²⁰ These responses will all be compared and contrasted in this chapter. The reaction of the British populace to the genocide in Europe found in Mass Observation diaries, Gallup polls and newspaper reporting will also be evaluated to allow for wider context in which to understand Ratcliffe and the origins of British far-right denial. Combining these factors will, not only demonstrate Ratcliffe's role as a founding figure in far-right British Holocaust denial, but also situate him in a context where such actions were treated with a level of ambivalence by the British government. This conflagration of factors will allow for an extended evaluation of the antisemitic attitudes in society and how the transition from antisemitism to denial was bound up with the historical racist traditions of antisemitism.²¹

In order to investigate these aspects it will be first necessary to outline Ratcliffe's career and the themes in his writings. Alexander Ratcliffe was leader of the short lived Scottish Protestant League, and later British Protestant League, he published throughout the 1930s until his death in 1947 in his *Vanguard* newspaper and in a series of pamphlets. He began circulating *The*

¹⁷ See: A. Goldman, 'The Resurgence of Antisemitism in Britain during World War II', *Jewish Social Studies*, (Vol. 46, No. 1, 1984), pp. 37-50. In which Goldman describes the treatment of Jews in Royal College London being forced to sit at the back of classes and excluded from certain clubs and societies.

¹⁸ See S. Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, Vol. 1, The Years of Persecution 1933-1939* (New York, Harper Collins: 1997), pp. 73-112.

¹⁹ T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination: A Social and Cultural History* (Blackwell: Oxford, 1994); L. London, *Whitehall and the Jews, 1933-1948: British Immigration Policy, Jewish Refugees and the Holocaust* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 2000); see also: D. Stone, *Responses to Nazism in Britain, 1933-1939: Before War and Holocaust* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan: 2003),

²⁰ See; 'Reviews', *The Jewish Chronicle*, (9th April 1943), p. 6.

²¹ For more discussion on this topic see the graphs and tables below.

Protestant Vanguard in 1931 the journal continued with similar titles until his death in 1947.²² Born in 1888, Ratcliffe was son to a clergyman in Borrowstounness Scotland, an area known for its dissenting Presbyterian traditions. Ratcliffe was a man of staunch religious and bigoted conviction. Ratcliffe was not initially aligned with the fascist movement in Britain like Oswald Mosley, Arnold Leese, Neil Francis Hawkins or William Joyce. Ratcliffe was a militant protestant, who fought for Protestant rights and played on anti-Catholic sentiments and on the fear of Catholic Irish immigration to Scotland. A fear which was prevalent in Scottish society from the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century.²³

After a short-lived occupation as a railway clerk, Ratcliffe's early political career was directed at attacking the Catholic religion and Catholic Church in Scotland and preventing Catholic Irish immigration to that country. Ratcliffe's main political priority, and the substantial part of his election manifesto, revolved around the removal of the 1918 Education Act. (The act would see the state provide full state funding for Catholic schools.) Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, Catholics and the Pope were the primary targets of his writings. His party, the Scottish Protestant League (SPL), was founded in 1920 in Edinburgh. The party achieved moderate success in local elections and won seats on both the Edinburgh and Glasgow councils. The league contained an assortment of political ideologies, demonstrated by the fact that Ratcliffe could publish in the leftist Scottish newspaper *Forward*, while simultaneously being a member of the Scottish Fascist Democratic Party.

The SPL attracted support and in 1933 acquired 23 percent of the votes (67,000) in the Glasgow council elections. Ratcliffe travelled to Ireland throughout the 1920s and early 1930s addressing rallies, at local Ulster Unionist meetings in Northern Ireland²⁴ and attracted the attention of the authorities.²⁵ Ratcliffe's political career petered out by the late 1930s, with his party fragmenting and losing ground to the Labour Party in Scotland.²⁶ After political failure

²² Ratcliffe's journal changed its name throughout his life time: from 1931-33 it was known as *The Protestant Vanguard* however from 1933-44 it was simplified to *The Vanguard* confusingly Ratcliffe changed the Journal's name back to *The Protestant Vanguard* from 1944-46 before returning to the simplification of *The Vanguard* in 1947.

²³ S. Bruce, T. Glendinning, I. Paterson and M. Rosie, *Sectarianism in Scotland* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press: 2004), pp. 54-55.

²⁴ For More information regarding Ratcliffe relations with Ireland see: T. P. Coogan, *Wherever Green is Worn: the Story of the Irish Diaspora* (London, Palgrave: 2000), pp. 244-45.

²⁵ In one instance Ratcliffe's wife, Mary, was arrested after vandalising a portrait of William of Orange because of the depiction of him as 'in association with the Pope.' See 'Picture of William of Orange damaged' *The Times* (3rd May, 1933).

²⁶ For more information about the Scottish Protestant League election success and its impact in politics see: S. Bruce, T. Glendinning, I. Paterson and M. Rosie, *Sectarianism in Scotland*, pp. 54-55; P. Barberis, J. McHugh and M. Tyldesley, *Encyclopaedia of British and Irish Political Organisations* (London, Continuum:

Ratcliffe began to devote more column inches in *The Vanguard* (and other single pamphlet publications) which attacked the Jewish population of the United Kingdom and the world.

Ratcliffe's anti-Catholic thinking correlated closely to his antisemitic rhetoric. Ratcliffe's anti-Catholic sentiments were predicated on both his strident Protestant convictions and his ultra-nationalist predispositions. For Ratcliffe a Catholic's loyalty was to Rome and as such he viewed them as 'traitors to their country of their birth or residence in the interests.'²⁷ This charge of disloyalty to the nation was also prominent feature of antisemitism. It is easy therefore to understand how Ratcliffe incorporated this strand of thought into his antisemitism and publications. Ratcliffe resented any form of Catholic or Jewish particularism seeing it as evidence of nepotism, conspiracy and undermining white British, protestant, hegemony.²⁸

The antisemitic strand to Ratcliffe's writings is evidenced in 1935 from the extracts he published from *the Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in *The Vanguard* alongside an article by Walter Allen, which claimed that the *Protocols of Zion* were not a forgery.²⁹ However it is towards the end of the 1930s that Ratcliffe's antisemitism became more flagrant. This upsurge in antisemitic propaganda coincided with a journey he made to Germany in 1939. After his return, his work had a distinctly pro-German stance and he claimed to have more insight into the Jewish problem.³⁰ It is unclear what happened to him in Germany or the contacts he made, but his writings took on a pro-Hitler tone and Ratcliffe painted Hitler as a champion against Catholics, Bolshevism and the Jews in Europe.³¹

By 1941 Ratcliffe was publishing many articles and pamphlets criticising Churchill and the National Government for war mongering and advocated peace with Nazi Germany.³² Ratcliffe was in strong opposition to the internment of far-right Nazi sympathisers under the Defence Regulation 18B.³³ He was not detained under this regulation; the official reason given was legal

2000), p. 1461; G. Walker, "'Protestantism before Party!': The Ulster Protestant League in the 1930s', *The Historical Journal* (Vol. 28, No. 4, Dec, 1985), pp. 961-967; T.M. Devine, *Scotland's Shame: Bigotry and Sectarianism in Modern Scotland* (Edinburgh, Mainstream Publishing: 2000), For details of the SPL policies see: The 1929 General Election: Scottish Protestant League Leaflet no. 1(-8) supporting the candidature of Alexander Ratcliffe, British Library Shelfmark: 8142.i.14.

²⁷ A. Ratcliffe cited in, S. Bruce, T. Glendinning, I. Paterson and M. Rosie, *Sectarianism in Scotland*, p. 55.

²⁸ Colin Holmes reaches similar conclusions in relation to Ratcliffe's anti-Catholic and antisemitic world view. See: C. Holmes, 'Alexander Ratcliffe, Militant Protestant and Antisemite', pp. 201-203

²⁹ *The Vanguard*, (February, 1935).

³⁰ See: *The Protestant Vanguard* (October 1939) and *The Protestant Vanguard* (November 1939).

³¹ See, A. Ratcliffe, *The Truth about Hitler and the Catholic Church* (1942) and *The Vanguard*, (June, 1940).

³² See: A Ratcliffe, *Mr Churchill on Trial* (Glasgow: 1941) and *The Vanguard* (April, 1940).

³³ See: A. Ratcliffe, *The Truth about Democracy* (Glasgow: 1944), p. 9.

loopholes in Scottish law which meant that Ratcliffe could not be punished because libel was not a crime in Scotland.³⁴ It was more likely, however, that the government and Home Secretary feared giving Ratcliffe undue public attention and intended to avoid a repeat of the court case *Rex v. Leese* in 1936 in which Arnold Leese and his publisher were acquitted by a jury of seditious libel, after they had claimed that Jews practised ritual murder against Christian children. Richard Thurlow notes that after this trial, 'the Home Office and the police became cautious in the 1930s and resisted all attempts to include specific clauses with respect to racial incitement in the public order act of 1936. Three more blatant seditious libels were thus ignored in the following years involving Leese, A.K Chesterton and Alexander Ratcliffe of the British Protestant League. Fear of an imagined nativist reaction which could be used by both left and right extremists provided a more potent influence on policy than the need to protect minorities from verbal abuse.' As such Ratcliffe could publish his brand of bigotry with relative security, although he would, from time to time, attract the attention of the British government, something discussed in the next section of the chapter.

Ratcliffe believed in a worldwide Jewish conspiracy. In his pamphlet *Twelve Falsehoods about the Jews*, Ratcliffe demonstrated this and claimed that in Britain a 'small but significant minority [of Jews] are part of the army of the world Jewry, and in Britain they are doing their best to procure full control of the non-Jews of the Nation.' Ratcliffe was convinced that the aims of this 'small but significant minority' was world domination, he went on to claim that Jews' desire for control was unquenchable: 'if the Jews got the whole earth, they would demand the sun, moon and stars.'³⁵ Ratcliffe's world view was not entirely informed from a fascist position. He also analysed the Jews, along with his critiques of Bolshevism and Zionism, through a Protestant religious prism. He was ruled by his religious convictions; he denied that the Jews were God's chosen people and depicted them as children of the devil drawing on medieval anti-Jewish trope that the Jews were responsible for deicide.³⁶

Ratcliffe claimed in his later years that he had no racial hostility towards the Jews, rather seeing his mission to wake up the country and world to the Jewish conspiracy as a 'religious duty.'³⁷ His world view and antisemitism was informed by his religious convictions. Only in areas where the ideology of fascism chimed with his religious principles was Ratcliffe drawn to the movement. Ratcliffe remained loyal to his religious conviction and these remained at the

³⁴ See: The Lord Advocate's Written Answer to Mr. D. N Pritt (MP), Hansard HC Deb 22 April 1943, Vol 388, Cols 18531.

³⁵ A. Ratcliffe, *Twelve Falsehoods about Jews: A Vindication* (Glasgow, 1946), p. 2-3.

³⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 7-9.

³⁷ A. Ratcliffe, *The Vanguard* (April, 1946).

forefront of his world view. Ratcliffe therefore represents an intersection between old medieval anti-Jewish hatred, and new antisemitism of the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Bryan Cheyette's arguments regarding the protean instability of the Jew as a signifier are particularly pertinent in relation to Ratcliffe and this intersection between new and old forms of hostility towards the Jews. It is clear that for Ratcliffe the Jew was not a collective 'race' but consisted of those who practised Judaism (the old form hostility) in which he saw a small significant minority bent on world domination (the new form of hostility). The consequence of this view was that Ratcliffe was distrustful of any information regarding the Jewish populations of Europe and the world. He claimed that information about Jews which sought sympathy or presented them in any light other than negative could and should not be trusted.

It is from this basis that Ratcliffe began to question the validity of the information regarding the fate of the Jews in Nazi Europe. Ratcliffe's first pamphlet dedicated solely to the Jews was published in 1942 and republished in 1943 and contains direct reference to the atrocities committed by Nazis against the Jews in Europe. *The Truth about Jews* serves as the first demonstration of how Ratcliffe negates the crimes.

The various press reports about Hitler's terrible persecution of the Jews mostly are written up by Jews, and circulated by Jews. Mostly these reports are the invention of the Jew mind. For the historian immediately after the war will prove that 95% of the Jew 'atrocities' stories and the 'photographs' of such 'atrocities' appearing in the press magazines and journals are mere invention.³⁸

The antisemitic discourse employed by Ratcliffe is overt and obvious. The use of the familiar stereotypes that Jews controlled the media is one that is recognisable as a traditional expression of antisemitic rhetoric and would have not been out of place in a publication like the German antisemitic propagandist rag, *Der Stürmer*. The parallels with Nazi antisemitic rhetoric in Ratcliffe's publication demonstrate a shared conspiratorial philosophy in relation to the Jews. As David Welsh has demonstrated Nazi newspapers like *Der Stürmer* portrayed 'the Jew as barbaric and 'subhuman' and denounced alleged Jewish 'criminality' and the 'conspiracy' of foreign Jews against Germany.'³⁹ Like Nazi newspapers Ratcliffe drew on traditional antisemitic tropes to perpetuate the myth of Jewish domination and a perceived danger from Jewish influence. Using these familiar stereotypes he cast doubt on the authenticity of the press reports and demonstrates that Nazi propaganda and ideology was a

³⁸ A. Ratcliffe, *The Truth about Jews*, (Glasgow: second edition, 1943), p 15.

³⁹ D. Welsh, *The Third Reich Politics and Propaganda* (London, Routledge: 2002),p. 47.

precursor in forming far-right attitudes about the causes of the Second World War. He did not give a reason as to why the reports were 'mere invention' but the impact was that these reports and images were connected to the wider Jewish conspiracy espoused in the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. For Ratcliffe a detailed rebuttal of the reports or in depth analysis of what was 'fake' about the photos was not necessary, reliance on conspiracy theory was enough to dismiss all evidence of Nazi atrocities against Jew. Just as Nazi newspapers 'offered an antisemitic outlook on recent events' Ratcliffe provided his readers with a similar response to Nazi atrocities. This outlook demonstrates the inherent paradox of denial: that Nazi antisemitism did not lead to genocide and the very brutality reported is the invention of the 'Jewish mind' and not a product of the actual Nazi brutality with perpetrates the crime.

Ratcliffe believed the reports were faked in order to gain sympathy for the Jews and facilitate their plan for global domination or for allied support against Hitler. While he does not say this here, when the extract is placed alongside the other stereotypes and conspiracy theories in the pamphlet, the link between Ratcliffe's denial and his view of a world Jewish conspiracy is obvious.⁴⁰ It is also significant that the 'stories of atrocities' are not mentioned in any extensive detail. He does not mention the gas chambers directly yet the existence of them had been publicised in the national newspapers. It is therefore to be assumed his blanket term of 'atrocities' included extermination by gas or electricity.⁴¹ Ratcliffe's reasoning for not mentioning the reports of gas chambers can only be surmised, but given the disdain with which he rejected the reports, it is probable he did not want to give the reports further publicity.

Ratcliffe claimed that the photographs published were probably 'faked in Jewish cinema studios', he cast doubt on the authenticity of them calling them 'crude' and called those that believe them 'half-wit[s]'. Ratcliffe dismissed the evidence as a product of the 'fog of war'; he explained that once the war was over the truth would emerge and such evidence would be exposed as 'lies'.⁴² Ratcliffe did not leave such assertions 'unfounded' and applied the work of others to substantiate his point; he directed his audience to *Falsehood in War Time*, by Lord

⁴⁰ See also: A. Ratcliffe, *Twelve Falsehoods* discussed later in the chapter.

⁴¹ For a select sample see: 'Hitler's Slaughter of the Jews: Inter Allied Report' *The Manchester Guardian*, (21st December, 1942), p. 6; 'Diary of the War January' *The Manchester Guardian* (1st February, 1941), p. 4; 'Nazi Brutality in Poland' *The Manchester Guardian* (13th December, 1942), p. 5; 'Extermination' *The Manchester Guardian* (27th October, 1942), p. 4; 'Massacre of Jews' *The Times* (30th June, 1942), p. 2 'Nazi War on Jews: Deliberate Plan for Extermination' *The Times* (4th December, 1942), p 3 and 'Barbarity to Jews Retribution by Allies, Commons Endorse A Pledge' *The Times* (December 18th 1942), p. 4.

⁴² A. Ratcliffe, *Twelve Falsehoods*, pp. 7-9.

Ponsonby. Ratcliffe described the work as an ‘amazing collection of carefully documented lies circulated in Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy and America during the Great War.’ He described how the book ‘exposes war time propaganda’ and likened the photographs of ‘atrocities’ to those of the First World War (which he also attributed to Jewish cinema studios).⁴³

Ratcliffe’s use of examples of past massacres was indicative of a movement towards comparing the atrocities against Jews to previous mass slaughter in order to normalise them. While Ratcliffe is not employing the *Tu quoque* (you also) arguments that would be used by later deniers, Ratcliffe’s comparison to past historical events would become a stock tool of the Holocaust deniers who followed him. In equating supposed Nazi crimes with other atrocities, Ratcliffe sought to use historical parallels to prove his point that wartime propaganda had created the ‘stories’. Deniers who came after Ratcliffe would also use historical parallels and *Tu quoque* arguments in conjunction with their ‘evidence’ that the Holocaust did not take place or was not on the scale that historians suggested. While the deniers who followed Ratcliffe manipulated evidence and the past to fit their ideologies, Ratcliffe did not have such material available to him and therefore tried to use to use historical parallels to suggest that the future historian would prove that the crimes had not taken place. It could be argued that Ratcliffe already understood the task that future deniers would face and laid the founding arguments which would attempt to write the far-right history of the Second World War. This far-right history of the war was already being forged in Nazi propaganda. As Jeffery Herf opines, Nazi media used every statement by national and international Jewish organisations and writers expressing support for the United States and the Soviet Union as ‘proof of the ubiquitous influence of world Jewry and of its determination to “exterminate” Germany by delivering it to Bolshevism.’⁴⁴ Ratcliffe’s view that the war was a product of Jewish influence is evident in his citation of Hitler’s prophecy delivered to the Reichstag in 1939 on the back page of the pamphlet.⁴⁵

Ratcliffe’s writings were not restricted to the claims that mass murder was not taking place; he also sought to justify the Nazi persecution of Jews in Germany before 1939 and claimed that

⁴³ *Falsehood in War Time*, by Lord Ponsonby would become a standard text used by British far right Holocaust deniers. For evidence of its recurring theme see below, pp. 147, 161, 201.

⁴⁴ J. Herf, *The Jewish Enemy Nazi Propaganda During World War Two and The Holocaust* (Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press: 2006)p. 185.

⁴⁵ In the speech Hitler proclaimed: ‘If the international finance-Jewry inside and outside Europe should succeed in plunging the nations into a world war yet again, then the outcome will not be the victory of Jewry, but rather the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe!’ Full speech available at <http://www.holocaust-history.org/der-ewige-jude/hitler-19390130.shtml> (accessed 12/12/13).

Jews were persecuted because of criminal acts they had committed. Ratcliffe stated that the British newspapers 'condemn [...] and denounce the very lying **photographs** which they themselves published in regard to Hitler's atrocities against the Jews!'⁴⁶ Ratcliffe carefully cultivated his language to implement his stultiloquent logic upon his reader and convince them of the lack of evidence for the Jewish massacres and persecution: 'let sane folk realise that all this talk about the persecution of the Jews by Germany is mostly Jew invention. If Hitler is out to massacre the Jews, then why has he not begun in Germany? **There is not a single authentic case on record of a single Jew having been massacred in Germany or unlawfully put to death under the Hitler regime.**'⁴⁷ Ratcliffe draws on his own experiences and presents these to his reader:

The author of this publication was in Germany in 1939, just returning some days before the war started. At that time there were some 500,000 Jews in Germany. Why were these Jews not massacred from 1933-39? Can the British not see that they are being duped and tricked, and that any of deaths of Jews in Germany ... have taken place because of the crimes of the Jews concerned? The same as in this country or any country.⁴⁸

Ratcliffe attempted to present his views a pedagogical lesson to 'enlighten' the British public about the control of Jews over the media are a recurring theme and tone within British far right Holocaust denial literature. Ratcliffe's condescending tone, in which 'sane folk' must realise that there is a conspiracy, is evidence of how he perceived his epistemological position superior and that he was in possession of the 'truth'. In drawing on his own experiences, he attempted to convince the reader that his own eyewitness accounts held more validity than those they read in British newspapers. This confidence in his world view and his attempts to educate his readership in the ways of conspiracy is the persistent core at the heart of far-right thought and Holocaust denial.

This confidence remains resilience and become overt when parallels with present Holocaust deniers are explored. David Irving provides a useful comparison in this regard, especially when Irving's comments on Nazi persecution of German Jews from 1933-39. Irving, like Ratcliffe, claimed that the Jews in Germany were being arrested and sentenced for legitimate legal crimes. In 1996 he wrote in *Goebbels: Mastermind of the Third Reich* that Goebbels would highlight

⁴⁶ A. Ratcliffe, *The Truth about Jews*, pp. 15-16.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 15.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 16.

Every malfeasance of the criminal *demi-monde* and identify it as Jewish [...] he was unfortunately not always wrong. In 1930 Jews would be convicted of forty-two of the 210 known narcotics smuggling cases; in 1932 sixty-nine of the 272 known international narcotics dealers were Jewish. Jews were arrested in over sixty percent of the cases concerning the running of illegal gambling dens; 193 of the 411 pick pockets arrested in 1932 were Jews. In 1932 no fewer than thirty-one cases of fraud, mainly insurance swindles would be committed by Jews.⁴⁹

While the two statements of Ratcliffe and Irving differ in tone, Irving provides specific examples (although the information was manipulated from Nazi propaganda and presented as fact) and Ratcliffe simply states a 'fact' about Jewish crime in Germany with no 'proof'. Both Irving and Ratcliffe seek to justify Jewish persecution by claiming that any persecution of Jews was based on legal means and in doing so they perpetuate the myth that Jews are synonymous with crime and corruption and fit into their shared stereotypical view of Jews as criminals and as a means to support notion a worldwide Jewish conspiracy existed.

The questioning of statistics in relation to the fate of the Jewish populations of Europe is a central facet of Holocaust deniers' arguments and one that chimed with the general populace of Britain at the time. The public's disbelief and the statistic regarding the number of Jews murdered by the Nazis is evidence in secondary material. Tony Kushner cites how Victor Gollancz, the Anglo-Jewish publisher and rescue lobbyist,⁵⁰ reveals how a small section of the British population did not believe the 'six million story' because in 1935 'there were only 665,000 Jews in Germany.'⁵¹ This lack of understanding about the nature of the crimes committed against the Jews of *Europe*, not just in Germany, and the suffering inflicted upon them, was in part, as Andrew Sharf opines, due to a 'inability to grasp the meaning of suffering wholly outside one's immediate experience and for which there was little historical precedent.' However Sharf notes that this inability to grasp the scale of Jewish suffering was also due to the 'widespread dislike of Jews in England'.⁵²

This may call into question the validity with which the label 'denier' in relation to Ratcliffe because if, as Kushner, Gollancz and Sharf state, antisemitism was the prism through which

⁴⁹ D. Irving, Goebbels: *Mastermind of the Third Reich* (London, Focal Point: 1996), pp. 46-47.

⁵⁰ For information on Gollancz see: T. Lawson, *The Church of England and the Holocaust* (Woodbridge, Boydell Press: 2006) pp. 85, 130-32, 173; M. Frank, 'The New Morality—Victor Gollancz, "Save Europe Now" and the German Refugee Crisis, 1945–46' *Twentieth Century British History* (Vol. 17, No. 2: 2006), pp. 230-256 and R.D. Edwards, *Victor Gollancz: A Biography* (London, Victor Gollancz Ltd: 1987), See chapter 15 for details of his war time activities.

⁵¹ T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal*, p. 249

⁵² A. Sharf, *The British Press and the Jews under Nazi Rule*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 1964), pp. 194, 209.

collective understanding of the atrocities committed were formed, Ratcliffe was not a denier, but rather simply a transmitter of the prevalent inbuilt antisemitism of 1940s Britain. These concepts impose a teleological aspect upon the development of Holocaust denial. In searching for the roots of denial, it has to be accepted that the basis of denial emerged out of a confused understanding of the dimensions of the Jewish plight. However, Ratcliffe's protestant militarism overt religiosity combined with his pro-Nazi sympathies to produce a much more potent and visceral hatred in which the stories of Jewish atrocities - seen from his world view - could not have any validity. It was this visceral hatred which drove him to publish his views on the reports emerging from occupied Europe and therefore confirms that he was one of the first in a lineage of British Holocaust deniers.

Stylistically Ratcliffe tried to forge a pseudo-academic approach. It was not like that of deniers which come chronologically later but he did attempt to direct the reader to earlier historical examples of war propaganda. In using his only cited text, *Falsehood in War Time*, he attempted to give his audience a prism through which to view the emerging information from occupied Europe. His scepticism was obviously rooted in his belief that the stories were faked by Jews and a product of Jewish media control. This perspective was to be expected from a man of Ratcliffe's convictions, yet he also held firm belief that the British population would become 'Jew wise', reject these stories and attack the Jewish 'powers' that had created them.⁵³ Ratcliffe wanted to provide his readers and the wider public with a pedagogical initiation into the mechanics of how the Jewish conspiracy operated. Below is an example of how Ratcliffe communicated his lesson and he believed it could be challenged in an anti-Jewish 'revolution' after the war:

The Jews are a race by themselves, and they truly have no country. The Jews are themselves to blame for that, for they do not want a country; they want **every** country! Historically and scripturally the Jews have brought down upon them the curse of God, who, seemingly, as Luther states, has left them to broil in their own sins.

The Jews are clever; they are keen and ever minding **Number One**. They are clannish, and keep themselves to themselves. They do not seek marriage union with gentiles, **except in the interest of filthy lucre**.

The Jews with whom one meets mostly are very civil, polite and kindly. For it must not be thought that the evils of Jewry lie at the doors of all Jews, especially the poorer classes of the Jews. Some such are found to be very kind, thoughtful and even generous. But it is the Jew with the wealth and with control of wealth who are the menace; the Jew who puts usury into practice at every turn; the Jew who has no heart when the matter to be

⁵³ Ratcliffe's belief in an anti-Jewish revolution also bore similarity to a fantasy anti-Jewish revolt depicted in Colin Jordan's *The Uprising!*, see: chapter three for further explanation.

conciliated is money. Then the Jew is seen in his true colours; he would see his gentile fellow meet ruin and go to jail rather than be merciful. The Jews are in the news today, and after the war they will be more so in the news. For the present pro-Jew propaganda that is throttling our nation will bring reactions. We predict that after the War the Jew in Britain will have to face a bitter anti-Semitic campaign, for we do not believe that even a military victory over Germany or an 'unconditional surrender' of the Hitler regime, as Mr. Churchill has put it, will ease the Jewish question in Britain. Churchill & Co. will go once the war is over and the reaction will set in. Notwithstanding all the fascist persecution of men and women in this county who have been jailed without even being charged, there is still in the British House of Commons a hefty anti-Semitic bunch of careerists politicians. These men are just biding their time.⁵⁴

The religious tone of this extract demonstrates the staunch religious beliefs of Ratcliffe and because his views were informed by scripture, to his mind, they were ratified by God. The structure of the piece gives an indication of the priorities through which Ratcliffe approached theories about Jews. He began his criticism in religion then moved on to describe how Jews differ from gentiles, focusing on traditional stereotypes: that they are 'clannish' and insular and in control of most of the wealth and the media. It is pertinent to note in the extract, and serves as an example of an earlier statement made in this chapter, that Ratcliffe does not see all Jews as 'evil'. He excuses poor Jews and those out of positions of power demonstrating that his brand of antisemitism was not located exclusively in racial theory. For Ratcliffe not all Jews were 'part' of the conspiracy, yet the Jew with control, money or power was the Jew who showed their 'true colours'. Ratcliffe's view therefore represents an amalgamation of religious hatred for the Jews but also contains the characteristics of racial antisemitism. That the Jews, as a collective group, could have 'true colours' indicates racial thinking or at least the hallmarks of a 'cultural code' which saw the Jews as collectively, culturally and characteristically different.

Ratcliffe's pamphlet was consumed with exposing what he saw as the 'evils of Jewry'; Ratcliffe was obviously heavily influenced by anti-Jewish rhetoric found in works like the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. It is apparent that Ratcliffe was laying the groundwork for what he saw as an inevitable consequence of the war - an anti-Jewish backlash. He remained convinced that the war was the product of Jewish financiers. This is evidenced by his direct quotation from Hitler's speech of 1st January 1939 on the back cover of the pamphlet. Ratcliffe presented his argument about the false nature of the 'atrocities' alongside other Jewish conspiracy theories. Nowhere were these theories this more apparent than in his sarcastic and bigoted, *Twelve*

⁵⁴ A. Ratcliffe, *The Truth about Jews*, pp. 16-17.

Falsehoods About the Jews. In the pamphlet he made twelve statements, and sought to show them as 'falsehoods'. The following quotation serves as an example of the style of the piece:

The Jews Want Palestine for a Home! This is hardly correct. It would be more to the point to say that the Jews want the whole Earth! But as for Palestine the reason why the Jews want into [sic] Palestine with a majority of people is to make Palestine a **Jewish State**. This is to become the Jewish headquarters for the better spread of world-Jewry. Teaming with thousands of Jews, they are not interested in Palestine by its self. How could Jews live where there are no non-Jews to exploit? The thing is absurd, the Jews firstly want Palestine for its oil and other rich treasures. Then the Jews want Palestine as an admission that Palestine belongs to them, which it does not, and never did.⁵⁵

Ratcliffe's notion that the Jew wanted Palestine a headquarters to facilitate the spread of world Jewry was a continual theme of antisemitic rhetoric. In *Mein Kampf*, and in relation to a Jewish state in Palestine, Hitler wrote, 'all they [Jews] want is a central organisation for their international world swindle, endowed with its own sovereign rights removed from the intervention of other states.'⁵⁶ This demonstrates a direct correlation between the rhetoric of Leese and Nazi antisemitism and provides an intimation of the ideological antecedents of the British far rights belief in a conspiracy theory and its predilection for rejecting narratives of Nazi atrocities against the Jews.

The sarcastic tone in *Twelve Falsehoods About the Jews* was, in part, a reaction to criticism of his newspapers and his earlier pamphlet, *The Truth about the Jews*. The eleven other points he addressed were: 'The Jews control Britain! The Jews own the press! The Jews are mean! The Jews own the banks! The Jews won't work! The Jews don't take an interest in sport! The Jews are the black market! The Jews are insulting to Christians! The Jews are not democratic! The Jews are very cruel! The Jews are God's Chosen people!' Ratcliffe continually repeated all of these themes in his publications, publishing individual treatises on these points. The pamphlet was indicative of how Ratcliffe took common antisemitic sentiments and extrapolated and expanded upon them. This technique indicated the pedagogical nature of his publications. Ratcliffe was not adding new arguments to the conspiracy theory discourse. Ratcliffe had no 'new' 'evidence' of a world Jewish conspiracy; he was simply recycling the sentiments which had already been expressed in other publications. The aim of which was to convince his readers that a Jewish conspiracy was pervasive in Britain and the world. There were stark parallels with Hitler's beliefs about the public's failure to understand the nature of the

⁵⁵ A. Ratcliffe, *Twelve Falsehoods*, p. 3.

⁵⁶ A. Hitler, *Mein Kampf* Introduction by D.C. Watt (London, Hutchinson & co: 1974), p. 294.

conspiracy in Ratcliffe's publication. In *Mein Kampf* Hitler wrote, 'The ignorance of the broad masses about the inner nature of the Jew, the lack of instinct and narrow-mindedness of our upper classes, make the people an easy victim for this Jewish campaign of lies.' This belief that the public was 'ignorant' about the nature of Jews and that only 'informed' individuals could see the conspiracy would become the clarion call that echoed throughout far right and Holocaust denial literature.

Ratcliffe's publications demonstrate the fundamental building block on which Holocaust denial was built: any information that related to the Jews was not to be trusted and the information regarding Nazi atrocities also had to be dismissed. The 'theory' left little room for expansion and was a single-faceted and accepted view of the world. As such evidence was harvested to support this perspective and ignored when it did not. The same evidence had to be used repeatedly because the theory does not change. This was why Ratcliffe drew on these embedded stereotypes because they were the only means to explain and support his ontological position. The monotonous repetition of 'evidence' is also present in Holocaust denial, it also only seeks a single-faceted view of the past: the Holocaust did not happen and, as such, the same 'evidence' must be recycled and the same targets are attacked.

Ratcliffe did however lead his fellow antisemitic compatriots in absorbing the new information regarding the Nazi massacre of the Jews of Europe. He filtered this news through the far-right and religious prisms which governed his thought processes and produced the 'logical' yet quotidian antisemitic response that the news was part of the Jewish conspiracy. Thus demonstrating the inevitability with which reports concerning the Jewish genocide were going to be denied or praised based on the belief in these conspiratorial fallacies. This finding supports the argument of Tom Lawson, who demonstrates how the Anglican church's silence regarding the Holocaust after the Second World War, was in part due to the pre-existing structures which obfuscated the murder of Europe's Jews a pre-existing rhetoric which divided the world between 'God and anti-God'.⁵⁷ That emergence of denial in the United Kingdom came from a pre-existing antisemitism that will be examined below.

Ratcliffe ended his section on the 'stories of atrocities', in *The Truth about the Jews* in a more placid and philosophical tone stating:

We do approve of Germany's attitude towards the Jews in depriving them of their means of livelihood but to say that the Germans, with Hitler at their

⁵⁷ T. Lawson, 'The Anglican Understanding of Nazism 1933-45: Placing the Church of England's Response to the Holocaust in Context' *Twentieth Century British History* (Vol. 14, No. 2: 2003), pp. 112-137.

head, are out to exterminate the Jews is both foolish and absurd. For if every Jew was exterminated the world would still go on with its evils and crimes.⁵⁸

Ratcliffe's ending is particularly significant because, like modern deniers in the far right, he does not condone the treatment of the Jews in regards to the legal discrimination carried out against the Jews in Nazi Germany. Ratcliffe acknowledges the prejudice of the Nazi state and his unyielding belief in a Jewish conspiracy probably inclined him to understand why Nazi anti-Jewish legislation had been implemented in Germany. However he, like the Holocaust deniers that followed him, would not accept that anti-Jewish legislation or Nazi antisemitic propaganda could escalate in to genocide. This paradox continues to punctuate the discourse of Holocaust denial and its presence in Ratcliffe's early incarnations demonstrate both the redemptive antisemitic nature of Holocaust denial and its capacity for political expedience. Ratcliffe could not accept that his own antisemitism had a relationship with the atrocity stories he sought to deny.

Ratcliffe's final statement about the 'evils of the world' is also illuminating in regards to his own antisemitism. As already highlighted Ratcliffe's hatred was based not only on a biological or racial theory, but on religious conviction which informed his world view: a Protocol of the Elders of Zion conspiracy and religious distrust.⁵⁹ For Ratcliffe, Jews, like Catholics, lacked the ability to be good patriotic British citizens, the Jews' loyalty was with their 'clan' and the Catholics' with the Pope in Rome.⁶⁰ This anomaly in which Ratcliffe could claim not to be 'antisemitic' but at the same time be anti-Jewish is one which is evident in the period and needs some explanation. It is clear that to a contemporary reader that Ratcliffe would be considered antisemitic. Modern deniers like Irving also claim not to be antisemitic, but as outlined in the introduction, the term antisemitic is a blunt instrument which lacks nuance when dealing with specific individuals' or groups' prejudices. In order to understand Ratcliffe and his writings the contemporary British context must be explored.

Alexander Ratcliffe and British antisemitism

The British attitudes to the Jews, politically, socially and racially during and after the Second World War have been debated by a range of historians. On reviewing the work of historians several points must be made on the context in which attitudes to Jews are placed. Antisemitism during the Second World War is often viewed in the context of Nazi

⁵⁸ A. Ratcliffe, *The Truth about Jews*, p. 16.

⁵⁹ A. Ratcliffe, 'The Jews are God's Chosen People' in *Twelve Falsehoods*, p. 7.

⁶⁰ A. Ratcliffe, *The Truth about Religion in Germany* (Glasgow, 1942).

authoritarianism, in which rabid antisemitism leads to the gas chambers of Treblinka and Auschwitz. In British collective memory there is a tendency towards generalization: viewing antisemitism as an exclusive fringe product of the far right at odds with a British liberal mentality. It has, however, been argued, while being careful to avoid blaming the victims, that it can also be seen as a genuine expression of social, economic and demographic concern of some of the populace.⁶¹ It is necessary, however, to move emphasis away from simple questions of 'race relations' and questions over the extent to which racism or antisemitism is endemic in or incompatible with the British character, and instead stress the importance of examining 'the anthropology of everyday relations'.⁶² The context in which anti-Jewish sentiments were understood in the British Isles in the 1940s. The British case during the war has a distinct quality; there has been a temptation in British collective responses to the Holocaust to see the British case as somehow distanced from the 'diseased continent'⁶³ with its pogroms, ethnic cleansing and gas chambers. It would be misguided to believe that, against the backdrop of the crimes of Nazi Europe, antisemitism was not a part of social interaction in Britain. In fact, as Kushner argues, the lack of understanding about the nature of the Nazi crimes and their irrational hatred was such that many in Britain looked for 'rational' explanations for Nazi antisemitism like those offered by Ratcliffe in *Twelve Falsehoods about Jews*.⁶⁴

Comparatively, the background level of antisemitism in Britain was the same or similar to Weimar Germany. What was missing in the United Kingdom, however, was the galvanizing authoritarian sanction, and incentives, provided by the overarching murderous and genocidal mechanisms in place in the Nazi state.⁶⁵ Kushner reaches the sobering conclusion that had Britain been invaded, the populace would have been complicit in assisting in pogroms and even death camps.⁶⁶ There is, therefore, the need to evaluate antisemitism in a 'liberal' British

⁶¹ T. P. Linehan, 'The British Union of Fascist in Hackney and Stoke Newington', in G. Alderman and C. Holmes (eds), *Outsiders & Outcasts: Essays in Honour of William J. Fishman* (London, Duckworth & Co: 1993), pp. 132.

⁶² T. Kushner, 'Jew and Non-Jew in the East End of London: Towards an Anthropology of "everyday" Relations,' *Ibid*, pp. 32-33.

⁶³ T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal*, p. 256.

⁶⁴ See: T. Kushner, 'Beyond the Pale? British reactions to Nazi anti-Semitism, 1933-39' in T. Kushner and K. Lunn (eds) *The Politics of Marginality: Race and the Radical Right and Minorities in Twentieth Century Britain* (London, Frank Cass: 1990), pp 143-60 (especially p, 153).

⁶⁵ See Dan Stone's conclusion on this question 'The "Final Solution": A German or European Project?' in which he argues that the Holocaust could not have happened without German leadership. D. Stone *Histories*, pp 62-63.

⁶⁶ T. Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice: Antisemitism in British Society, During the Second World War* (Manchester, Manchester University Press: 1989), p. 191.

setting as opposed to measuring it against a German totalitarian framework.⁶⁷ Furthermore, antisemitism should be viewed as 'social antisemitism' in which the British public could accept the *reason* for the Nazi dislike of the Jews while at the same time finding Nazi methods of persecution abhorrent.⁶⁸

Understanding the nuanced nature of British antisemitism is a prerequisite in understanding Ratcliffe in his correct historical context. It also provides the historian of early denial a conduit through which to understand the form that denial took in a nation that was not a direct 'perpetrator' in Nazi crimes. Examining the social context in which Ratcliffe's denial operated, will provide valuable insights into how his pedagogical insights into the Jewish conspiracy and his clarion predictions for an anti-Jewish revolution after the war were received by the wartime British public. The discussion below seeks to measure the nature of British antisemitism by examining, Gallup public opinion polls, contemporary literature and mass-observation diary extracts. It will demonstrate that a residual antisemitism in society provided Ratcliffe with an audience that would be receptive to his particular pernicious brand of antisemitism and denial of the Jewish atrocity 'stories' found in the popular press.

Politically, the British government was reluctant to publically sympathise with the Jewish plight, as questions of rescue and the subsequent anticipated immigration wave was felt to risk stoking up anti-Jewish hatred and antidemocratic sentiments.⁶⁹ The government feared that emphasising Jewish suffering, or giving any oxygen to debates over antisemitism, would shift the focus from the war being a democratic crusade for the liberation of Europe from Nazi tyranny into being a defence of Jewish interests.⁷⁰ As Kushner opines, in wartime Britain there existed a 'golf-club' or 'music hall' antisemitism, located firmly in the mainstream of society. 'The strength of British antisemitism in the war was not in its violence against the Jewish community, but it caught Jews within a vice, demanding that Jews assimilate, yet denying them Gentile preserves.' This ultimately compounded the image of the Jew as an outsider or alien and which forced Jews to accept a second-class citizenship.⁷¹

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Introduction.

⁶⁸ D. Stone, *Responses to Nazism in Britain*, pp. 92-98; A. Goldman, 'The Resurgence of Antisemitism', pp. 37-50.

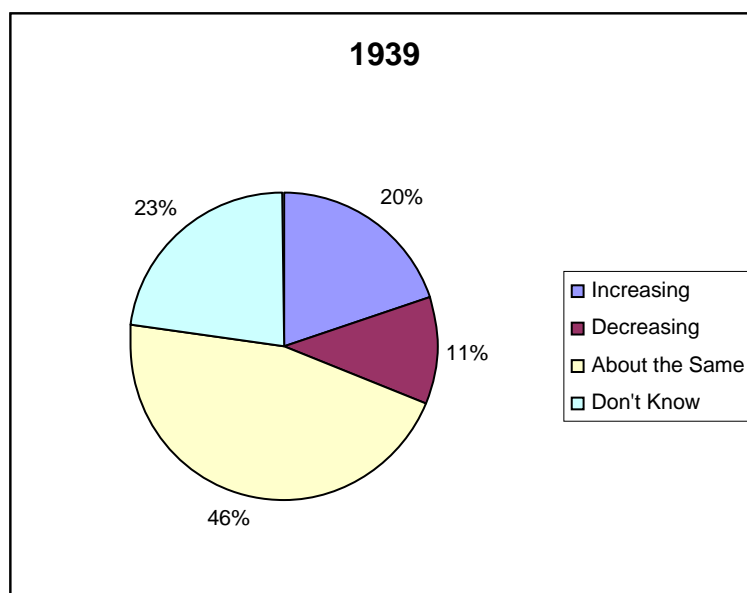
⁶⁹ L. London, *Whitehall and the Jews*, p. 2.

⁷⁰ T. Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice*, p. 190.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 198.

Anti-Jewish feeling was not new to Britain.⁷² The conclusions drawn from the historiography on British antisemitism in the Second World War go some way in explaining the results found in Gallup public opinion polls, relating to anti-Jewish feelings, before and during the war. The British Institute for Public Opinion [BIPO] commissioned a survey on public feeling towards the Jews, which was executed by the Home Office as part of one of their general polls. Below are a series of graphs created from questions asked by BIPO primarily in response to the question: ‘among the people you know, is anti-Jewish feeling increasing, decreasing, or about the same?’ A demographic breakdown of those surveyed each year is included under each pie chart, and the percentages included for each year, a bar chart combining all the years is included at the end:

Fig. 1: Results for 1939



Demographic breakdown: (Total surveyed 1,811 people)

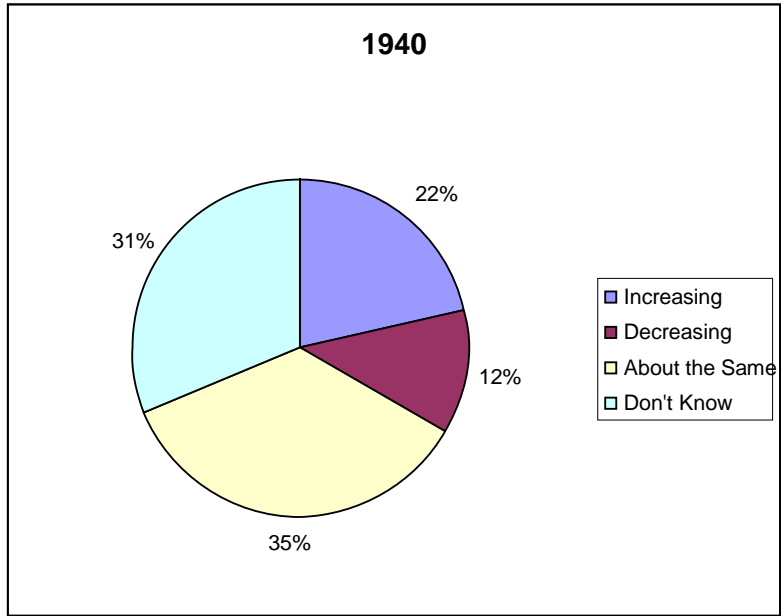
GENDER: Men: 70.35%, Women 29.65%.

INCOME: Above average income: 10.44%, average: 40.31%, less than average: 38.65%, unemployed: 10.60%.

AGE RANGE: 21-29: 24.02%, 30-49: 48.15%, 50+: 27.83%.

Fig. 2: Results for 1940

⁷² W. D. Rubinstein, *A History of the Jews in the English Speaking World: Great Britain, Studies in Modern History* (New York: Macmillan: 1996), p. 147.



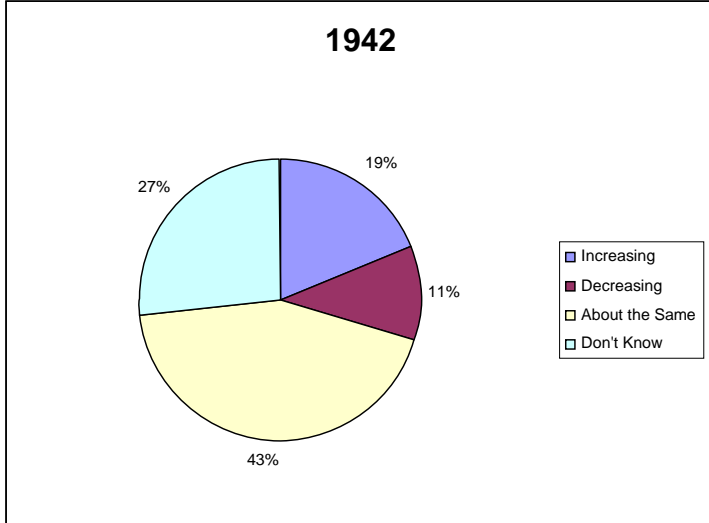
Demographic breakdown: (Total surveyed 2,285)

GENDER: Men: 55.24%, Women 44.76%.

INCOME: Above average income: 5.14%, average: 22.63%, less than average: 71.40%, unemployed: 0.84%.

AGE RANGE: 21-29: 23.86%, 30-49: 54.49%, 50+: 21.49%.

Fig. 3: Results for 1942



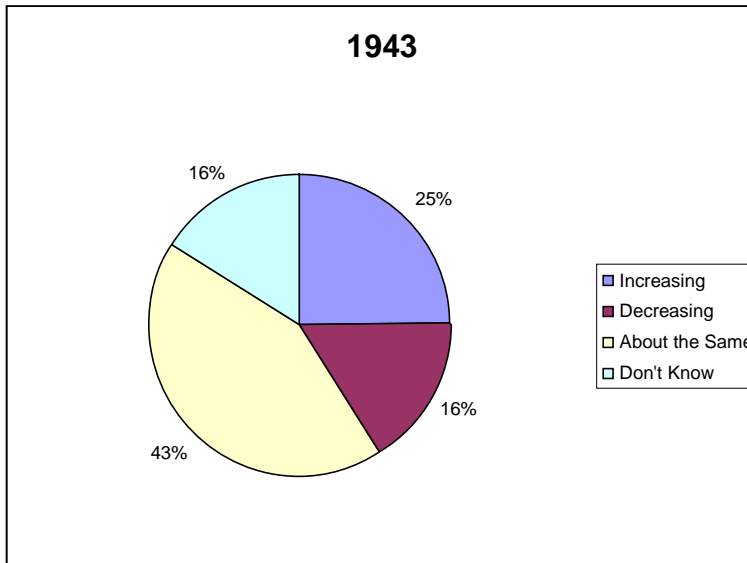
Demographic breakdown: (Total surveyed 2002)

GENDER: Men: 50.83%, Women 49.17%;

INCOME: Above average income: 5.46%, average: 22.68%, Less than average: 69.65%, pensioners: 2.22%;

AGE RANGE 21-29: 14.08 %, 30-49: 47.26%, 50+: 38.67%.

Fig. 4: Results for 1943



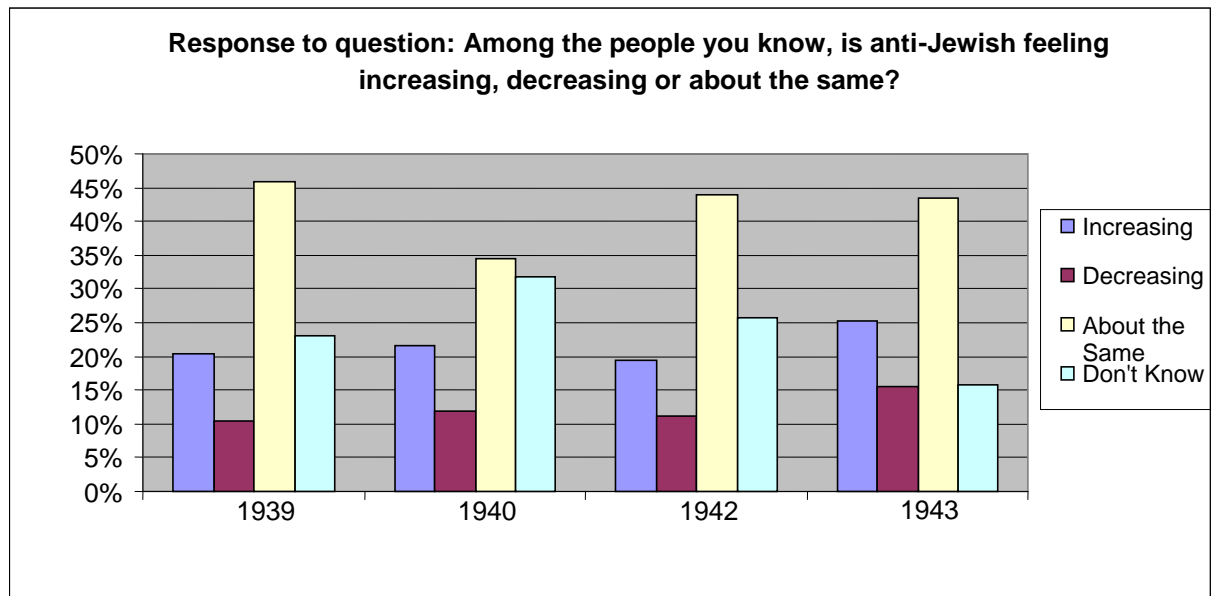
Demographic breakdown: (Total surveyed 1,996)

GENDER: Men: 50.05%, Women 49.95%;

INCOME: Above average Income: 5.36%, average: 20.69%, less than average: 73.95%

AGE RANGE 21-29: 13.65 %, 30-49: 45.65%, 50+: 40.72%.

Fig 5: Years combined.



These graphs fall into the trap of a 'race relations' approach - opposed by Kushner⁷³ because the question asked is robbed of anthropological context and cannot seriously contribute to the

⁷³ T. Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice*, p. 146.

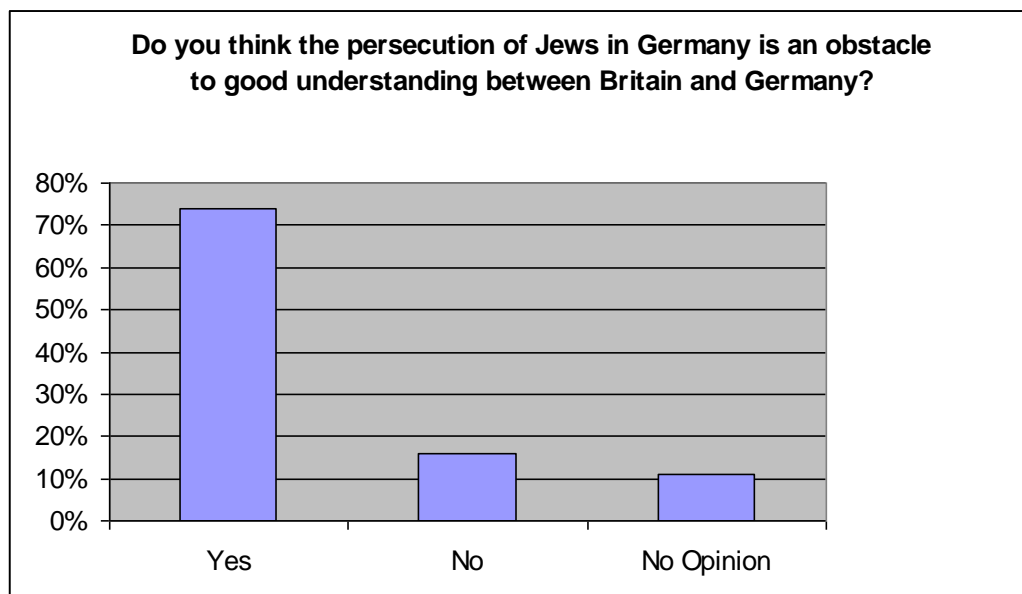
study of antisemitism.⁷⁴ There are still several significant points about these charts and the BIPO questions. First, the question does not directly ask the respondent what they *personally* feel about the Jews in Britain, but wants their general impression of the attitude within their given social circles. This suggests the existence of an almost tangible and recognised anti-Jewish rhetoric which the participants would be able to respond to and report on. Second, the phrasing of the question itself is revealing: the option 'about the same' for participants demonstrates a concealed indicator about attitudes of the day. Asking the public if anti-Jewish feeling is 'about the same' holds an implicit acknowledgement and recognition of the existence of anti-Jewish feeling in society. What this points towards, therefore, is an anti-Jewish *habitus* in Britain, intrinsic and taken as read in British society throughout the war.

Leaving aside the debate over a 'race relations' approach to understanding anti-Jewish feeling, statistically the above graphs demonstrate a general perspective of public opinion over the question of anti-Jewish feeling in the years, 1939, 1940, 1942 and 1943. They provide indicative evidence to the sentiment of the time. Demographically the proportion of those interviewed appears broad. Apart from 1939 (when there was a ratio of 73: 27 men to women), the ratio of men to women is around 50 percent. Socioeconomically the sample is balanced, with a representational differential quota between those on 'above average' income and those in a more middle and lower income. Similarly, there is a good breadth of age ranges.

Fig 5 demonstrates that throughout the period under study, the common consensus on the part of those interviewed is that the anti-Jewish feeling remains 'about the same'. Apart from in 1940, over forty percent of those surveyed felt that there was no increase or decrease in antisemitic feeling in their social circles; the dip in 1940 can possibly be explained by the fact that a higher proportion of those surveyed did not have an opinion on anti-Jewish feeling. The fact that many people considered antisemitism remained 'about same' is difficult for the modern observer because the way in which the question was phrased means it is hard to ascertain what this level of 'about the same' could possibly mean. However, a different question, asked only in 1938, provides a different insight:

⁷⁴ Other 'aliens' and minorities were also a target of xenophobic criticism and suspicion. See: T. Colpi, 'The Impact of the Second World War on the British Italian Community', pp. 167-187; L. Sponza, 'The British Government and the Internment of Italians', pp. 125-146, in D. Cesarani and T. Kushner (eds), *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth-Century Britain* (London, Frank Cass: 1993).

Fig 6: 1938 German persecution of Jews



Demographic breakdown: (Total surveyed 1171)

GENDER: Men: 67.84%, Women 32.16 %;

INCOME: Above average income: 11.66%, average: 31.39%, less than average: 43.83%, pensioner: 31.12%

AGE RANGE 21-29: 24.08 %, 30-49: 55.00%, 50+: 20.92%.

On first glance of this graph, we could be led to conclude that there is a high percentage of sympathy toward the plight of the German Jews, which, by proxy, suggests that there was equally a low level of anti-Jewish feeling in the United Kingdom. Clearly this graph represents the British public reaction to *Kristallnacht* which attracted global condemnation. However, as Stone points out, sympathy for the predicament of the German Jews does not necessarily go hand-in-hand with a *pro*-Jewish feeling.⁷⁵ The high percentage does indicate a high level of moral condemnation for the treatment of German Jews, and supports Kushner's assertion that the context in which *British antisemitism* is viewed should be a liberal one and was located within an 'ideal' ethos which focused on fair play as opposed to the persecutory mechanisms of the German Nazi government. It also leads to a sign of the aforementioned 'golf-club' and 'music-hall' antisemitism. Furthermore, what is significant in this graph is the low level of those who felt that the persecution of Jews would not represent an obstacle to good understanding between Germany and Britain: indicating a core level of antisemites who would have found a political resonance with men like Ratcliffe or the British Union of Fascists (BUF).

When we combine all the statistics a pattern emerges. Across the period there are only limited percentage increases or decreases in the answers given and because the group of people that

⁷⁵ D. Stone, *Responses to Nazism*, pp. 92-98.

were questioned each year were not the same people it is therefore statistically significant that there was little change in the answers given, and indicates a collective opinion on anti-Jewish feeling amongst the British populous. The statistic for those answering 'about the same' remained (apart from in 1940, with a higher proportion answering 'don't know') around forty five percent. Likewise, those answering 'increasing' gravitated between twenty to twenty five percent, and participants who responded 'decreasing' remained constantly between ten to fifteen percent. It is significant that these percentages remained the same, as it shows that attitudes to the Jewish populace in the United Kingdom remained constant in the answers given.

In each year twenty to twenty-five percent of those questioned articulate that anti-Jewish feeling was increasing, with the highest increase in 1943.⁷⁶ This increase can be, in part, explained by stereotypical attitudes that the Jewish population were engaged in black-market activity⁷⁷ and were avoiding conscription, as well as a general *zeitgeist* in which 'aliens' were distrusted. Clearly antisemitic attitudes and stereotypes remain prevalent among the population.⁷⁸ These ideas were exacerbated by the pressures of war and the need for a scapegoat. The questionnaire also denotes that *least* popular or common answer among the highest proportion of people was that anti-Jewish feeling was actually decreasing. That only ten to fifteen percent of the people surveyed agreed with this statement, demonstrates that antisemitism was pervasive in British society.

Leaving aside those who answered 'don't know' in the survey, between sixty five to seventy five percent of those questioned from 1939 to 1943 acknowledged the existence of antisemitism or a rise in anti-Jewish feeling. This is demonstrative of an environment in which antisemitism was prevalent and tangible and not, as some historians, such as Richard Bolchover have claimed, a peripheral issue in its 'death throes'.⁷⁹ These graphs represent a quantitative examination of antisemitism. They express an acknowledgement of anti-Jewish feeling extant at this time and, among some, an increase in that feeling. This information alone,

⁷⁶ This spike in 1943 supports the work and claims of historians who see antisemitic sentiments rising by 1943. See in T. Kushner 'Immigration and Race Relations in Post war British Society' in P. Johnson (ed.), *Twentieth Century Britain: Economic, Social and Cultural Change* (Harlow, Longman: 1994), p. 421; A. Goldman, 'The Resurgence of Antisemitism', pp. 37-50.

⁷⁷ Kushner points out that government ministers chose to accommodate or appease these common expressions of antisemitism to prevent radical antisemites from manipulating them for their own far-right agenda. This was demonstrated in the government's refusal to allow the British Broadcasting Corporation to debate antisemitism and its own refusal to publish a 1943 survey which demonstrated that Jews were not dominant in the black market. See: T. Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice*.

⁷⁸ A. S. Lindemann, *Anti-Semitism Before the Holocaust* (London, Longman: 2000), pp. 79-84.

⁷⁹ See: R. Bolchover, *British Jewry and the Holocaust* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 1993), p. 145.

however, is not enough to fully understand the nuanced picture of antisemitism. While the graphs can give a numerical expression of attitudes and serve as a useful reference point, the question of what constitutes 'about the same' needs to be examined with more qualitative analysis to understand the context in which Holocaust denial begins and its link to antisemitic attitudes at the time.

In qualitative terms these graphs reveal little about the attitudes of everyday British people. What they do provide is a broad and general trend about attitudes and gives a clear indication that there was an audience who would have an affiliation with Ratcliffe's views. Numbers and statistics do not, however, give a direct indication of why these resentments and feelings existed. Below is an extract from an essay by George Orwell, examining the attitudes of the British people to the Jews during the war:

Young intellectual, Communist or near-Communist: "No, I do NOT like Jews. I've never made any secret of that. I can't stick them. Mind you, I'm not antisemitic, of course."

Middle-class woman: "Well, no one could call me antisemitic, but I do think the way these Jews behave is too absolutely stinking. The way they push their way to the head of queues, and so on. They're so abominably selfish. I think they're responsible for a lot of what happens to them."

Milk Roundsman: "A Jew don't do no work, not the same as what an Englishman does. 'E's too clever. We work with this 'ere" (flexes his biceps). "They work with that there" (taps his forehead).

Intelligent woman, on being offered a book dealing with antisemitism and German atrocities: "Don't show it me, please don't show it to me. It'll only make me hate the Jews more than ever."

I could fill pages with similar remarks, but these will do to go on with. Two facts emerge from them. One [...] is that above a certain intellectual level people are ashamed of being antisemitic and are careful to draw a distinction between "antisemitism" and "disliking Jews". The other is that antisemitism is an irrational thing. The Jews are accused of specific offences (for instance, bad behaviour in food queues) which the person speaking feels strongly about, but it is obvious that these accusations merely rationalise some deep-rooted prejudice. To attempt to counter them with facts and statistics is useless, and may sometimes be worse than useless. As the last of the above-quoted remarks shows, people can remain antisemitic, or at least anti-Jewish, while being fully aware that their outlook is indefensible. If you dislike somebody, you dislike him and there is an end of it: your feelings are not made any better by a recital of his virtues.⁸⁰

Orwell's essay is useful for understanding some of the attitudes towards Jews in Britain, but it does little to explain what is meant by antisemitism. As demonstrated in the introduction to this chapter the term is pliable. The examples from Orwell, could each find a place in Halpern's

⁸⁰ G. Orwell, 'Britain and Antisemitism' in *England your England and Other Essays* (London, Secker & Warburg: 1953), pp. 68-71. The article first appeared in the *Contemporary Jewish Record* in April 1945.

overarching definition of antisemitism because the trajectory of their hostility towards Jews varied from person to person. If we inspect comment of the young communist he expresses a dislike and explains that he 'can't stick them', but refuses to be classified as antisemitic. This raises the question of what constitutes antisemitism at the time, a personal and irrational hatred of the Jews would not be considered antisemitic *per se* but actions of violence and persecution were (as seen in fig. 6 above).

Anti-Jewish sentiments are not hard to find in the period, if we take an extract from a Mass Observation diary we gain an indication of the endemic beliefs of ordinary people. The extract is a man describing a Jewish lecturer he met in October 1939:

The lecturer who is, incidentally, a Jew from Austria (he is modest, clean, free from the oiliness of most Jews, neatly dressed and a charming fellow: my opinion on his race raises to par...⁸¹

Similarly if we couple this with other statements of mass observers one diarist, who has great sympathy for the Jewish plight demonstrates the prejudices of those around her. She also mentions a conversation with a gentleman:

'The war is run by financiers' he said 'do you want war? No. Does the working man want war? No. it's the moneyed boys that want war. It is the same in Germany. Do you think Harry Jacob wants war? Or Fraulein Dutchmann?' There is a story going about that all the plate glass in many Jewish shops has been scratched with insulting remarks.⁸²

The comments above are just a short sample of some of the comments collected in Mass Observation diaries during the beginning of the outbreak of war. The comments continue throughout the war. For example in January 1944, one diarist recorded that at a dinner party:

One man mentioned that the only shops with radio valves were Jewish shops, which had brought up the stocks. 'The only way to stop that,' said another 'is to put a brick through their window and every time they put a new one in to smash it again.' I was surprised to hear such talk; it was reminiscent of the German pogroms.

This diarist often recorded antisemitic sentiments in his diary; on another occasion in March 1942, he recorded the comments of a bus conductor 'remark this morning: "the Jews are the ones who are making money out of this war. A Jew's war, that's what it is." It is rare to hear such anti-Semitic views nowadays.'⁸³

⁸¹ Mass Observation Archive: Diarist no: 5212, 9th October 1939.

⁸² Mass Observation Archive: Diarist no: 5390, 7th November 1939.

⁸³ Mass Observation Archive: Diarist no: 5205, 26th March 1942. The diarist recorded similar remarks and conversation on other dates: 16th March 1944 and 5th October 1944.

Other diarists recorded similar remarks or observations, one diarist recalls ‘a good story’ of how a ‘Jewess’ was waiting in a shop queue in Westerton the woman lent over to take a fish that another woman intended to buy, the woman took exception to this and hit the Jewish woman across the face with it. The ensuing uproar, reported the diarist, was ‘so bad the police had to be called’.⁸⁴ While this example does not represent an explicit depiction of antisemitism as the examples above, the fact that the diarist felt compelled to depict the woman as a Jew and describe it as a ‘good story’, demonstrates the *layers* of antisemitism which were prevalent in British society. The event depicts the Jews in commonly held stereotypes of the day; it is not to say that this story did not take place, or that the woman involved was indeed Jewish, but the fact that the diarist records it as a ‘good story’ suggest the diarist regarded the actions of the non-Jewish woman as just, and that the actions of the Jew in question was commonplace.⁸⁵

This hostility towards the Jews was also felt by the Jewish populace in Britain. Todd Endelman, explains in his work, *The Jews of Britain 1656-2000*, that Jews ‘living outside immigrant neighbourhoods, repeatedly encountered corrosive reminders of the gentile constructions of their difference.’⁸⁶ Betty Miller’s *Farewell Leicester Square*, published in 1941, explains the social constraints and residual fear that her protagonist Ale Berman feels living in London. Although Berman, seems to have made a successful life in the film industry for himself and married a ‘gentile’ wife, he is constantly plagued by the fear that he could lose all he has because of the residual antisemitism present in society.⁸⁷

Tony Kushner demonstrates the reality of these fears when he explains in the conclusion to *The Persistence of Prejudice* that, ‘Jews who prepared the use of cyanide capsules in the event of a Nazi invasion of Britain were not necessarily suffering from paranoia.’⁸⁸ Kushner also illustrates that even after the war when the crimes against the Jews were known, British society still had little appreciation or understanding for the Jewish victims of Nazi tyranny. Quoting two victims, Kitty Hart and a young Jew who had survived from Westerbork and Belsen, Kushner shows how attitudes toward the Jews remained hardened and that the Holocaust, ‘far from making racism unrespectable in post war Britain, was in fact little understood for many years after 1945.’ Below is a reproduction of Kushner’s sources:

⁸⁴ Mass Observation Archive: Diarist no: 5390, 30th December 1944.

⁸⁵ See the comments of the middle-class woman in Orwell’s essay quoted above.

⁸⁶ T. M. Endelman, *The Jews of Britain 1656-2000* (London: University of California Press, 2002), p. 201.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ T. Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice*, p. 191.

‘Everybody in England would be talking about personal war experience for months, even years, after the hostilities had ceased. But we, who had been pursued over Europe by a mutual enemy, were not supposed to embarrass people by saying a word.’ - Kitty Hart A Polish Jew in Auschwitz who immigrated to Brimming after liberation.

‘I found it better not to talk about the concentration camps, and not to do or say anything that made me different from anyone else. People simply did not understand what we had been through, and did not make allowances for anything ... from the time I left I was shunted about, and there was nothing solid, nothing firm in my life; and I am angry when I look back and consider how we were treated when we came to England.’ - A young Jew who had survived from Westerbork and Belsen.⁸⁹

As Kushner illustrates, there was a lack of empathy for the victims of the Holocaust and that particularity of the Jewish experiences during the Holocaust were not fully appreciated and understood. Furthermore, as the observations of the survivors suggest, people also simply did not want to know. When this is cross-referenced with the information found in the Mass Observation diaries and the information found in the surveys, it becomes apparent that a multitude of facts affected the way in which Jewish people were viewed. The first was filtered through the various antisemitic discourses that were present in British society. The second was marked by a general ambivalence to the plight of the Jews of Europe. The third was that the plight of the Jews was understood and empathy felt for their suffering yet there was also a reluctance to fully engage with the horrors of the Nazi genocide of the Jews.

There are two other factors to consider in relation to these sources and will relate to the discussions later in the chapter on the British government's reaction to the Holocaust. First, people felt a sense of resentment that Jews were being given a privileged status as victims of Nazi brutality and war. Both sources make reference to the fact that British people ‘would be talking about personal war experience for months, even years, after the hostilities had ceased’ or ‘did not make allowances for anything’. It therefore stands to reason that prior to the exponential growth of Holocaust studies combined with the elapse of time since the end of the war to the present day, people who had also suffered during the war and lost family, friends and loved ones, were resentful of Jews who received a special victim status. The fallout from this resentment compounded their stereotypical representations of Jews.⁹⁰ Second, the

⁸⁹ Kushner's sources are taken from K. Heart, *Return to Auschwitz* (New York, Atheneum: 1985), pp. 11-12; A. Gill, *The Journey back from Hell* (London, Avon Books: 1988), pp. 152-4 and can be found in T. Kushner ‘Immigration and Race Relations in Post war British Society’ in P. Johnson (ed.) *Twentieth Century Britain*, p. 421.

⁹⁰ See: A. Falk, *Anti-Semitism: A History and Psychoanalysis of Contemporary Hatred* (Westport, Praeger Publishers: 2008), pp. 22-24. For discussions about the relationship between Xenophobia, nationalism

way victims were treated could be likened to a form of Holocaust denial. Berel Lang opines there is a thin line between denial, acknowledgment and recognition, but that at the 'end points of denial' are groups that can acknowledge the crimes but for whom its occurrence does not matter 'because personal or group hardship has left no room for empathy with others' suffering.'⁹¹ This could explain the failure of some sections of the British public to interact with the murder of the Jews on the Continent. Given the information available at the time, however, and with the position the Holocaust now occupies in contemporary society, it seems anachronistic to label this as denial. Instead it would seem better to describe this failure to understand the crimes committed against Jews as a result of the various antisemitic discourses that occupied society during and immediately after the war.

When these discourses are compared to the statements in Ratcliffe's publications it is apparent that his pedagogical writing in regards to the Jews would have had both a familiarity and resonance to the public's ears. Figures one to six, along with the historiography of British society in relation to the Jews, demonstrate an inbuilt *habitus* of anti-Jewish feeling and the presence of multiple antisemitic discourses in Britain during the war. It is clear that the examples above do not represent a complete picture of British society, but as an indicator, it is clear that the (negative) sentiments expressed regarding Jews chimed with those expressed by Ratcliffe.

There was a similarity and commonality between the stereotypes employed by Ratcliffe and those recorded by Orwell and the Mass Observation diarists. The stereotypes found in the diaries represent a domestic and less pernicious form of antisemitism, one which was accessible and represents a shared anti-Jewish and prejudiced view of Jewish populations in Britain. It is clear that the sentiments expressed in *The Truth about Jews* and *Twelve Falsehoods about the Jews: A Vindication* originate from these domestic forms of antisemitic discourses. However it is vital not to simply suggest that Ratcliffe's antisemitic discourse is the same as that of the diarists. The difference between the former and latter may appear slight, but is in fact substantial. Ratcliffe was a transmitter of his discourse, attempting to influence others and promote his particular brand of prejudice and hatred. The examples of antisemitic discourse found in the Mass Observation diaries are private, or at least only exposed because of the project launched in the 1930s. Although they show domestic antisemitism, they are not

and antisemitism in relation to Jewish victimhood pp. 84-86. The debates explain how shared group experiences contrast their own shared experience against those of others perceived to be 'outsiders'.
⁹¹ B. Lang, 'Six Questions on (or about) Holocaust Denial', *History and Theory*, (Vol. 49, 2010), pp. 157-168, p. 160.

attempts to transmit ideas, but to report on what is found, therefore the discourses contained in them are only temperate indications of what the authors saw, felt or believed. What is exposed, by comparing the two types of discourse, is the cyclical nature and symbiotic relationship of the antisemitic discourses. Ratcliffe's publications stem from his emersion in a domestic context where antisemitic and anti-Jewish language could be found in a variety of echelons of society and as a result he draws on traditional and common beliefs regarding the Jews. He then publishes these along with his own idioms back into a society where such beliefs found a place in the 'music hall' or 'golf club' antisemitism that existed in society. Ratcliffe, because of his publications, stands as an example of a transmitter of the ideas found in, and received by, some areas of society.

This cyclical nature of absorption, transmission and re-absorption, explains Ratcliffe's belief that the reports of atrocities against the Jews was an invention of Jews, but it does not explain why others in society did not deny the crimes - they were accepted as fact - but did not alter their own prejudices about the Jews. The following extract from a diarist in March 1943, the year after Ratcliffe's first edition of *The Truth about Jews* demonstrates that some of antisemitism in British society contained the same redemptive nature found in Nazi ideology. In the extract the diarist reports on the comments of a woman (Mrs. M) that the diarist knew from a social club on the minute's silence in parliament commemorating the murdered Jews of Europe.⁹² 'Mrs. M was blazing about the House of Commons standing out of respect for the Jews who were being massacred throughout Europe. She thought the world was well rid of the Jews. Is that not dreadful?'⁹³ The diarist reports on similar issues, but rarely gives her own view of Jews. In one of her diary entries, however, she demonstrates a propensity for a belief in a Jewish conspiracy. After reporting the indignation over a rumour that the diarist believed to be true, that Jewish people were cheaply buying bombed out houses and fixing them up and selling them on for profit, the diarist states: 'my own thought was that the defence of Jewry is one of the many causes for which the war is being fought.'⁹⁴ This comment demonstrates the multifaceted nature of antisemitism during, and after, the war. There is a dichotomy at play, on the one hand people can be appalled at the extermination of Jews, like the diarist's reaction to Mrs. M's comments, but at the same time still hold antisemitic beliefs (that the war is being fought for the defence of Jewry).

⁹²It is probable that 'Mrs M.' was reacting to the following story: 'Barbarity To Jews Retribution By Allies, Commons Endorse A Pledge' *The Times* (18th December, 1942), p. 4.

⁹³ Mass Observation Archive: Diarist no: 5390, 7th March 1943.

⁹⁴ Mass Observation Archive: Diarist no: 5390, 23rd May 1941.

This tension between thought and action is demonstrated in another diarist's observation. The diarist comments on a debate between himself, his secretary, both defined as 'pro-Jewish', and another 'anti-Jewish' man.

We pointed out several inconsistencies in the anti-Semitic attitude: that objectors to the presence of Jews in this country failed to pursue this view by turning them out or by putting them in concentration camps; they condemn Hitler for persecuting the Jews and then refuse the Jews the right to a decent life anywhere else [...] they expressed dislike for the Jews' way of living - forced on them by centuries of having to fend for themselves in hostile communities - but put in the same position they would do exactly the same thing themselves.⁹⁵

This diarist highlights the inconsistencies that existed in regards to the Jews of the United Kingdom and Europe. While there was condemnation of the atrocities, there was still an underlying hostility and innate antisemitism in society.⁹⁶ While there were individuals who had a deep hatred of the Jews and a more 'redemptive' form of antisemitism like Mrs M, there were those in society who seem to be unable to resolve the inconsistencies in their position towards Jews. They remained both appalled at the acts of the Nazis but unable to relinquish their innate prejudice.

In Ratcliffe's publications there is conclusive evidence of antisemitic tropes and elements that would have resonated within British wartime society. While his radical antisemitism and denial may prove too much for some, other comments would have been accepted because they were already part of the mentality of the populace in regard to the Jews. These views need to be understood through the prism of the mono-cultural, jingoistic and nationalist environment of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Britain. Orwell, for example, concludes in his essay on antisemitism in Britain that:

When Hitler has disappeared a real enquiry into this subject [antisemitism] will be possible, and it would probably be best to start not by debunking antisemitism, but by marshalling all the justifications for it that can be found, in one's own mind or anybody else's. In that way one might get some clues that would lead to its psychological roots. But antisemitism will not be

⁹⁵ Mass Observation Archive: Diarist no: 5364 16th March 1944.

⁹⁶ This conclusion about the ambiguities of people's feelings towards the Jews is supported by Tony Kushner's analysis of Mass Observations diaries, in which he details the diaries of a Mrs Grant and her view on Jews and antisemitism and her 'own ambiguities about the Jews'. While Mrs Grant, as the diaries and Kushner point out, attacked the Jews to an extent that was verging on 'redemptive antisemitism' and attempted to convince herself and others that such antisemitism was both common and normal amongst ordinary people. See: T Kushner, *We Europeans?: Mass Observation, 'Race' and British Identity in the Second World War* (Aldershot, Ashgate: 2004), pp. 170-76 and 187-88.

definitively CURED, without curing the larger disease of nationalism, I do not believe.⁹⁷

The prosaic nationalist tendencies and the level of patriotic feeling of the public during the war would have been intense and fostered a deeper resentment of foreign immigrants and those considered aliens. As Kushner points out, however, there is a danger in asserting that the 'British public were too antisemitic to consider helping the Jews.'⁹⁸ The liberal mentalities of Britain lead to a complete failure of imagination in regard to the horrors of the Final Solution.

It is into this dichotomy of retaining antisemitic prejudice while simultaneously expressing revulsion at the Nazis crimes towards the Jews of Europe that we get a sense of the differing reactions operating and possible at the time. Ratcliffe's own response can, therefore, be contextualised in relation to this dichotomous ethos. Unlike the 'Mrs. M' mentioned in the diary above, who approves of the extermination of the Jews in Europe, Ratcliffe chooses to deny the occurrence of the atrocities which were appearing weekly and sometimes daily in the national newspapers. While he could not have published the 'redemptive' sentiments, like those of Mrs M, publicly (even if he had such views) his denial represents not just an attempt to sanitize the crimes of the Nazis, but to open the public's eyes to what he viewed as the control and 'conspiracy of worldwide Jewry.' For Ratcliffe the atrocities simply did not exist. Was Ratcliffe a man who, as Walter Laqueur claimed, could not accept or understand the information? Given that his denial was rooted in pre-existing conspiracy theories it seems doubtful that he would be able to absorb the information in a way that reflected the reality. We can only speculate on his psychological motives, and whether he did actually understand what was happening and chose to deny it. What is clear, however, is that Ratcliffe began to transmit these ideas in line with his pre-existing ideologies, belief and his blinkered worldview meant that he could not accept as true the stories written in national newspapers because he believed them to be in the control of Jews. Therefore from Ratcliffe's standpoint he could not adopt a dichotomous form of antisemitic discourse: unlike many of the Mass Observation diarists, he could not continue to hold his staunch anti-Jewish views and accept the atrocities against the Jews of Europe.

Ratcliffe's conviction of a Jewish conspiracy continued after the war and during the Nuremberg war crimes trials. Ratcliffe refused to believe the stories of atrocities because of the presence

⁹⁷ G. Orwell, 'Britain and Antisemitism' in *England your England*, pp. 68-81.

⁹⁸ T. Kushner, 'Different Worlds: British Perceptions of the Final Solution During the Second World War', in D. Cesarani, *The Final Solution: Origins and Implementation* (London, Routledge: 1994), p 262.

of 'innumerable numbers of Jews' involved in the investigations.⁹⁹ Ratcliffe's position never changed throughout or after the war. It appears the basis for his conviction for these views was rooted and located in both the commonly shared intrinsic antisemitism that existed during the period his rigid world view that a Jewish conspiracy existed and controlled world, political and economic events. Thus denial of Nazi atrocities against Jews became absorbed into a pre-existing form of antisemitism and part of the discourses surrounding Jewish victims. However as we shall see, and will be argued in later chapters, the pre-existing, pre-war antisemitism and its bigoted anti-Jewish assumptions, would become marginalised in favour of 'new' forms of antisemitism: Holocaust denial and anti-Zionism. These new forms, still contained the conviction that a conspiracy was at work, but were more concerned with presenting arguments within a pseudo-socialistic frame work to appeal to a different generation that did not share the antisemitic prejudices of war time Britain.

The British Government: Response to Ratcliffe, Antisemitism and the Plight of Europe's Jews.

Much has been written about the British government's response to the plight of the Jews of Europe, and the response of individual government officials.¹⁰⁰ Gavin Schaffer demonstrates that, 'two 'racial' rationales are visible within government decision making in relation to the plight of the Jews of Europe both of which were set in the mind-frame of British liberalism. The first held that there was a real risk that the 'Jewishness' of refugees would make them unreliable allies (and possibly even traitors) in the war struggle. The second alleged that the presence of Jews (and the inevitable behaviour of these Jews) might increase British popular antisemitism to a dangerous level. Both these contentions were based in highly racialised perceptions of the Jewish character and reflected the antisemitic agitation and opinion of the period. It is reasonable to argue that not only did the government accede to the lure of these 'racial' discourses, but that there was often widespread acceptance of these views within government decision-making circles.'¹⁰¹ Schaffer's second point, regarding the increase of antisemitism goes, some way in explaining the responses of the Home Secretary to questions about Ratcliffe's publications as well as supporting the pre-existing historiography relating to

⁹⁹ *The Protestant Vanguard* (December, 1945).

¹⁰⁰ G. L. Weinberg, 'The Allies and the Holocaust' in M. Berenbaum and A. J. Peck (eds), *The Holocaust and History: The Known, the Unknown, the Disputed and the Examined* (Indianapolis, Indiana University Press: 2002), pp. 481-510; L. London 'British Responses to the Plight of the Jews in Europe 1933-45', *Ibid*, p. 515; L. London, *Whitehall and the Jews*; L. London, 'British Government policy and Jewish Refugees 1933-45,' *Patterns of Prejudice* (vol. 23, no. 4, 1989), pp. 26-43; G. Schaffer, 'Re-Thinking the History of Blame: Britain and Minorities during the Second World War', *National Identities*, (Vol. 8, No. 4, 2006), pp. 401-419.

¹⁰¹ G. Schaffer, 'Re-Thinking the History of Blame...' p. 405.

the British government's and their allies reaction to the plight of the Jews in occupied Europe.¹⁰²

Ratcliffe's paper and pamphlets attracted the attention of the House of Commons on three occasions. The first is an extract from the Commons debate on 25th February 1943, when the independent MP, Denis Nowell Pritt¹⁰³ asked the Home Secretary, Herbert Morrison, about *The Vanguard* publication:

Mr. Pritt:

asked the Home Secretary whether his attention has been called to the issue, dated February, 1943, of a periodical called "The Vanguard," which contains anti-Semitic matter, fulsome praise of Hitler and the Nazis, and abuse of this country in general and the Prime Minister in particular; and what steps he proposes to take to deal with this paper?

Mr. H. Morrison:

I share the view of the Hon. Member as to the obnoxious character of this obscure publication which is published in Scotland and I have considered in the past, in consultation with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Scotland, whether it was necessary to take action against the paper under the Defence Regulations. The view has hitherto been taken that its influence was negligible and that such action would merely give its views a greater prominence than it is likely to achieve in its native obscurity. I will, however, continue to keep the publication under observation.¹⁰⁴

The second is from November 1943. Mr. Driberg,¹⁰⁵ an independent MP for Maldon, asked the Home Secretary, Herbert Morrison, about the circulation and impact of Ratcliffe's writings. In the exchange Driberg drew Morrison's attention to Ratcliffe's pamphlet *The Truth About The*

¹⁰² B. Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 1979); D. S Wyman, *The Abandonment of the Jews: America and the Holocaust, 1941-1945* (New York, New Press: 2007); G. L. Weinberg, 'The Allies and the Holocaust' in M. Berenbaum and A. J. Peck (eds), *The Holocaust and History*, pp. 481-510; L. London 'British Responses to the Plight of the Jews in Europe 1933-45,' in M. Berenbaum and A. J. Peck (eds), *The Holocaust and History*; T. Kushner, 'Different Worlds: British Perceptions of the Final Solution During the Second World War' in D. Cesarani, *The Final Solution Origins*; T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination*.

¹⁰³ Denis Nowell Pritt, was at this time an independent MP who was expelled from the Labour party in 1940 for his support of the Soviet invasion of Finland. His pro-Soviet tendencies led him to form the Labour Independent Group in 1949. The group contained Pritt and four other former Labour MPs who had also been expelled from the party because of their communist sympathies. The group was disbanded when all five members lost their seats at the 1950 election. His pro-communist tendencies and anti-Nazi credentials were most keenly observed in 1933 when he served on the international enquiry into the Reichstag fire, during which he attempted to establish the innocence of the accused communist leaders and place the blame on the Nazi party and SA.

¹⁰⁴ Hansard HC Deb 25 February 1943, vol. 387, cols 314-5W.

¹⁰⁵ Thomas Driberg, was at this time an independent MP. He joined the Labour party in 1945, and was the briefly party chairman from 1957-8. Driberg was known for his communist sympathies and was a member of the communist party. Driberg was, however, expelled from the Communist Party in 1941 after having opposed the Nazi-Soviet pact. Driberg was first elected to the House of Commons in 1942 after winning the Malden the by-election. Driberg detested racism and gives the probable reason for his question about Ratcliffe's publication.

Jews. Morrison was aware of the pamphlet and only offered one main comment about the publication; 'I would warn my hon. Friend that Questions in Parliament can increase [the circulation of] it.'¹⁰⁶ Herbert Morrison's comments are illuminating, for it is clear that Ratcliffe had come to his attention, as Home Office reports from 1941 to 47 into his antisemitic publications exist.¹⁰⁷ Despite the 'very, very small'¹⁰⁸ distribution Morrison felt that questions relating to it could increase the circulation. This supports the conclusions Tony Kushner has reached in *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination*. The government's reluctance to comment on antisemitism was born out of a fear of provoking anti-Jewish demonstrations or presenting the war as being fought in Jewish interests.¹⁰⁹ Morrison may have also been reluctant to talk of the publication as Ratcliffe quoted Morrison as saying 'I am watching *The Vanguard*' in his second edition to *The Truth about the Jews*, in 1943. Clearly this is a misrepresentation, as the above extract shows, but in having his name mentioned in the House, Ratcliffe overly inflated the influence he was having in politics, and used conversations in the House as advertisements for his crusade in *The Vanguard* newspaper and in his pamphlets.¹¹⁰

Morrison's position on Ratcliffe also confirms what Louise London states in regard to Morrison's position on Jewish Immigration. London points out that Morrison was reluctant to allow Jewish refugees to remain in Britain after the war because 'he was convinced that to allow refugee Jews to remain within Britain would be a recipe for an outburst of antisemitism.'¹¹¹ Morrison's fear of an antisemitic powder keg exploding in British society was seen in other areas in relation to antisemitic materials and gatherings. In another exchange in the Commons, Driberg questioned Morrison in regard to a small antisemitic and pro-Nazi meeting taking place in London and whether Morrison intended to stop it.¹¹² Morrison's response to this question bore all the hallmarks of those responses given in relation to Ratcliffe but also gives a further indication as to why Morrison gave such non-committal responses to such antisemitic pamphlets and meetings:

Mr. Morrison: I will certainly look into the incident to which the Hon. Member refers. If it is true, it is much to be deplored, but I am between two

¹⁰⁶ Hansard HC Deb 4 November 1943, vol. 393, col 852.

¹⁰⁷ See: Home office registered papers, H/O 45/25398: 'British Protestant League and Scottish Protestant League: Reports on activities; anti-Semitic and anti-Roman Catholic publications including A. Ratcliffe's *The Vanguard*.'

¹⁰⁸ Hansard HC Deb 4 November 1943, vol. 393, col 852.

¹⁰⁹ T. Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice*.

¹¹⁰ See: A. Ratcliffe, *The Truth about Jews*, inside cover and *The Vanguard*, (December, 1943).

¹¹¹ L. London 'British Responses to the Plight of the Jews in Europe 1933-45', pp. 511-515.

¹¹² Hansard HC Debate 4 February 1943, vol. 386, cols 1045-6.

fires. The Hon. Member wants me to be harsher, and there are other Hon. Members sitting near me who are always anxious that I should be much more lenient.¹¹³

Morrison's response shows how division in politics was common over the issue of antisemitism and race relations, supporting Schaffer's claims about the attitudes of politicians in decision-making circles. It also demonstrates further the reluctance of politicians to react to Fascist and extreme provocations of antisemitism because antisemitic rhetoric was part of a domestic and societal dialogue.

Ratcliffe attracted the attention of the House of Commons again on 29th March 1945. Herbert Morrison was grilled more thoroughly on the attitude of the Home Office and government towards his publications. The independent MP and rescue lobbyist, Eleanor Rathbone and Sir William Davison, a Conservative MP, probed him on the issue. In the exchange, William Davidson brought Ratcliffe's publication *The Vanguard* to the attention of Morrison. Davison asked why Ratcliffe had not be interned under Defence Regulation 18b because of his comments regarding Hitler, who, Ratcliffe claimed, was '...sweeping back Bolshevism, which is blessed by the Prime Minister of Great Britain and the American President'.¹¹⁴ This third, and more lengthy, inquiry into Morrison's actions towards Ratcliffe and his publications demonstrates that Ratcliffe's influence and publications was an issue of concern and had been adopted by several MPs, (Driberg, Pritt, Davidson and Rathbone). These MPs directed questions, from different political leanings, over what was to be done about Ratcliffe and his publications. Miss Rathbone's stated that: 'he is doing real harm among ignorant people.'¹¹⁵

Morrison's position was steadfast, unequivocal and symbolised the mantra of the government's position in relation to the Jewish plight in Europe: 'Is it endangering security and the prosecution of the war to such an extent that I should take extreme action?' Morrison's position was that winning the war was the best way to end the torment of those suffering under Nazi tyranny.¹¹⁶ This was not just Morrison's own position or the government's position to race and antisemitism; it was their response to the entire plight of the Jews of Europe.¹¹⁷ It was as Louise London opines, that 'Morrison wanted no more admissions [of Jewish refugees].

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ Hansard HC Deb 29 March 1945, vol. 409, cols 1518-9.

¹¹⁶ See G. L. Weinberg, 'The Allies and the Holocaust' in M. Berenbaum and A. J. Peck (eds), *The Holocaust and History*, p. 489.

¹¹⁷ See: B. Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe*, W. D. Rubinstein, *The Myth of Rescue: Why The Democracies Could Not Have Saved More Jews From The Nazis* (London, Routledge: 1997), p. 170; D. S Wyman, *The Abandonment of the Jews*, p. 301.

He was convinced that to allow even refugee Jews, then within Britain, to remain was a recipe for outbursts of antisemitism.¹¹⁸

The Mass Observation diaries and Orwell's essay and the reaction of the government to Ratcliffe in the House of Commons demonstrate the fluidity and complex antisemitic discourse which influenced the response to the Final Solution in Europe. Morrison's fear that questions in the House 'could increase the circulation' of the pamphlet, supports Kushner's thesis that the British government wanted to downplay antisemitism and debate over Jewish immigration.¹¹⁹ Morrison's inaction towards Ratcliffe, despite pressure from other MPs, was clearly symptomatic of this fear. As such the government's reaction to Ratcliffe is located firmly in the findings of the historiography that relates to the British responses to the Holocaust and race relations during the war.

As the analysis of the Gallup polls and mass observation diaries above as confirm the antisemitic discourses during the Second World War in British society were multifarious and ranged from 'redemptive' forms of antisemitism¹²⁰ to more mild hostility based on racial stereotypes which were based on racial, xenophobic and mono-cultural, jingoistic attitudes. It is from these attitudes that we can best understand Ratcliffe's attitudes and his place in relation to societal trends. Ratcliffe's antisemitic discourses were a combination of both domestic antisemitism and his pedagogical approach to educating the population further about the nature of the 'Jewish conspiracy'. This populist approach bares remarkable symmetry with the Holocaust denial of later far right figures. It secures Ratcliffe's position in the lineage of British far right Holocaust deniers. While Ratcliffe's denial may have a crude prototype of later Holocaust denial arguments, his blend of pedagogical-populism would provide the hallmark of all future denial.

To talk of 'Holocaust denial' in this period or our modern understanding of it is a misnomer. The preoccupations of war and understanding of the dimension of genocide on the Continent with little historical parallel denotes the failure of the British liberal imagination to grasp the scale of the atrocities. Yet through his antisemitism and Jewish conspiracy theory worldview, Ratcliffe placed the Jews at the centre of the suffering. This is a complex notion, because by denying that anything was happening to the Jews, he placed them at the centre of the

¹¹⁸ See L. London 'British Responses to the Plight of the Jews in Europe 1933-45,' p. 515; L. London, *Whitehall and the Jews, 1933-1948*, introduction.

¹¹⁹ See: *Ibid*, p 247; T. Kushner, 'Jew and Non-Jew in the East End of London', pp. 32-33; L. London, *Whitehall and the Jews, 1933-1948*, p. 2.

¹²⁰ See S. Friedländer, *The Years of Persecution 1933-1939*, pp. 73-112.

genocide and atrocities. It is stories of *Jewish* massacres that he seeks to rebut, and as such gives the genocide a distinctly Jewish dimension. The British government's reluctance to 'play-up' Jewish suffering in favour of more universal and collective acts of atrocity meant that Ratcliffe was in fact stressing a Jewish particularity regarding the genocide that was at odds with British government's relative silence.¹²¹ This dilution of the unique experience of Jewish suffering was not restricted to government circles. As Tom Lawson highlights in his work on the Church of England's search for a usable past, 'overt concentration on Christian victimhood dictated that Jews rather disappeared from this Christian history of Nazism.'¹²²

Ratcliffe's decision to deny reports of Nazi crimes against Jews in a context of public apathy, and the British government downplaying of Jewish victimhood is a paradox. Ratcliffe's focus on Jewish Victimhood was at odds with both the prevailing political and social climate. Ratcliffe's attempt to negate the crimes relating to Jewish victims gave significantly more precedent to Jewish suffering over others persecuted by the Nazi regime. Ratcliffe did not need the monolithic concept of the Holocaust to begin denying the events that took place against the Jews in Germany and occupied Europe from 1933 to 1945. To explain this apparent confusion, it is necessary to understand Ratcliffe's epistemological position: he was convinced that the war was the product of Jewish financiers (a concept born from traditional antisemitic discourses) he envisaged that after the war there would be a popular rising against the Jews. It therefore stands to reason (from Ratcliffe's view) that the crimes committed against the Jews had to be explained away so as to prevent sympathy after the war. This is evident in Ratcliffe's continued denial once Auschwitz, Belsen and other death and concentration camps were liberated.

Ratcliffe represents a prototypical form of denial, but his initial lines of argument, match those which would be expanded upon later by others. Take for example Ratcliffe's questioning of the numbers of German Jews in Germany before 1939 and the number of Jews prosecuted for crimes. David Irving would later expand on these sentiments in his 1996 biography of Goebbels. Richard Harwood would also draw on arguments similar to those of Ratcliffe; in his introduction to *Did Six Million Really Die?* He would pose the question, 'What rendered the atrocity stories of the second world war so uniquely different from the First World War? Why were the latter retracted while the former are reiterated louder than ever?'¹²³ John Ball, published a book in 1992 entitled, *Air photo evidence: Auschwitz, Treblinka, Majdanek,*

¹²¹ T. Kushner, 'Different Worlds' p. 251.

¹²² T. Lawson, *The Church of England and the Holocaust*, p. 172.

¹²³ R. Harwood, *Did Six Million Really Die? The Truth At Last* (London, Verrall: 1974) p. 3.

Sobibour, Bergen Belsen, Balzec, Babi Yar, Katyn Forest, in which he attempts to discredit the photographic evidence and claim that the photographs taken were altered and doctored by the CIA to fit to pre-existing Holocaust narratives, sharing Ratcliffe's initial assertion that photographs of the atrocities were faked.¹²⁴ David Irving would also cast doubt on the photographic evidence of the gas chambers at Auschwitz in his 2001 libel trial.¹²⁵ It cannot be conclusively argued that Ratcliffe was the soul influence, which turned these men to these areas of 'research'. What is apparent is that Ratcliffe, used the same methods and pseudo-logic of other conspiracy theory followers and demonstrates Holocaust denial's origin from world Jewish conspiracies. Ratcliffe's professional and personal links with Arnold Leese are well documented. Leese's later association with Colin Jordan, John Tyndall and Richard Verrall, places Ratcliffe at the start of the British Holocaust deniers' genealogy. Ratcliffe's work is still available today; his pamphlets can still be bought through far-right and fanatical religious groups.¹²⁶

Holocaust denial as we understand it today shares many of the foundations that Ratcliffe expressed as early as 1943. His links to the far-right Arnold Leese are notable, and it is therefore probable that many of the immediate deniers after the war would be familiar with his work. What is absolutely clear is that from Holocaust denial's foundation with Ratcliffe, the *basic* arguments employed to discount Jewish victimhood at the hands of the Third Reich changed very little. This finding will be discussed in later chapters, particularly in chapter five which studies the relationship between Holocaust denial and historiography through the prism of the David Irving libel trial.

Ratcliffe was the first example of a Holocaust denier who was publishing in Britain even before the Second World War was over, at a point when monolithic concepts like 'the Holocaust' had not yet crystallised. When we compare Ratcliffe's arguments with those of later deniers we see that little has changed and given the initial information available when he was publishing, it is clear that he attempted to refute all the information that was presented in the press. Later Holocaust deniers may present their findings in a 'pseudo-academic' way than Ratcliffe, but the 'fundamentals' that Ratcliffe began with in 1943 remain unchanged.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ J. C. Ball, *Air Photo Evidence: Auschwitz, Treblinka, Majdanek, Sobibour, Bergen Belsen, Balzec, Babi Yar, Katyn Forest* (Canada, J. C. Ball: 1992), pp. 37-48.

¹²⁵ Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 10 Wednesday 26th January 2000, pp. 7-8.

¹²⁶ See: www.newchristiancrusadechurch.com/books.htm (Accessed on 10/02/11)

¹²⁷ Deborah Lipstadt summarised the arguments of Holocaust deniers in contemporary society in the 2010, *Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*; all Ratcliffe's arguments are contained within this summary. Those which are not mentioned are due to the absence of the information when Ratcliffe was

Ratcliffe's denial and publications ended after the war, he died of pneumonia in 1947.¹²⁸ The first to deny, what we now call the Holocaust, Ratcliffe stands as one of the most peculiar figures in the movement. To call him a founder of the movement is problematic, but it is clear that his warped views did not die with him. After his death and in the aftermath of the war his views and ideas would become embedded in far-right thought. While Ratcliffe never became a widely recognised public figure, his views regarding the Jewish populations do have a particular resonance with the context of the time. This is evidenced by the fact that Mass Observation diarists reported continued antisemitic discourses after the end of the war and even that they met people who reported to be pleased by Hitler's murder of the Jews.¹²⁹

Having come from humble beginnings, as a railway clerk and from a failed political party, for Ratcliffe to have stayed in business printing newspapers and pamphlets throughout the war it is clear that he was making enough money to support himself and his wife. There was, therefore, a market, although presumably a small one, for Ratcliffe's brand of bigotry. His pamphlets and newspapers give the historian a body of literature from which to understand the formation of denial not just as an anti-history phenomenon, but also of its relation to the social and political structures in place during the war. While historians, like Kushner and London, have researched the political and social impact of the Final Solution on Britain during the war, Ratcliffe provides an insight into the origins of early far right British Holocaust denial and its emergence from a domestic culture of contempt against Jewish populations. For the historian of Holocaust denial Ratcliffe furthers historical understanding of the development of denial as a product that was present from the very moment that knowledge about the Nazi crimes became public.

writing, for example, specific information about Zyklon B and Ann Frank's Diary. See D. Lipstadt, 'Denial' in P. Hayes and J. K. Roth, *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 2010), pp. 560-561.

¹²⁸ *The Protestant Vanguard*, February 1947.

¹²⁹ For examples from other Mass Observation diaries see: T Kushner, *We Europeans*, pp. 166-219.

Chapter Two: Arnold Spenser Leese and the British Far-Right after the Holocaust

The Holocaust marks both a break and a continuity. It remains a transformative event in an unchanged world.¹

In the immediate aftermath of the war the British society was, like the rest of Europe, seeking to make sense of war. As one of the only two nations (the other being Germany) to have been involved in the war for its six year duration, Britain was both economically and socially exhausted.² This chapter focuses on the initial decade of the post war years. Britain underwent a number changes as a result of war in relation to both the government's management of society and direct economic management. The newly elected Labour government promised to provide healthcare from 'cradle to grave'. Economically the government sought to direct the resources of the state to support the welfare state and transform Britain's wartime economy to a peacetime economy which could repay the massive debts accrued during the war.³ Internationally Britain began to see the decline of her Empire, with India and Pakistan given their independence in 1947. The retreat from empire proved problematic. Palestine, in particular, presented diplomatic and political challenges. With rival commitments to both resident Arabs and the immigrant Jewish community that dated back to the 1917 Balfour Declaration for a Jewish national home, the British government's attempts to find a solution to such extraordinary complexity proved impossible. In 1948, the British Government removed its last troops from Palestine and left the Arabs and Jews to fight over the future of the region.⁴ The withdrawal from Palestine was a humiliation, British lives had been lost and financial resources spent, no guaranteed outcome had been provided.

International concerns over Palestine resulted in a spike in British domestic antisemitism. As demonstrated in the previous chapter a residual antisemitism still pervaded British Society. In August 1947 in response to the 'Sergeants Affair', and residual tensions the bombing of the King David Hotel bombing attack in Palestine, British-Jewry suffered from antisemitic rioting that took place in London, Manchester and Liverpool.⁵ These events demonstrate not only the

¹ D. Stone, *Constructing the Holocaust: A Study in Historiography* (Edgware, Vallentine Mitchell: 2003), p. 3.

² T. Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (London, Vintage: 2010), p. 16.

³ For a detailed description of the challenges facing Britain in the immediate aftermath of the war see: K. O Morgan, *Britain Since 1945: The Peoples Peace* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 2001), pp. 3-10.

⁴ See, *Ibid*, pp. 49-52 for more detailed explanation of Britain's withdrawal from Palestine.

⁵ The 'Sergeant's affair' was the murder of two British sergeants - Sergeant Clifford Martin and Sergeant Mervyn Paice. The Irgun, a Jewish underground group in Palestine, kidnapped the men; they were held as a ransom to prevent the execution of Irgun militants by the British authorities. When the authorities carried out the sentence the Irgun killed the sergeants. 'Sergeant's affair' are discussed in more detail below. See: p. 148.

persistence of antisemitic prejudice, but also are emblematic of wider societal attitudes. As Morgan opines, in the decade after the war, 'awareness of Britain as a multi-racial society [was] still very indistinct ... a Victorian ethos still prevailed'. Adherence to empire and a persistent belief in white supremacy was still intrinsically part of the social fabric of Britain.⁶ It was into this environment that the British far right would seek to revive fascism and Nazism and provide its own analysis of the 'Jewish problem'. Before they could begin planning a revival of far right activism they would have to reorganise themselves after their own individual experiences of the war.

Towards the end of the Second World War British fascists were released from their internment under Defence Regulation 18b by the British government. While internment 'had physically and psychologically scarred many fascists; some questioned their faith ..., others found new religions, either spiritual or secular, or retired from politics, through fear, disillusionment or a newfound wish for a quiet life', others continued their political and ideological quest.⁷ These men were immediately treated and viewed as 'eccentric throwbacks by a deeply antagonistic public opinion'.⁸ The changed geo-political realities and trauma which resulted from the Second World War meant that the far right was faced with a changed world. Yet the ideologies which were espoused by the far right were still deeply ingrained and the way forward for these movements was far from clear. While some figures like Oswald Mosley would attempt to find 'new clothes' for previous ideologies, other individuals like Arnold Leese would continue unabated with their previously established beliefs.⁹

The shadow and legacy of Arnold Leese loomed over the future generations of the main far right parties and movements. He would entrust his legacy to Colin Jordan who would mentor, and in his early years work alongside, the future National Front Leader John Tyndall, thus Leese represents an vital branch on the genealogical tree of far-right Holocaust denial. Leese has been described as the 'nearest equivalent to the British Hitler.'¹⁰ His views are still echoed in the extreme revolutionary groups of the far right today.¹¹ Leese's extreme views on Jews and his dogmatic belief in a worldwide Jewish conspiracy allow for a greater understanding of how the far right attempted to create a new 'history' of what had taken place during the Second

⁶ K. O Morgan, *Britain Since 1945*, p. 107.

⁷ R. Thurlow, *Fascism in Modern Britain* (Stroud, Sutton Modern British History Series: 2000), p. 118.

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 117.

⁹ *Ibid*, p. 117.

¹⁰ R. Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain: A History 1918-1998*, (London, I.B.Tauris: 1998) pp. 47-48.

¹¹ For examples see: <http://wakeupfromyourslumber.com/node/9525> (accessed, 11/12/12) and <http://www.bloodandhonourworldwide.co.uk/magazine/issue18/issue18p20,21,22.html> (accessed 12/12/12).

World War. Leese's connections to Jordan and Tyndall explain the continued presence of his formulation of the conspiracy and the neo-Nazi traditions. As Daniel trailing opines, 'Tyndall ... absorbed the theory inherited from Leese.' This is of particular significance because under Tyndall the National Front would become prevalent in the mind of the public and was indelibly linked to British racism, as Garry Gable explains leading the NF 'was like owing the name of Heinz if you were a baked beans manufacture – it is the name everyone knows.'¹² The Leese 'tradition' therefore echoed throughout the contemporary history of the far right.

Leese's bond to future far right figures demonstrates the necessity of placing him as the central focus of the chapter. However the chapter will also examine other figures, most notably Oswald Mosley and Douglas Reed. While Mosley's name is indelibly linked with fascism in the minds of the British public, his influence on post war far right politics was muted. This is supported by Thurlow who states, 'apart from a small coterie of devoted followers nobody took any notice of what Mosley was saying.'¹³ This was because his post war political platform was directed to unification with Europe rather than a specifically British form of far right ideology. As Hill opines, Mosley's Union movement made little headway in the post-war years and was 'certainly not helped by the arrogant, imperious behaviour of their leader, who absented himself to Orsay, in France, to live a life of luxury while he awaited the call from the British people to return and lead their country to greatness.'¹⁴ Nevertheless Mosley's relationship with denial must be explored in spite of his lack of influence on the future course of the main parties of the British far right. By examining Leese, Mosley and Reed as well as contemporary literature on the Nuremberg tribunals, a comparative study can be made about the different responses and arguments which were made by the far right in trying to make sense of the murder of European Jewry, and the failure of fascism and Nazism.

This chapter will demonstrate that while Arnold Leese may have been presented as akin to an 'British Hitler' he resembled more of a Julius Streicher figure, editor of the low brow *Der Stürmer* magazine in Nazi Germany. The work of Leese clearly resembles the radical and redemptive antisemitism that was found in *Der Stürmer*. In this regard Leese resembles Ratcliffe in his antisemitic rhetoric because both built upon the Nazi propaganda narratives about Jews being the instigators of the second world war. Leese's publications provide a prism through and context in which to understand how such extreme antisemitic rhetoric absorbed

¹² G. Gable, 'The Far Right in Contemporary Britain' in L. Cheles, R. Ferguson and M. Vaughan (eds.), *Neo-Fascism in Europe* (Harlow, Longman: 1991), p. 250.

¹³ R. Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain: From Oswald Mosley's Black Shirts to the National Front* (London, I.B. Tauris: 2000), p. 221.

¹⁴ R. Hill, A. Bell, *The Other Face Terror: inside Europe's Neo-Nazi Network* (London, Grafton: 1988), p. 77.

the news of Nazi atrocities against the Jews of Germany and occupied Europe. Leese therefore represents a radical variant of British extreme far-right thought. As this chapter will show, the arguments marshalled by Leese were the same as those appropriated by later deniers. They may have differed in tone and style and were far more fanatical in their overt antisemitism and outlook; however, they represented the axiomatic nucleus from which far right thought radiated: a fundamental belief in race, racial stereotyping, racial struggle and supremacy and a conspiratorial view of history. Therefore by understanding the most extreme variant of such thought, other variants of far-right thought can be understood within their own context and in relation to their proximity to Leese. That is to say that that the initial responses to the Holocaust need to be understood in relation to the different contexts *within* the far right. Leese's publications may have been the most virulent expression of antisemitism in the context under study but the arguments he used were still the same of those expressed by more 'recidivist' individuals of the far right.¹⁵ Leese will be compared to Oswald Mosley, who attempted to gain power by appealing to the public, in order to see how Mosley's denials were more attuned to his political career and what this tells us about the different contexts in which denial was used in the British far right. Leese will also be contrasted with Douglas Reed, who was more of an 'independent' denier, meaning that as a journalist he was not seeking to recreate a past for an 'active' political purpose. Rather he was, like Leese, trying to expose what he saw as a prolific and controlling Jewish power in society. In comparing these three individuals this chapter will show how each character is indicative and representative of the antecedences of the 'radical' (Leese), 'recidivist' (Mosley), 'hybrid' or 'populist' (Reed) groups found in the far right as defined by Eatwell.¹⁶

Leese is useful to the historian of British far-right denial, not only as a conduit to understand how the atrocities were absorbed into extreme far-right thought, but also as an individual who first approved of the crimes committed by the Nazis against the Jews of Europe and then later denied their existence. As this chapter will show, the arguments found in Leese's initial approval could be, and were, transposed into the discourses found in Holocaust denial. Thus, such arguments demonstrate the implicit nature of Holocaust denial as a form of redemptive antisemitism. An antisemitism where the Jews are not only robbed of their victimhood, but where their victimhood is actively used against them as evidence of a covert conspiracy of

¹⁵ R. Eatwell, 'Towards a New Model of Fascism', *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, (Vol. 4 No. 2: 1992), pp. 161-194.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

domination and power. The conspiracy in turn consolidated and made apparent to travellers of the far right that the Jews were a 'menace' in society and must be stopped.¹⁷

Leese's arguments represented the early incarnation of a denial that would be absorbed, used, and later modified by his far-right descendents and disciples. It created the foregrounding myth that the Second World War had been a 'Jewish war for survival'. In Leese's view, the Jews had orchestrated the war against Hitler because he had tried to curb supposed Jewish power. From Leese's perspective the Jews had won the war against Nazi Germany; the Aryan or Nordic races were in terminal decline and the Jews remained in control of world.

Nazi atrocities could not be ignored and had to be incorporated into and understood within far-right thought. The liberation of the death and concentration camps in Germany and occupied Europe confirmed to the world the inhumane horrors of Nazism. In Britain, eyewitness news reports by Edward Ward and Richard Dimbleby informed the British public of what had taken place in Buchenwald and Belsen and newspaper accounts informed the populace of further horrors in the death and concentration camps throughout the Nazi empire.¹⁸ Yet these reports should not be read as imbuing the populace of Britain, or the far-right, with full understanding of what had taken place against European Jewry. As Judith Peterson demonstrated, Dimbleby's reports of the Belsen concentration camp were 'dejudaised'.¹⁹ The British government had 'resisted particularising the Jewish plight' to dispel any notion they had been fighting a 'Jewish war'.²⁰ Initial reports were devoid of specific group tragedies and a universalising narrative was employed and therefore the liberated camps were not a 'Jewish tragedy but a human one.' Joanne Reilly opines, 'the impact of the liberation of German concentration camps, and the impact of the realities of the 'Final Solution', with its six million dead, did not strike Britain simultaneously.' The figure of six million did not really permeate the British consciousness until the Nuremberg Tribunals at the end of 1945 and is still an ongoing process.²¹

As Reilly has shown the place of Belsen and other concentration and death camps in popular conceptions of the Holocaust have been conflated with a postwar retrospective about what

¹⁷ A. Leese, *Out Of Step: Events in The Two Lives of an Anti-Jewish Camel Doctor* (Hollywood, Sons of Liberty: 1951), p. 48.

¹⁸ Edward Ward's report of Buchenwald was transmitted on 1st April 1945 and Richard Dimbleby's report of Belsen was transmitted on 19th April 1945.

¹⁹ J. Petersen, 'Belsen and a British Broadcasting Icon', *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History*, (Vol. 13, No. 1: 2007), pp. 19-43.

²⁰ J. Reilly, *Belsen: The Liberation of a Concentration Camp* (London, Routledge: 1998), p. 2.

²¹ *Ibid.*

liberation actually meant in 1945.²² The British far right's response to the liberation and Nuremberg tribunals must therefore be understood in light of the contexts and knowledge that was available. Michael Marrus explains 'information was not knowledge. It took time for the news to sink in, and imagination to put the pieces together ...the Nuremberg tribunal did not change this situation overnight.'²³ Donald Bloxham has shown, however, that not only did the Nuremberg tribunal not 'change the situation overnight' but that it in fact established a narrative in which 'the seeds of the misrepresentations that were to characterize portrayals of Nazi criminality in the post-war era and in some cases up to the present day' were developed.²⁴ Bloxham highlights that, in the Nuremberg tribunals, western liberated camps were presented as the main expression of Nazi death camps, while the actual mechanised centres of killing in the east were marked by a 'non-representation' because the prosecution had enough 'representative examples' and did not want to 'furnish more' into their case.²⁵ Bloxham demonstrates this by highlighting the absence of Aktion Reinhard in the tribunals.²⁶

The work of Bloxham, Marrus and Reilly all demonstrate that information which emerged after the Second World War was a history which was constructed based on the necessities for a changed world and geo-political outlook as well as the political necessities of the allied powers. The Nuremberg tribunal may have established the figure of six million Jews murdered but historiographical debate is still rife over the value of the tribunal. While some historians state that the tribunal 'served the world reasonably well in 1945-1946',²⁷ others contend that it was 'the modern equivalent of a victory march'.²⁸ What is clear is that British images of the Nazi brutality centred on Belsen with Auschwitz and other death camps failing to capture the popular imagination along with the specific Jewish dimension of Nazi atrocities.²⁹ The Nuremberg tribunals established before the world the crimes of the Nazis, and the documents of the trials and transcripts have been an essential component of the historiography on the Holocaust which followed. Yet, as Kushner explains, both the British and American public 'soon tired of the meticulous attention to detail in the trials and there was relief when they

²² *Ibid.* p. 3.

²³ M. R. Marrus, 'The Holocaust at Nuremberg' in D. Cesarani (ed.), *Holocaust: Critical Concepts in Historical Studies* (London, Routledge: 2004), p. 158.

²⁴ D. Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial: War Crimes Trials and the Formation of Holocaust History and Memory* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 2001), p. 10.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 109-115.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 116-120.

²⁷ M. R. Marrus, 'The Holocaust at Nuremberg', pp. 181-182

²⁸ D. Stone, *Constructing the Holocaust*, p. 83.

²⁹ T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination: A Social and Cultural History* (London, Blackwell: 1994), p. 226.

finished.’³⁰ As such information about what had actually taken place was restricted and filtered through immediate post-war allied concerns: the contexts and historiography through which we now understand the Holocaust were absent. As Bloxham argues, the emphasis of the Nuremberg tribunals actually hampered historiography of the Holocaust and it is largely due to the work of academics that we have a fuller understanding of what actually took place during the Holocaust.³¹

This chapter will demonstrate that while information and attitudes regarding the Jewish dimensions of Nazi atrocities remained obfuscated in the minds of the British people, new ways of incorporating the information that was available (as well as continuing old practices and beliefs) were being explored by the far right and antisemites. The chapter will present a dialogue which was taking place over how to absorb the information from the Holocaust into the old and pre-existing structures of the British far right and Jewish conspiracy theories.

In 1945 each group and individual in the British far right had differing views on what the best course of action to achieve power was. In essence, there was no collective ‘far right’, or a far right which was self-aware. There was, however, a central nucleolus of thought the far right shared. The common denominators in this grouping were nationalistic tendencies, coupled with a dislike of democratic principles, xenophobia and conspiratorial views of the Jewish population in Britain and the world. It was these denominators which shaped what the Second World War had actually been about in far-right thought. These terms are effective markers which identify the groups which were most prone to denial of the Holocaust, and as such can be expressed as the ‘British far right’. This does not mean that other individuals did not share similar sentiments or that disbelief and denial did not, and could not, belong to other political groupings. As Tony Kushner illustrates, the left-wing *Socialist Appeal*, claimed during the war, that the numbers of atrocities committed against Jews had been exaggerated and even after the war when the magazine admitted the scale of atrocities, it focused on the German working classes as the real victims of the Nazis’ terror.³² Therefore in order to understand the way in which denial was incorporated into the British far right it is essential to recognise that members or individuals drawn to such thought and ideologies were still trying to make sense of what had taken place, and how to coordinate their responses to it in relation to preordained far-right axioms.

Arnold Spencer Leese

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ D. Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial*. Introduction.

³² T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination*, p. 216, n. 27.

Arnold Leese was born in Lytham in Lincolnshire in 1878. Leese's early life is well documented as is his awareness of, and conversion to, Jewish conspiracy theories and fascism.³³ In his autobiography, *Out of Step: Events in the Two Lives of an Anti-Jewish Camel Doctor*, published in 1951, Leese gives a detailed account of his 'two lives', the first being his time as a veterinary surgeon and the second 'life' beginning during the 1920s when he neared retirement. It is obviously Leese's political career which has relevance for this chapter or his 'second life' as he dubbed it. In 1924 Leese was elected as a fascist councillor in Stamford, Lincolnshire, where he had a private veterinary practice, but he seemed to have very little enthusiasm for democratic politics calling it 'dull work' and remarked 'what utter humbug the democratic vote really is; many people, I knew, voted for me because I had cured their pigs or pets and without the slightest idea what I stood for.'³⁴ Leese remained a councillor for three years before moving to London. It was during this time he began to move in 'fascist circles' in London and adopted a staunchly fanatical antisemitic stance. In his biography, Leese details how he was introduced to antisemitism and tutored by a man named Arthur Kitson (a friend he met in Stamford while running his private practice) and members of The Britons Society in London:

Arthur Kitson had introduced me to the Jewish Menace, of which hitherto I had no real knowledge. ... He introduced me to a little Society called "The Britons" ... founded by the now well-known anti-Jewish pioneer, the late H. H. Beamish. From them I got a copy of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, in which is concentrated the main outline of the Jewish Plot for World Domination. Everything in this little book rang true; I simply could not put it down until I had finished it. When I came to investigate further, I realised how little information was really available for detailed study of the subject; want of knowledge among the public was the result of a deliberate conspiracy of Jewish silence; I determined to break that silence and to make the knowledge public property ... I have been conducting a research on the Jew Menace ever since, and I wish here to emphasise that I have done it in the same scientific spirit as when I was investigating camel diseases in the world's deserts.³⁵

Leese points to this time as his 'political awakening' and as his 'Damascus moment' over 'what was going on behind the political scenery'.³⁶ Leese's use of his 'methodology' or 'scientific spirit' is significant. Leese was suggesting that his 'scientific' 'methodology' or explanations of past and present society could be achieved, something echoed by later Holocaust deniers in

³³ For information regarding Leese's early life and career as a veterinary surgeon see: A. Leese, *Out Of Step: Events in The Two Lives of an Anti-Jewish Camel Doctor* (Hollywood, Sons of Liberty: 1951), pp. 1-46.

³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 49.

³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 48.

³⁶ *Ibid*.

their own methodologies in which they attempt to present a scholastic frame work. Leese political awakening also shares a similar pedagogical tone with the work of Ratcliffe because both men sought to enlighten the populace by making knowledge of the Jewish conspiracy 'public property'.

In the historiography of British Fascism Leese's interwar activities are well documented and provide further evidence of how Leese wanted to teach the public about the prevalence of what he perceived as a Jewish conspiracy in control of society.³⁷ In 1928 he left Lincolnshire and moved to Guilford, he then founded the Imperial Fascist League (IFL) and this organisation would be the focus of his political ambitions until he was interned in 1940. In 1929 Leese founded the *Fascist* newspaper in which he would peddle his antisemitic beliefs and by 1930 he was considered the sole leader and 'guiding force' behind the IFL.³⁸ Leese never intended the IFL to become a major political force, rather preferring to see it as an elite organisation for training 'Jew-wise' anti-Jewish propagandists. Essentially Leese's organisation and publications (before and after the war) were aimed at removing what he saw as a veil over the eyes of the British population regarding Jewish control of politics, economics and society. In this regard Leese bore an overt similarity to Julius Streicher: trying to transmit antisemitic ideas to what they perceived as an 'unknowing' public. Leese commented in *Gothic Ripples* that he found *Der Stürmer* 'accurate and reliable'.³⁹ That Leese could read German and used Nazi propaganda to inform his own arguments demonstrated how post war far right arguments were drawn from a Nazi school of thought.

Prior to his internment under defence regulation 18b, Leese was put on trial for seditious libel and public mischief in 1936 for publishing an article in *The Fascist* magazine on the subject of Jewish ritual murder (again something found in *Der Stürmer*).⁴⁰ Leese was acquitted on the charge of libel but convicted on public mischief but because he refused to pay a fine he was sentence to six months in prison. After his release from prison, he published *My Irrelevant Defence: Meditations Inside Gaol and Out: On Ritual Murder*, a lengthy treatise in which Leese claimed that Jewish control of money had allowed the clandestine ritual of Jews murdering Christian children to take place. *My Irrelevant Defence* presented various 'examples' of Jewish

³⁷ See: R. Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain*, pp. 35-67; R. Thurlow, *Fascism in Modern Britain*, pp. 54- 60; J. Morell, 'Arnold Leese and the Imperial Fascist League: The Impact of Racial Fascism' in K. Lunn and R. C Thurlow (eds)*British Fascism* (London, Croom Helm: 1980), pp. 57-77 and M. Pugh, *Hurrah for the Blackshirts!: Fascists and Fascism in Britain Between the Wars* (London, Pimlico: 2006), pp. 29, 69-71.

³⁸ R. Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain*, p. 41.

³⁹ A. Leese, *Gothic Ripples*, No. 23 (22nd September 1946), p. 1.

⁴⁰ For the impact of this trial on other far-right publications and British government responses to the trial see chapter one, p. 82.

ritual murder had taken place.⁴¹ The document consisted of nearly seventy pages and demonstrated the fanatical and extreme position which Leese adopted in regards to the Jewish faith. In a particularly offensive outburst, he likened the Talmud to a drainage system claiming 'I smell the bad smells and remain aloof.'⁴² Leese continued to publish *Fascist* magazine until 1940 and in various issues outlines ideas regarding solutions to the 'Jewish Problem' in the United Kingdom and Europe. In the July issue of *The Fascist* in 1936, Leese called for the 'killing', 'sterilisation' or 'segregation' of Jews as a solution to the 'Jewish problem'.⁴³ Leese remained unconvinced of any information that was published in relation to the Jews of Britain and Europe and made his irrational views apparent in the December 1937 issue of *The Fascist*. In that issue he stated, 'A safe rule where Jewish propaganda is concerned is to multiply or divide their figures by ten, at least, before accepting them as the basis for discussion.'⁴⁴ This mistrust of Jews would continue throughout his life, and provided the basis for how he would view the atrocities against the Jews in occupied Europe and explains why denial rather than celebration of the Holocaust fitted more neatly into his conspiratorial view of the world.

Leese was arrested on the 9 November 1940 under defence regulation 18b, and interned in Brixton Prison. While in prison, he attempted to go on hunger strike but the action received little publicity.⁴⁵ Leese's biography documents his time in prison and laboured his contempt at being interned without trial which was expressed by his repeated destruction of his cell and refusal to abide by prison rules.⁴⁶ Leese was imprisoned for just over three years and was officially released on 2 February 1944 on health grounds.⁴⁷ His activities after his imprisonment will now be discussed in detail. Leese did not begin to publish immediately after his release from prison as he was recovering from surgery.

The Publications of Leese in the Aftermath of War and Genocide

The publications of Leese after 1945 are significant because he had been silenced during the war; he had made no comment on the atrocities against the Jews in Europe or on the conduct of the war itself. This section will review how Leese critiqued and formulated arguments in relation to the Nuremberg trials that corresponded to his ideological position and beliefs. It

⁴¹ A. Leese, *My Irrelevant Defence: Meditations Inside Goal and Out: On Ritual Murder* (London, I.F.L. Printing Company: 1938), pp. 12-34.

⁴² *Ibid*, p. 4.

⁴³ A. Leese. *The Fascist*, (July, 1936).

⁴⁴ A. Leese. *The Fascist*, (December, 1937).

⁴⁵ A. Leese, *Out Of Step, Op. Cit.*, pp. 64-66.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 66.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 67.

will review the direct (and indirect) responses of Leese to Nazi atrocities against the Jews and how he sought to incorporate this information into his ideology.

A focus on Leese's thesis that the Second World War was a *Jewish war of survival* will be the prime gateway into understanding how he incorporated the Nazi genocide of the Jews into his mental landscape. It will show how, in the immediate aftermath of what we now call the Holocaust, Leese accepted the reports which were emerging from Europe and the Nuremberg tribunals and sought to justify the crimes in line with his belief that, far from being a war between nations and ideologies, the Second World War had been an actual war waged between Nazism and Jews. Leese would argue that Britain and the United States had been brought into the war by the Jews to destroy Nazism and the Aryan race and secure 'Jewish world domination'. Leese however would later recant these views and deny the actuality of the Holocaust and label it as part of the Jewish conspiracy and Jewish propaganda.

Leese and the Nuremberg Tribunals

Historically, the Nuremberg tribunals have often been associated with 'victors' justice' and as such have become a preoccupation of Holocaust deniers.⁴⁸ By criticising the tribunal, deniers have historically sought to claim that Allied crimes were not punished and attempted to cast doubt on the evidence submitted or claim that the tribunals were run by Jews.⁴⁹ While Nuremberg remains one of the bastions in the deniers' arguments regarding the facts that relate to the Holocaust, legitimate historians and philosophers of law have attacked the Tribunals too. It is essential to separate between genuine criticism and those who seek to use valid criticism as a starting point for historical revisionism. This is complicated by the volume of literature which was published in the immediate aftermath of the trial and appreciating that many of those who campaigned against the trials 'showed little or no concern for the crimes

⁴⁸ D. E. Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (New York, The Free Press: 1993), p. 22.

⁴⁹ For examples of this see: D. Irving, *Nuremberg: The Last Battle* (London, Focal Point Publications: 1996) pp. 99-101 in which Irving states 'A few days before leaving for London Jackson visited F.B.I. officials in New York on June 11 1945. Here he had, probably not at his own wish, his first meeting with several powerful Jewish organisations who had already made quite clear to him they wanted a hand in running the trial.' Irving goes on to question the statistics of the 'six million figure'. See also R Harwood, *Nuremberg And Other War Crimes: A New Look* (Ladbroke: Chapel Ascote: 1978), p. 59, in which Harwood claims, 'Since Jews represented only a tiny proportion of the population, it would seem very peculiar indeed that so many of them were involved with Nuremberg. Such a realisation immediately raises the question of who the real instigators of the trials were. Churchill wanted the Nazi leaders put up against a wall. Stalin wanted 50,000 put up against a wall [...] It was only the Americans who were pushing for the trials. They conceptualised them. They planned them. They arranged them. And the American Presidential Adviser (to both Roosevelt and Truman) was none other than Samuel Rosenman, yet another Jew.'

investigated' and that by 'paying lip service to the theoretical desirability of the prosecution' it allowed 'campaigners to claim that their objections were not an effort to minimise or deny Nazi brutality.'⁵⁰

Many examples of this type of literature are seen during this period. To take one example Montgomery Belgion's 1946 book, *Epitaph on Nuremberg*. In the book Belgion highlights the crimes of the allies (such as the Katyn massacre and the Allied carpet bombing of German cities) which he considered to have been ignored by the media.⁵¹ Belgion's thesis was received with mixed reviews and demonstrates the varied public and academic opinion which related to the Nuremberg trials and its role in delivering justice.⁵² Belgion was not alone in his criticism of the Nuremberg tribunals and other individuals also published work along the same lines.⁵³ Other post-war crime trials also attracted condemnation, such as the trial of Field Marshal Eric von Manstein, which was led by Maurice Hankey.⁵⁴ These types of tracts however should not always be seen as revisionist texts, although it noteworthy that, 'the murder of European Jews was almost entirely marginalised within their narratives.'⁵⁵ For the purposes of this thesis it is essential to acknowledge two points about these types of critiques of post-war justice. First, that the arguments contained in them were 'particularly susceptible to the world view of fascist apologists for Nazi Germany.'⁵⁶ Second, the trials of Manstein and early release of other German war criminals (for instance, Albert Kesselring and Nikolaus von Falkenhorst) were inherently political. They were a deliberate attempt by the British government to rewrite the Second World War and stemmed from a desire to create closer ties with West Germany during the onset of the Cold War and ultimately undermined the process of punishing war criminals.⁵⁷

⁵⁰ T. Lawson, *The Church of England and the Holocaust, Christianity, Memory and Nazism* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), p 152.

⁵¹ M. Belgion, *Epitaph on Nuremberg* (London, Falcon Press: 1946), p. 21.

⁵² See: H. Becker, 'Review: Victors' Justice: A Letter Intended to Have Been Sent to a Friend Recently in Germany by Montgomery Belgion', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, (Vol. 266: 1949), pp. 215-216 and W. A. Everitt, 'Review: Victors' Justice: A Letter Intended to Have Been Sent to a Friend Recently in Germany. By Montgomery Belgion' *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, (Vol. 25, No. 4: 1949), p. 522.

⁵³ See: R. Grenfell, *Unconditional Hatred: German War Guilt and Future of Europe* (Michigan, Devin-Adair: 1954); L. Hart, *The Other Side of The Hill Germany's Generals. Their Rise and Fall, With Their Own Account Of Military Events 1939-1945* (London, Cassel, 1948).

⁵⁴ For more information regarding the Manstein trial see: D. Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial*, pp. 164-166, T. Lawson, *The Church of England and the Holocaust*, p 50-59 and G. Macklin, *Very Deeply Dyed in Black: Sir Oswald Mosley and the Resurrection of British Fascism after 1945* (London: I B Tauris: 2007), pp 127-129.

⁵⁵ T. Lawson, *The Church of England and the Holocaust*, p 165.

⁵⁶ G. Macklin, *Very Deeply Dyed in Black*, p. 133.

⁵⁷ See: D. Bloxham, 'Punishing German Soldiers during the Cold War: The Case of Erich von Manstein', *Patterns of Prejudice*, (Vol. 33, No. 4: 1999), pp. 25-45.

Thus the far-right could use these examples to support their arguments that post-war justice had been corrupt and emblematic of a covert conspiracy.

Leese's perspective on the Allied victory against Nazi Germany and his critique of post-war justice was used as a building block to suggest that Jewish conspiracy was at play. Leese attacked the Nuremberg tribunal from several directions. *The Jewish War of Survival* displayed how anti-Nuremberg literature was particularly suited to the way in which Leese viewed the world.⁵⁸ Leese appropriated the arguments put forth by men like Belgion and injected them with his far-right and antisemitic ideology. In practical terms the arguments were used to bolster the ideology Leese wanted to project and thus he rewrote his history of the Second World War accordingly. From a historical and analytical point of view Leese's arguments represented the introductory incarnation of the methods that would lead to historical 'revision' of the Second World War along far-right lines of thought. It was an example of the early incarnations of 'piggy-backing' on legitimate debates that were taking place over the validity of the Nuremberg tribunals.⁵⁹ This use of legitimate arguments, or rather more precisely, appropriating genuine debates and infecting them with a far-right or Holocaust denial ideology would become a stock tool of later Holocaust deniers.⁶⁰ Leese's publication was initially not widely circulated due to a paper shortage at the end of the Second World War and only around two-hundred copies were published. However, Leese would attempt to have the publication printed in the United States of America, and would offer free copies of his publication *Gothic Ripple* in exchange for the return of old copies of *The Jewish War of Survival* in order to increase its circulation.⁶¹

In *The Jewish War of Survival*, Leese placed the blame for the Second World War firmly on world Jewry. In the introduction Leese signified the main argument and theme of the book 'this War was Jewish and has never had any other object than the salvation of the Jews from Hitler.'⁶² The work was a staunch and unrelenting defence of Hitler, in which Leese boasted in the chapter titles, 'Hitler always knew his real enemy', 'the Jews declare war', 'how Britain was egged on to make war' and 'the Jewish war.' These comments bore all the hallmarks of Nazi propaganda, and given that Leese stated that he found *Der Stürmer* to be reliable, it is

⁵⁸ A. Leese, *The Jewish War of Survival* (Gilford, Self-published: 1945).

⁵⁹ For explanation of 'piggy backing' see introduction, and R. Eaglestone, *Postmodernism and Holocaust Denial* (Cambridge, Icon Books: 2001), p. 18.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 18-21.

⁶¹ See: Letter to the Attorney General dated 28th February 1947: HO 45/24968 and A. Leese, *Gothic Ripples* No. 26 (27th October 1946).

⁶² A. Leese, *The Jewish War of Survival* (Gilford, Self-published: 1945), Preface.

probable this influenced his thinking. The appropriation of this view of the war as the product of Jewish conspiracy signifies the Nazi antecedents of British far right attitudes.

Leese cited many 'examples' of Jews declaring war against Germany, from reports in the *Jewish Chronicle* and other newspapers before the war. Leese argued that statements he cited (often taken out of context) amounted to a pronouncement of war by the Jews against Germany. Below is one example used by Leese to validate his claims:

The forces of reaction are being mobilized. A combination of England, France and Russia will sooner or later bar the triumphant march of the success-crazed Führer. Either by accident or by design a Jew has come to the position of foremost importance in each of these nations.⁶³

The Jewish War of Survival and its arguments would form the backbone of the arguments of Leese in relation to the causes of the Second World War. These arguments would also be used by later far right deniers and demonstrate Leese influence and lineage over the forms their denial took.⁶⁴ The pamphlet typified an attempt to refashion the history of the war which had just taken place. Just as the Allied powers sought to recast the Second World War according to their own political imperatives, Leese too was searching for meaning and building an understanding of the recent past. His reconstruction of the past and causes of the war were inevitably guided by his own world view, and his preoccupation with what he perceived as the 'Jew[ish] menace' in society.⁶⁵

What is particularly poignant about *The Jewish War of Survival* is its lack of attention to the Nazi atrocities. This is not surprising given that Leese's aim was to rehabilitate Hitler and Nazism, yet the silences remain particularly pertinent and prominent. In the entire document only one reference was made to the extermination of the Jews, and it was buried in an appendix. Leese simply wrote, 'who can the Jews blame other than themselves for all that has happened to them in Europe?'⁶⁶ Leese writes this after quoting Theodore N. Kaufman's work *Germany Must Perish* in which Kaufman calls for the sterilisation of Germans. Kaufman's work was widely published in Germany by the Goebbels propaganda machine to 'prove' to the German population the existence of a Jewish plot to destroy Germany. Kaufman's book did not receive any particular attention outside of Germany and reviews were unfavourable.⁶⁷ Yet Leese took

⁶³ *Ibid*, p. 47.

⁶⁴ For examples of future deniers using arguments similar to Leese see below, pp. 141-142, 148 -150, 159, 162, 163, 169, 174, 189, 202.

⁶⁵ A. Leese, *Out of Step*, p. 48.

⁶⁶ A. Leese, *The Jewish War of Survival*, p. 65.

⁶⁷ For More information on *Germany Must Perish* see: B. Lang, *Philosophical Witnessing: The Holocaust as Presence* (New England, Brandeis University Press: 2009), pp 125-138.

Kaufman's threat seriously because it suited his ideological perspectives. The book added 'weight' to his own ideas about the role of Jews, both in society and in creating the Second World War. For Leese it provided a perfect example of his belief that Jews sought to destroy the Aryan race and thus, from his point of view, validated what had happened to the Jews under Nazism. Leese's use of Kaufman works demonstrates his continued use of Nazi propaganda and the strong connection to Nazi far right thought.⁶⁸ The Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels had Kaufman's book published in a print run of five million copies.⁶⁹

The careful selection of sources was also very apparent in Leese's critique of the Nuremberg Trials. Leese cites many quotations and publications from individuals who attack the Allied forces and governments for their war crimes which were ignored. In one example Leese quoted from Edgar L Jones, a soldier and correspondent in the Far East:

We Americans have the dangerous tendency in our international thinking to take a holier-than-thou attitude toward other nations [...] What kind of war do civilians suppose we fought, anyway? We shot prisoners in cold blood, wiped out hospitals ... We topped off our saturation bombing and burning of enemy civilians by dropping atomic bombs on two nearly defenceless cities, thereby setting an all-time record for instantaneous mass slaughter.⁷⁰

Leese went on to state, 'as victors we are privileged to try our defeated opponents for their crimes against humanity; but we should be realistic enough to appreciate that if we were on trial for breaking international laws, we should be found guilty on a dozen counts.'⁷¹ These examples demonstrate a propensity by Leese towards the arguments of men like Belgium, Russell Grenfell and Liddell Hart. The majority of Leese's arguments in *The Jewish War of Survival*, however, centred on the Jews as the main cause of the Second World War and demonstrates its fundamental nature as a revisionist tract and divorces him from legitimate criticisms of the Nuremberg tribunals. Leese wanted to rewrite the history of the build up to the Second World War based on his rooted belief that Jewish control of the world had brought about the war against Hitler. He attacked the idea that Britain went to war to defend Poland, claiming that it was inconceivable to see Britain declaring war to guarantee Poland's independence without 'Jewish money' controlling the decision.⁷² Furthermore, he argued that

⁶⁸ Jeffery Herf demonstrates how extracts from Kaufman's book were published in the German Newspapers, *Die Frankfurter Zeitung*, *Münchener Neuesten Nachrichten*, *Der Stürmer*, and *Das Reich*. See: J. Herf, *The Jewish Enemy Nazi Propaganda During World War Two and The Holocaust* (Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press: 2006) p. 111.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 112.

⁷⁰ A. Leese, *The Jewish War of Survival*, p. 17.

⁷¹ *Ibid*.

⁷² *Ibid*, p. 5.

Jewish power was determined to destroy Hitler and as such forced Hitler to declare war against international Jewry. Leese stated that prior to the outbreak of war, '[w]ar, had been decreed by international Jewish influences and nothing could stop it. These influences were able to fasten upon the politicians' the catch-cry that no one could possibly trust Hitler or have any dealings with him. He was to be regarded as a pariah.'⁷³ Leese's view that the war was a product of Jewish control was a view propagated by Hitler. After invading Poland on a fabricated pretext of Polish aggression on 1st September 1939, Hitler claimed that Britain's declaration of war was evidence that 'our Jewish-democratic world enemy [has] succeeded in inciting the English people to a state of war against Germany.'⁷⁴ This shared world view and conspiratorial outlook provided the prism through which far right 'histories' of the second world war would be written and demonstrates its overt lineage to Nazi redemptive antisemitic propaganda.

The main observation that can be drawn from *The Jewish War of Survival* is Leese's attempt to rewrite history based upon the conspiracy theory that Jews control the world's governments and finances. Hitler was painted as a man who was aware of the 'Jewish control of the world' and the war had been fought on the behalf of Jews by the Allied powers in order to allow Jews to regain control of the expanding Third Reich.⁷⁵ The book bore a strong resemblance to Nazi scholars' attempts to rewrite history based upon a Jewish conspiracy and the attempts of individuals to combat this control.⁷⁶

While *The Jewish War of Survival* could not be considered a pamphlet devoted to denying the destruction of the Jews under Nazi control, its central theme was devoted to exonerating Hitler and Germany by suggesting the war was the product of Jewish world control and Jewish desire to keep that control.⁷⁷ Leese was foregrounding the context through which any persecution of the Jews would be presented and filtered in order to either justify it or, as Leese would do later, deny it. What was taking place was a rewriting of the past in order to fulfil an ideological need in the present. Leese's treatise, it should be noted, was published before the

⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 37.

⁷⁴ Cited in J. Herf, *The Jewish Enemy*, p. 58.

⁷⁵ Leese sent a copy of *The Jewish War of Survival* to the defence council for Hermann Göring presumably believing it was a valid defence. See: A. Leese, *Gothic Ripples* No. 15 (10th May 1946).

⁷⁶ See: A. E. Steinweis, *Studying the Jew: Scholarly Antisemitism in the Third Reich* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press: 2006), pp. 92-122.

⁷⁷ Leese's rhetoric and theories in the book bear a striking similarity to the recorded conversations of Adolf Hitler. See: N. Cameron and R. H. Stevens (trans), *Hitler's Table Talk 1941-1944: His Private Conversations* (New York, Enigma: 2000). Leese's arguments about why the war was lost and had been declared share similar characteristics to those mentioned by Hitler in *The Testament of Adolf Hitler The Bormann documents February -April 1945, Introduction by Hugh Trevor-Roper* (London: 1961).

trial commenced, which may explain the absence direct reference to the murder of the Jews of Europe. Yet when *Gothic Ripples*, Leese's regularly produced magazine, is examined it is clear that he made several references to the murdered Jews of Europe.⁷⁸

In *Gothic Ripples*, Leese followed the Nuremberg tribunals avidly and featured a regular section dubbed 'Notes on Nuremburg'. Leese continued the arguments found in *The Jewish War of Survival*, that the war was a product of Jewish power and that Jews had fought the war to destroy the Aryan race, defeat Hitler and Nazi Germany which sought to remove 'Jewish power'. Leese used the trial to further his belief that the world was controlled by Jews and followed his conclusions from *The Jewish War of Survival* that the trial was a product of 'naked Jewish vengeance.'⁷⁹In a remarkable statement which outlines the intent and thought behind Leese's writing and his notion of 'Jewish vengeance', he wrote, 'speeches by the Prosecuting council at Nuremberg show plainly that the real offence of the prisoners against the Allies was their policy to finish the Jewish menace by extermination methods. The war itself was a Jewish one of Survival and the Allies were forced into it to do their Jewish masters' work!'⁸⁰ Leese made similar statements in which he claimed 'on the 9th of April 1946, the freemason Jackson, prosecuting council for the U.S.A. ... declared, "we are not charging the men in the dock with ideologies but with the murder of 4 or five million Jews" Yes, readers, that it is all about -the War was Jewish.'⁸¹ Leese's statements indicate how information of the Holocaust was initially absorbed into his world view: he was not condemning the crimes, nor was he suggesting that the crimes had not taken place. The crimes were, for Leese, an expression of 'casualties' of a war brought about by Jews against the Aryan race and for whom Leese had no sympathy. For Leese, the trial represented Jewish victors' justice, the justice of those who he perceived as 'winning the war.'

In 1946 Leese wrote:

The main result is that Europe is dead and gone, never to arise again. Only one race, the Aryan or Nordic, can make a civilisation worth having; history has proved this ... there are not enough Aryans to repopulate Europe in sufficient proportion to regenerate it. The Jews know this well enough. The ridiculous-seeming demand for unconditional surrender ensured that the greatest number of Aryans in Europe would be killed and that the results of their great civilisation should also be destroyed - the finest in Europe. A

⁷⁸ For an example of the presentational style of Leese's *Gothic Ripples* see Appendix Two.

⁷⁹ A. Leese, *Gothic Ripples*, No. 9 (3rd January 1946), p. 1.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, No. 21 (8th September 1946), pp. 1-2.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, No. 14 (11th April 1946), p. 3.

dead set has been made upon the Aryan people, because without them, the Jews' road to world domination is clear of obstruction.⁸²

This description demonstrates a clear Darwinian and racial thinking that was a key component of Nazi Ideology. Leese's view that because the Aryan race had been depleted as a result of the war Europe was 'dead and gone' and could not achieve greatness again was a view that was shared by Hitler. In his memoirs Albert Speer's recounts a conversation he had with Hitler at the close of the war in which the Führer stated, 'if the war is lost the people will be lost also. It is not necessary to worry about what the German people will need for survival ... for the nation has proven to be weaker ... in any case only those that are inferior will remain after this struggle.'⁸³ It is clear that Leese viewed the war through the same Darwinian lens as Hitler and as a result he saw the war as a great defeat. His perception that unconditional surrender was part of a Jewish plan to ensure world domination shows how far right narratives of the war would remain locked within a specifically Nazi prism of the war as a Darwinian struggle and of racial strife.

Leese's appraisal of the war along racial lines demonstrates his early rationale in relation to the reports of the murder of European Jewry. The extermination of Jews to which Leese referred was not glorified, nor was it central to his arguments, because Leese was in mourning for the loss of National Socialism 'the finest civilisation Europe has ever known.'⁸⁴ For Leese the murder of the Jews, was their own responsibility; it was the Jews who had declared war on Germany and this was why the Jews had been exterminated by the Nazis.

Leese's initial responses to the genocide show how they were a product of pre-existing radical far-right thought. The news of what had taken place in Nazi occupied Europe and liberated camps was to formulate an argument in which the Jews had been exterminated because they were 'enemies'. This belief had been part of Leese's mind set before and during the war and his genocidal views on the Jews were evidenced in his pre-war *Fascist* magazine. Leese could therefore grasp the concept of murdering and exterminating Jews, and indeed saw it as a viable and legitimate course of action. Thus explaining why the news of 'extermination', as Leese reported it in *Gothic Ripples*, was met with approval.

This approval of why Jews should be exterminated was rooted in the redemptive nature of Leese's antisemitism and world view. What is perverse about Leese's writings on the subject is the way in which the crimes he wanted to justify (or later deny) were marked with a distinctly

⁸² *Ibid*, p. 1.

⁸³ A. Speer, *Inside the Third Reich* (London, Phoenix: 1995), p. 588.

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, No. 22 (15th September 1946), p. 2.

Jewish dimension. Where the British government were doing all they could to play down the Jewish proportions of the Nazi crimes in favour of universalising suffering, Leese was giving the crimes the Jewish dimensions which would later be established by historians and the world at large. It is not to say that Leese recognised there was a distinct Jewish dimension to the *crimes* committed. His conspiratorial view of the world predisposed him to looking for Jewish news stories or any information which related to Jews in society. Therefore every mention of Nazi brutality or crimes was marked with a partiality for Jewish victims. Leese did not dwell on other victims of Nazi terror. For Leese the 'stories' which related to 'extermination' were wholly Jewish 'stories'. This is not an isolated finding, as illustrated in the previous chapter; Alexander Ratcliffe also highlighted the Jewish nature of genocide. This was a facet found across the British far right and demonstrates the group's predilection for attacking all aspects of Jewish life, culture and tragedy. Leese approved of the crimes because, to him, they were an expression of the type of 'solution' he envisaged for destroying the Jewish race.

The implicit approval, acceptance or understanding of the extermination of the Jews from Leese's perspective is clearly not Holocaust denial in a familiar or contemporary sense. Rather it should be labelled Holocaust celebration or Holocaust approval. Yet Leese did go on to deny the Holocaust. This transference from approval to denial did not involve a complete recalibration of the narratives that Leese had established. The war could still be the product of Jewish power, but it did not have to result in a genocidal reckoning on the part of the Nazis against the Jews of Europe. The mercurial nature of the Jewish conspiracy theory could easily adapt to a change of conclusion about what had happened to the Jews of Europe. This was because the forms which 'Jewish power' took were ill-defined because of their 'hidden' and clandestine nature. The anti-rational nature of the conspiracy provided the mechanism by which simultaneous and incongruous far-right narratives about cause and result of the second world could coalesce together. For Leese the Nazi murder of the Jews was both justified, because they were the enemy that had brought war to Germany, and a Jewish fabrication to undermine the legitimacy of National Socialism. This conversion from justification to denial is evidenced in Leese periodical *Gothic Ripples*.

The first direct comment he made on the liberation of the death camps came in the first issue of *Gothic Ripples*. In this edition Leese provides an early incarnation of using Allied bombing to justify arguments about the validity of the conditions found in the liberated camps, or rather he used the Allied bombing to suggest that conditions were so abominable as a result of the bombing *not* German brutality. Under the title of 'Yes? but who did it?' Leese states:

The hate propaganda against Germany is reaching its climax, and we are daily regaled by reports of eye-witnesses about the starvation of occupants of internment camps in Germany. Now supposing Britain had been receiving the continuous bombing from the air of all bridges, marshalling-yards, railway centres, canals and other communications [...] what would conditions have been like here?

Leese's claim that the atrocity stories were the result of Allied bombing is a common theme in contemporary Holocaust denial literature. Leese sought a way to explain the reports which had been circulating in the newspapers, on film and on radio after the liberation of Belsen and Buchenwald. Yet, as the title of the article suggested Leese was not claiming that the conditions were false, rather that the culprits were not the Germans. He was trying to exonerate German war crimes by attributing them to Allied aggression. He went on to say that the consequence of the bombing was 'now seen (but apparently not recognised) in the starvation stories (fully illustrated for their Jewish propaganda value) advertised in our newspapers.'⁸⁵ Although Leese did not mention Jewish victims in the article, his suggestion that the accounts served 'Jewish propaganda' demonstrates the continued belief that the war was the product of Jewish power; that only a Jewish perspective was ever shown in the media because it was controlled by Jews and because the Jews had won the war.⁸⁶

Leese made a more direct reference to the number of Jews murdered in Nazi Europe in the second issue of *Gothic Ripples*. Quoting from an article by Alaric Jacob in the *Sunday Express* an exasperated Jacob notes how 'incredible' it is that antisemitism continues in Poland after 'millions of Jews have been slaughtered by the Germans.' Leese simply responded 'We agree that things should be better now.'⁸⁷ This statement, again, demonstrates that Leese agreed with the crimes committed against the Jews and suggests approval of the murder of the Jews of Europe. It provides further evidence of Leese's own genocidal thinking that he had expressed prior to the war and the redemptive nature of his antisemitism. Leese makes a further comment on this issue in his biography. In response to why he was interned under defence regulation 18b, Leese wrote, 'I admitted that I was anti-Jewish, and that I considered Hitler was right in the main, as I do now.'⁸⁸ This is again a typically vague response to the crimes of the Nazis in adding the postscript 'as I do now' he acknowledged and approved of

⁸⁵ A. Leese, *Gothic Ripples* No. 1. (22nd June 1945).

⁸⁶ Leese would make a similar claim in a letter to the right-wing British People Party newspaper *The People's Post*. Leese would claim that the majority of witnesses at Belsen, including British Personnel, were Jewish. See *The People's Post*, Vol, 2 No. 12 January 1946.

⁸⁷ A. Leese, *Gothic Ripples* No. 2. (20th July 1945).

⁸⁸ A. Leese, *Out Of Step*, p. 67.

both Hitler and the persecution of the Jews. It also highlights how he believed his imprisonment to be as a result of anti-Jewish sentiments.⁸⁹

This approval is found again in a later edition of *Gothic Ripples* in which Leese reviewed a book, *Failure at Nuremberg* by the research department of The British People Party. In the review he stated that the book was 'a valuable survey of the various circumstances which make this trial not a "trial."' Leese went on to state that he would not be stocking the book for his readers because he did not agree with two points in the book, first 'the Jewishness of the whole Trial [was] only vaguely hinted at' and second 'with the Jewish Extermination policy being labelled an Abomination or a Fearful Atrocity.'⁹⁰ Leese's critique of *Failure at Nuremberg* further demonstrates his commitment to the belief the extermination of the Jews was a positive outcome of the war. It also does give an intimation of how the 'Jewishness' of the trial would later serve as a mechanism by which he could later deny the genocide. Leese had stated that Nuremberg was the product of Jewish vengeance and therefore this perceived influence of Jewish power meant that any evidence from the trial could be rejected. Thus by labelling the trial as 'Jewish' Leese allowed himself a great degree of manoeuvrability to change his view about what had happened to the Jews of Europe.

Despite these examples of Leese approving of the Holocaust, his response was far from straightforward and further reading uncovers a more confusing picture. In another edition of *Gothic Ripples* under the title of 'Belsen Bunkum' Leese criticised the quality of evidence given in relation to the liberation of the Belsen concentration camp at the trial of SS men in Lüneburg in 1945. In the article Leese criticised the speculation of Brigadier Hughes who reported on a situation when food was distributed by the British Army to the victims of Belsen. He commented that the judges who were hearing the evidence relating to conditions and food distribution allowed 'flights of imagination' from the witness Hughes. The 'flights of imagination' relate to how the food was distributed in the Belsen camp. Hughes reports 'The food containers were taken into the compound but I imagine it was a free for all and the weakest could not attend.'⁹¹ Leese took issue with Hughes imagining what took place on distribution of the food to the starving inmates of Belsen. These kinds of linguistic game are seen in contemporary denial publications and require further analysis.

⁸⁹ Dan Stone reaches similar conclusions about this statement see: D. Stone, *Building Supermen: Nietzsche, Race and Eugenics in Edwardian and interwar Britain* (Liverpool, Liverpool University Press: 2002), pp. 54-55.

⁹⁰ A Leese, *Gothic Ripples* No. 26. (27th October 1946).

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, No. 4. (13th October 1945).

The article, which was only six lines long and on the front page of the issue, is illuminating for three reasons. First that Leese chooses to publish such a seemingly insignificant account demonstrates his fanatical, fastidious approach to exposing what he saw as a conspiracy. It is likely that he chose to publish this account because it was an account that he felt he could effectively argue against. The fact that the article occupies the front page but is only six lines in length demonstrates Holocaust deniers predilection for focusing on minute details and ignoring the wider context and conclusive evidence that the Holocaust took place.

Second, it reflects a common tactic of Holocaust deniers: to dismiss or attack eyewitness testimony. Leese, took issue with what Hughes 'imagined' happened, for Leese this was not empirical evidence and thus had to be dismissed and ridiculed. Leese's evidence was not empirical, but this dismissal and disavowal of eyewitness testimony is a common theme in denial and its presence in Leese's early work shows how it was inevitably predisposed to far-right and 'revisionist' thinking. It also shows how even immediate testimony at initial war crimes tribunals was dismissed by far-right individuals. Criticism of eyewitness testimony in Holocaust deniers' arguments is a point highlighted by Jean François Lyotard. Lyotard highlights that deniers will only accept the eyewitness testimony of someone who has lived through an event and was killed in the process; because such a person does not exist - evidently they are dead - they can continue to believe that such a person did not exist and thus the crime did not take place. If such a person does exist and has survived, they are either a liar, mistaken or their very survival proves that such crimes did not exist because the survivor continues to live today and was not murdered.⁹² Lyotard was referring to contemporary deniers' disbelief in the gas chambers at Auschwitz, yet it is still applicable to Leese's argument regarding 'Belsen bunkum'. Leese was unconvinced about the reliability of eyewitness testimony or the esteem given it in the British media. Leese was however not decrying eyewitness testimony in order to prove that the murder of the Jews had not taken place. Rather he was demonstrating how such trials of SS men represented 'victor's justice.'

Third, the presence of Belsen in the report supports the findings of Kushner, Reilly and Bloxham that the camps liberated by the west were more enmeshed in the mindset of the British public at the time. Leese's focus on the Belsen tribunals is indicative of the context in which the news regarding Nazi atrocities was absorbed. The Belsen tribunals had a prominent

⁹² J. F. Lyotard, *The Differend: Phases in Dispute* (Manchester, Manchester University Press: 1988), p. 14

place in the newspapers and occupied many column inches.⁹³ Therefore it is not surprising that Leese attacked such accounts and framed them as post-war Jewish retribution and vengeance and thus inherently unreliable. Leese did not mention other war crimes trials other than those established at Nuremberg. The trials of Auschwitz, Dachau and other war crimes were not mentioned by Leese. It was not that information about Auschwitz was not accessible to Leese; in fact, Auschwitz had been mentioned in relation to the Belsen tribunals Leese had commented on.⁹⁴ There is not a logical answer as to why this was but it can be supposed, given what we have seen of Leese, he did not want to dwell on the details of what was said at the tribunals but rather sought evidence to reveal that the trials were biased, negligent and inherently a product of Jewish vengeance. This hypothesis fits well into what is known of the methods of deniers, and far-right thought: evidence which does not fit into a given paradigm were ignored or rejected.

Leese did not comment directly on the information regarding the actual nature of the destruction of European Jewry, instead he chose to develop his theories about what the Second World War had meant in relation to his ideological perspectives. The murder of the Jews in Europe was approved of by Leese because of the context in which he situated their destruction: they were responsible for the war and, based on his readings of Theodore N. Kaufman, he believed the Jews had (and continued to do so) destroyed the Aryan race. The absence of any direct reference to what had taken place against the Jews or the suffering inflicted upon them was inherently a form of Holocaust denial, yet his taciturn approval of what had taken place renders the label denial problematic. Explaining his reluctance to detail the specifics of what 'extermination' actually meant may have been in part to his desire to avoid providing sympathy for the murdered Jews, but it seems more likely that Leese may have approved of the methods used. In an article published in 1953, Leese explained that he wished that figure of Jews murdered had been higher than; as long as the 'destruction was done in a humane manner' it was to the benefit of everyone.⁹⁵ Leese's words contain an echo of the final political testament of Adolf Hitler who claimed that Jews had been made to atone for their sins against the German people by 'more humane means'.⁹⁶

⁹³ For a select examples of mention of the Belsen Trial at Lüneburg see: *The Times*, (Wednesday, September 19th:1945),p. 3; *Ibid.*,(Thursday, September 20th: 1945), p. 3; *Ibid.*, (Friday, September 21st: 1945), p. 3; *Ibid.*, (Saturday, Sep 22: 1945) p. 3 and *Ibid.*, (Monday, Sep 24, 1945), p. 3.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, (Monday, Sep 24, 1945), p. 3.

⁹⁵ A. Leese, *Gothic Ripples* No. 96 (12th December 1953).

⁹⁶ I. Kershaw, *Hitler: 1936-1945, Nemesis* (London, Penguin: 2000), pp. 821-822.

It is clear that Leese's thinking was inherently genocidal and that he approved of the Nazis' Final Solution, but by 1953 Leese was no longer attempting to justify the crimes committed against the Jews of Europe, instead Leese turned to denial. Leese would not, or could not, remove his genocidal mentality towards the Jews and even in denying the Holocaust he would approve of a theoretical desirability of a Holocaust.

Leese finally explicitly confronted what had taken place against the Jews in the 1953, January issue of *Gothic Ripples*. He also acknowledged his own reluctance to confront the issue and for the first time included the figure of the six million dead, writing:

The fable of the slaughter of six million Jews by Hitler has never been tackled by *Gothic Ripples* because we take the view that we would have liked Hitler even better if the figure had been larger; [...] we believe that as long as the destruction was done in a humane manner, it was to be to the advantage of everyone if it had been true. However, it was not.⁹⁷

Leese qualified this statement with the following justification:

The *World Almanac*, 1947, quoted the American Jewish Committee as estimating the world's Jewish population in 1939 as about 15½ million . . . In 1948, the *New York Times* (Jew-owned) said that the world Jew population was between 15,700,000 and 18,600,000. So here is the simple subtraction sum: Jews in 1939: 15,500,000 Less Jews killed by Hitler: 6,000,000 Surviving Jews in 1948: 15,700,000 (or make it 18,600,000).⁹⁸

His simple mathematical sum⁹⁹ was the basis for his belief, and is one which is often cited by contemporary Holocaust deniers to assert that the murder of millions of Jews did not take place.¹⁰⁰ What was significant about Leese's direct comment on the fate of European Jewry is the relative ease from which he could switch from approval to denial. Two points should be made regarding this fact. First, this denial contained the overt and redemptive antisemitism which characterised his earlier writings on the 'extermination of Jews'. In denying the actual Holocaust he could still explicitly approve of a theoretical Holocaust which suited his ideologically driven redemptive antisemitism. Second, it demonstrates the fluidity of far-right thought and its ability to shift and change positions. Leese could absorb denial into the remit of his earlier work because it was predisposed to processing information regarding the Jews in

⁹⁷ A. Leese, *Gothic Ripples* No. 96 (12th December 1953).

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ It is possible that Leese harvested these figures from the work of Douglas Reed who quotes the same figures in 1951, see: D. Reed *Far and Wide* (London, J. Cape: 1951), pp 303-306. Reed will be discussed later in this chapter.

¹⁰⁰ This attempt to discredit the figure of six million is explored and rebuffed by John Zimmerman. See: J. C. Zimmerman, *Holocaust Denial: Demographics, Testimonies and Ideologies* (Maryland, University Press of America: 2000), pp. 3-52.

a conspiratorial framework. This was clearly evidenced when we recall his earlier pre-war comment in *The Fascist* magazine, in which he talked of randomly dividing numbers or multiplying numbers in regards to statistics which related Jewish news stories. Leese had built a 'history' of the Second World War around racial and conspiratorial lines. Therefore the structure which he had built could withstand the change of position from approval to denial. He had believed that Jewish propaganda and control had brought about the Second World War, and therefore it is possible to understand how any information about the Holocaust would also be viewed through this far-right, antisemitic prism. In other words, denial of the atrocities actually fitted more neatly into the conspiratorial view of the world he had constructed.

It is not entirely clear as to why Leese changed his position at this point. It may have been a simple matter of political expedience. It may have been because the position of denial fitted more cohesively into the narratives which he had adopted regarding World War Two. He may have adopted the position from other far-right commentators who had adopted denial into their political remit.

Understanding the history that Leese fabricated reveals much about his mentality. He had a pathological mistrust of Jews and as such he could not accept the reports of mass atrocity within the 'liberal' context in which they were presented to him. For Leese the Jews were not innocent victims, but rather the instigators of the Second World War. He therefore wrenched information from what he considered to be unfriendly 'liberal', 'democratic' or 'Jewish' contexts and transplanted it into a milieu which suited his ideologies and the axioms of his world view.

As shown in his work on Nuremberg, Leese believed that the trials were run by Jews in accordance with a Jewish agenda. They were an expression of Jewish vengeance after winning what he perceived as a 'Jewish war for survival' against Hitler, National Socialism and the Aryan and Nordic races. Initially, he greeted the persecution and extermination of Jews in Europe with approval, and incorporated this approval into his narratives over why the Jews had been exterminated. Leese did not however give any details about what he understood as the 'extermination', largely because he mistrusted the information which emerged from the newspapers and war crimes tribunals or he may have been reluctant to classify the crimes for fear of promoting Jewish victimhood. However it is clear that he understood that something apocalyptic had happened to the Jews of Europe, yet it was not for the dead Jews he mourned but rather the defeat of Nazism and the destruction of an Aryan race. Leese therefore provides

an understanding of how German National Socialist ideology may have interpreted its own defeat.¹⁰¹

Leese believed that the media was controlled by Jewish agents and was steadfast in his dismissal of newspapers or media outlets which had ever had a 'Jew' on the staff or had any affiliation with Jewish groups.¹⁰² Leese's mistrust of the media, war crimes tribunals and governments combined with the other 'histories' being written by his fellow far-right travellers goes some way in explaining why in the early 1950s, Leese adopted a prototypic Holocaust denial into his own 'history' of the Second World War. On close inspection of his views, we see how his conversion to denial was a relatively easy process which encompassed his mistrust of any information which was connected to Jewish populations, culture or religion. He could deny the actual Holocaust but approve of a notional Holocaust as a solution to what he perceived as the 'Jewish problem'. Leese's belief that a notional Holocaust would have been to the advantage of everyone supports Thurlow's assertion that he was the 'nearest equivalent to a British Hitler' or my own assertion he was closer in tone and motivation to Julius Streicher.¹⁰³

Leese shared the same desires as the Nazi hierarchy to rid Europe of Jews. In one issue of *Gothic Ripples* Leese spoke of the benefit of the Nazi plan to send the Jews of Europe to Madagascar.¹⁰⁴ Leese's redemptive view of a Europe rid of Jews was a common theme in his writing and was demonstrated in his lionisation of Edward I for his expulsion of the Jews in 1290.¹⁰⁵ His constant calls of 'all out' in relation to the Jews of Britain were a frequent theme in his writing, and Madagascar was his preferred destination for the Jews.¹⁰⁶

Leese's writings represent something akin to a British National Socialism. For Leese, 'Hitler was always right',¹⁰⁷ his views on Jews and his view of their control of Bolshevism and democracy were an overt and constant theme of his writing and bore remarkable similarity to those of

¹⁰¹ See: *The Testament of Adolf Hitler The Bormann documents February -April 1945*.

¹⁰² Leese's mistrust of the media is demonstrated in a pamphlet published just before the outbreak of war: A. Leese, *Jewish Press-Control* (London, I.F.L Printing Company [Third Edition]: 1939). In the pamphlet Leese demonstrates through examples how all newspapers are run or under the control of Jews. Some example are extremely flimsy for example when describing the *Yorkshire Post* he simply writes, 'from 1925-1936, the chief sub-editor was the Jew S. Salomon'; in Leese's fanatical view this made the paper 'under the influence of Jews' and untrustworthy.

¹⁰³ R. Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain*, pp. 203-205.

¹⁰⁴ A. Leese, *Gothic Ripples* No. 19 (15th August 1946). In the article, Leese does not reference the German plan to send Jews to Madagascar but bases his ideas on the research of his mentor and head of the Britons Society H. H. Beamish.

¹⁰⁵ A. Leese, *Gothic Ripples*, No. 20 (20th August 1946), p. 2.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, No. 13 (21st March: 1946), p. 1.

Hitler and Nazi ideology and Hitlerite conspiracy theory.¹⁰⁸ Contained within Leese's body of work, were the antecedents of a 'history' that would situate itself within the collective consciousness of the extreme, 'revolutionary', far right.¹⁰⁹ Leese criticism of Nuremberg as 'victors justice' and as being controlled by Jews; the notion that the Jews had declared war on Nazism and manipulated Britain into joining the war; the prominence of Jewish propaganda in the media during; the criticism of eyewitnesses; lamenting the loss of the Aryan race and the Nazi empire; the dismissal of the numbers killed during the Nazi persecution and murder of the Jews of Europe, would all be expanded on and adopted by later Holocaust deniers.

Leese represents the fundamental link between National Socialist ideology and the arguments contained in British far right Holocaust denial. The arguments coined by Leese were not simply an expression of a desire to whitewash the crimes of the Nazis they were, first and for most, a justification for the crimes against Jews. Leese's publications therefore signify the redemptive and antisemitic nature of denial. The ease with which Leese could transmogrify his approval of the Nazis' treatment of Jews to denial of the crimes - without having to change the fundamental arguments of the 'history' he had constructed around the Second World War - demonstrates how the wider history Leese sought to create was far more important to him. This new history of the Second World War amended the pre-existing, pre-war belief in a Jewish conspiracy. Furthermore, the ability to incorporate this new information demonstrates the malleability and ease at which Jewish conspiracy theories could be amended to incorporate any new significant event in world history. To Leese even if Jews had, or had not, been murdered they were still guilty of a conspiracy, be that engineering the Second World War for their own ends or fabricating genocide. As a result of his ferocious antisemitism he had no other prism from which he could view the Holocaust and the causes of the second world war. All the new information he assimilated confirmed his belief that the world was in the grip of a Jewish conspiracy.

Leese and other deniers in the far right

The above study of Leese demonstrates a fundamental, and deeply antisemitic man, who not only denied the mass murder but approved of the notion of a Holocaust. Is this seen in other far right groupings of the period or does Leese stand alone as a lunatic on the fringes of far-right thought? This section will survey two key individuals who approached the Nazi atrocities

¹⁰⁸ I. Kershaw, *Hitler: 1936-1945*, pp. 821-822.

¹⁰⁹ Lipstadt gives a comprehensive list of the arguments of denial and many of them correspond to those found in the publications of Leese. D. E. Lipstadt, 'Denial' in P. Hayes and J. K. Roth (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies* (London: Oxford University Press: 2010), pp. 560-561.

from a different trajectory from that of Leese. The first, Oswald Mosley, will be examined in regard to his responses to the Holocaust while trying to rebuild a political platform for himself and his new party - Union. The second, Douglas Reed, is considered in the light of his apolitical antisemitism and continued journalistic belief in a world Jewish conspiracy based on the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

Information regarding what we now call the Holocaust was disseminated and understood differently in the immediate post-war period. The stories of liberation of Nazi concentration camps and the Nuremberg tribunal's evidence may have attested to the reality of the crimes committed yet they remained 'drowned in greater flood of [other] accusations and crimes.'¹¹⁰ Bloxham offers us a way to understand what was taking place in relation to how the information from Nuremberg was absorbed in the immediate aftermath of the war, or rather, how it differs from contemporary understandings. Bloxham demonstrates clearly how 'judicial memory' was not 'collective memory', and that for every piece of information 'presented at Nuremberg and elsewhere another was missing, another concealed, another co-opted.'¹¹¹ As Bloxham opines, the tribunals need to be conceptualised in accordance with Allied occupation policy and political environments of the post war period. The persecution of the Jews was not a central tenet of war crimes trials and the crimes presented did not bare a direct relation to what had actually taken place. As Bloxham shows, the methods of murder were frequently and persistently misconstrued; gassing was given a central role as the main instrument for murder, yet the death camps of Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka were missing from the proceedings.¹¹² It is clear that the aims of the Allied powers was to isolate the criminal hierarchy of the Nazi government, and exonerate the German people in order to rehabilitate the German nation and population and find them a place in a post-war Europe.

Antisemitic writers and travellers of the far-right also had to adapt to the information which was emerging. While Nuremberg may not have given precedence to Jewish suffering or established accurate accounts of the fate that had befallen the Jews of Europe, the same cannot be said for far right commentaries of the tribunal. The ideological position of the far right, with its predisposed predilection for attacks on Jews, drove its members to study what had been reported about the fate of Jews. It is not surprising that the far right focused on the information which related to Jews because their ideologies were primarily driven by a belief in a Jewish conspiracy and antisemitism. Thus perversely crimes against Jews and the 'Jewish

¹¹⁰ D. Bloxham quoting M. Marrus, see: D. Bloxham, *Genocide on Trial*, p. 1.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 2.

¹¹² *Ibid*, p. 116-118.

nature' were singled out because they *were* Jewish tragedies and attacked because they related to Jewish victims. The attitudes and responses adopted by other far-right groups and individuals need to be assessed in order to ascertain how Leese's perspectives on the Second World War fit into this context.

As explained in the introduction, Oswald Mosley the pre-war leader of the British Union of Fascists (BUF), does not feature prominently in the thesis. This is due to his lack of direct influence on the main parties and groups of the British far right and because his particular post-war brand of fascism was more predicated on European unity than a particularly British centric political platform.¹¹³ As former far right figure, turned Searchlight undercover mole, Ray Hill reports, 'with the demise of the Mosley tradition, the reins of the far right were taken over by extremists who came from a quite different tradition.' These extremists were Arnold Leese and later Colin Jordan and John Tyndall and the different tradition was that of German National Socialism, rather than Mosley's adherence to a Mussolini style of fascism.¹¹⁴ As Macklin's research demonstrates, 'Mosley's attempts to revive British Fascism after 1945 were an unmitigated failure'.¹¹⁵ Far right groups and parties which placed 'Britain first' at the centre of their political platform reaped more (albeit limited) electoral benefits than Mosley.¹¹⁶

Dispute Mosley's lack of influence on the course of post-war far right British politics, his reaction to the destruction of the Jews of Europe warrants comment. While Macklin identifies that Mosley helped 'lay one of the cornerstones of late twentieth century political antisemitism: Holocaust denial.'¹¹⁷ Mosley's influence in relation denial and the British far right requires further discussion. Mosley's influence on the direction of far right politics was minimal, yet the arguments he disseminated do share the same characteristics espoused by Leese and Ratcliffe. For all adherents of far right ideologies Holocaust denial was a political necessity. It pandered to their confirmation bias and supported their preconceived notions of Jewish duplicity and conspiracy. Denial of Nazi atrocities was therefore a shared objective. Mosley reacted to the news of concentration camps in a more refined and calculated way than that of Leese.

In his 1968 autobiography, Mosley recounts how he absorbed the news of the crimes:

¹¹³ G. Macklin, *Very Deeply Dyed in Black*, p. 5.

¹¹⁴ R. Hill, A. Bell, *The Other Face Terror: inside Europe's Neo-Nazi Network* (London, Grafton: 1988), pp. 76-77.

¹¹⁵ G. Macklin, *Very Deeply Dyed in Black*, p. 140

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 115-116.

I personally did not believe it at first [...] how did it happen? - The question points to one of the tragic mysteries of history, but the fact remains. It in no way affects the enormity of the crime whether 12,000,000 Jews were killed, as was alleged at Nuremburg, or 6,000,000, as was stated later, or far less, as many Germans claim; the killing of any defenceless person [...] is a hideous crime. It is obviously true that it could not have happened if the process of war had not hidden [the] crime from both the Germans themselves and from the moral judgement of mankind [...] if the war had been avoided, the life of 6,000,000 Jews would have been saved, as well as the lives of 20,000,000 other Europeans. Horrors of this magnitude cannot possibly be perpetuated in time[s] of peace.¹¹⁸

Mosley goes on to say that he has 'utterly condemned' these crimes and summarises his views as follows, 'Hitler in the final period had no sense of moral law or of the limitations of will [...] he usurped a higher foundation than that of man.'¹¹⁹ While this may be seen as recognition of Nazi crimes by Mosley, he employed other arguments alongside his recognition and argued that Stalin murdered millions of his countrymen 'even in a time of peace,' and that these crimes 'vastly exceeded the war time slaughter of National Socialism.'¹²⁰ Mosley attempted to confuse the established history of the Holocaust in regards to the numbers of Jews murdered. While he may have 'utterly condemned' the crimes, he posits the idea that Nuremburg established that twelve million Jews were killed (which was not the case), and then stated that the number had been reduced to six million but was probably 'far less'. This method of 'utterly condemning' the crime only to then create confusion over what the exact nature of the crime was demonstrates the pernicious nature in which Mosley presented the Holocaust to the reader. Mosley's comments that war had prevented anyone from knowing about what was happening to the Jews of Europe was also incongruous with established narratives of the Holocaust. As chapter one demonstrated, the media in the allied countries reported on the atrocities being committed against the Jews and the Germans themselves were aware of what the SS and Nazi elite were doing to the Jews in their name.¹²¹

Mosley's treatment of the Holocaust is unsurprising given his political agenda. He believed that the future of Europe lay in a National Europe, in which Germany would play a central role, and would act as a third super-power during the Cold War, with Africa serving as a joint colony of such a power.¹²² Mosley's attempt to place the blame firmly on Hitler demonstrated this view,

¹¹⁸ O. Mosley, *My Life*, pp. 370-371.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 371.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 372.

¹²¹ For discussion on the German populations knowledge of the Final Solution see: I. Kershaw, *Hitler, the Germans, and the Final Solution* (New Haven, Yale University Press: 2008), chp. 6.

¹²² For detail and discussion see: G. Macklin, *Very Deeply Dyed in Black*, pp 97-114, and R. Thurlow, *Fascism in Modern Britain*, pp. 118-119.

as did his attempts to whitewash the crimes with an argument about such a crime being only possible 'in the processes of war'. The implication of such a statement was that Stalin's 'peace time' crimes against his fellow countrymen were worse. These provide the historians with a blatant example of the use of denial for political expedience and the recasting of the past for political ends.

As outlined by Bloxham, Mosley's arguments demonstrate the same propensity of the Allied war tribunals to exonerate 'ordinary' Germans and institutions for politically expedient purposes. Mosley's dream of a National Europe may have differed greatly from that of the British government, yet his awareness of the changed post war geopolitics in light of the onset of the Cold War and the importance of Germany in post-war Europe bore striking similarities with the British government.¹²³ For Mosley, the crimes of the Second World War were the responsibility of Hitler and the Nazi hierarchy alone. In Mosley's view, the past had to be forgotten and Europe had to unite in order to become a third world super power capable of defending itself against the Soviet Union.

Yet, Mosley, like Leese, had conflicting responses to the Nazi atrocities against the Jews. While his 1968 autobiography suggests an acceptance of the Holocaust, his actions between 1945 until his biography was published did not. During the press conference for the launch of his new party The Union Movement (UM) in 1947, in an precursor of what would later be espoused by David Irving, Mosley claimed that 'gas ovens' were only used to destroy the bodies of those who had died from typhus outbreaks in the concentration camps.¹²⁴ In his post war publication *Union*, Mosley would call the stories of atrocities in the concentration camps 'fairy tales' and claimed that the images and pictures from the concentration and death camps had been 'faked'.¹²⁵ Mosley, in the initial aftermath of the war, proved no different from Leese and Ratcliffe in denying the authenticity of reports and photographs.

Mosley, like Leese, attacked the Nuremberg tribunals in an attempt to rehabilitate the German people, and compared the crimes of Nazi Germany with the actions of the Soviet and Allied forces. Mosley poured scorn on the trials as a barrier to European solidarity and for his own plan for a future European unification in his 1947 work *The Alternative*. In *The Alternative* Mosley also called for a homeland in Palestine and Abyssinia for Jews in order to rid Europe of the 'Jewish problem'.¹²⁶ In essence this is reminiscent of Leese's call for the Jews to be

¹²³ D. Bloxham, 'Punishing German Soldiers during the Cold War', pp. 26-32.

¹²⁴ G. Macklin, *Very Deeply Dyed in Black*, pp. 140-143.

¹²⁵ O. Mosley, *Union* No. 10 (7th April 1948); O. Mosley, *Union* No. 39. (6th November 1948).

¹²⁶ O. Mosley, *The Alternative* (London, Mosley Publications: 1947), pp. 212-219.

deported to Madagascar and demonstrates the shared view of the two men, who still perceived a 'Jewish problem' in Europe (though, their shared hatred of one another would ensure that they would never work together).¹²⁷ The 'Jewish problem', as they saw it, represents a solidifying and unifying factor in far-right opinion. The 'problem' centred on the argument that Jews continued to control the world. The Holocaust and the atrocities carried out by the Nazis now meant that, in order to solve the original 'Jewish problem', the new 'problem' of the Holocaust had to be disproved in order to reduce sympathy for Jewish populations and marshal support for the overarching aim: a Jew-free Europe. In essence the Nazi genocide of European Jewry had shown the world where antisemitic rhetoric, action and thought led and the pre-war British fascist movements, antisemitism and actions had become associated with the genocidal outcome. Furthermore, and given the antisemitic beliefs that were still prevalent in British society shown the last chapter, it was not just the possible consequences of the British far-right's antisemitism which had become apparent. The ideologies of Nazism and fascism held no sway with a populace which had spent six years of war fighting against them. As such far-right groups and individuals had to think about how to recast themselves, or search for a new political identity. While individuals like Leese would remain devoted to their pre-war ideologies, men like Mosley would attempt to find new political clothes and this would temper the way in which they responded to the Holocaust.

Mosley, like Leese, had different responses to the news and reports of Nazi atrocities. These responses would end in Mosley's acceptance of the brutality of the Hitler regime. Mosley would, however, still attempt to apologise for the crimes of ordinary Germans and the Wehrmacht presenting them as victims of Hitlerism. He would also continue to highlight Soviet and Allied brutality in relation to Nazi crimes. Denying what had happened to the Jews of Europe was politically and practically expedient for Mosley. In sanitising the persecution and murder of European Jewry, and placing the worst excess of Nazism on Hitler, Mosley cleansed the recent German past of the crime of genocide and murder and thus rehabilitated it as a country in which the British and other European nations could work together against the Soviet Union.

Mosley would remain antisemitic until the end of his life even though he claimed to have abandoned such beliefs.¹²⁸ His attachment and relationship with Holocaust denial was more emblematic of his political pragmatism. As Graham Macklin has shown in his study of Mosley's

¹²⁷ For Leese's scathing commentary on Mosley as a 'Kosher fascist' see: A. Leese, *Gothic Ripples*, No. 20 (26th August: 1946).

¹²⁸ G. Macklin, *Very Deeply Dyed in Black*, p. 118.

Holocaust denial, Mosley displayed all the characteristics of 'historical revisionism'. Mosley criticised the Nuremberg tribunal as a 'peepshow for gloating joy' and even attempted to cast German perpetrators as the real victims, explaining that questions of punishment should be considered 'in relation to the morality and chivalry of hanging young girls who happened to be placed in official positions in such camps at such times.'¹²⁹ Macklin describes how Mosley even went as far as to claim that Hitler had not ordered the murder of the Jews, stating that he had seen 'no evidence myself which can prove it.'¹³⁰ This, as Macklin opines, demonstrates how Mosley oscillated between placing the entire blame for Nazi crimes on Hitler and fully exonerating him. Macklin has also documented Mosley's dismissal of eyewitness testimony from perpetrators. Mosley explained, in response to the testimonials of camp guards that mass murder had taken place against the Jews: 'if you put a man in gaol long enough, he will say anything.'¹³¹

Macklin's research on Mosley's denial demonstrates how it was a fundamental part of reconstructing a 'history' which suited the ideological needs of the present. His findings also attest to the fundamentally 'Jew' heavy nature of the criticisms Mosley levied against Nuremberg. Like Ratcliffe and Leese it was the Jewish dimension of the crimes he sought out for attack. Unlike Leese, Mosley adopted a more pragmatic approach to dealing with the Holocaust in public. Mosley was willing to change his position on the Holocaust and his own antisemitism in accordance with wider social and political imperatives. Unlike Arnold Leese, Mosley was willing to shelve his antisemitism and views on the Holocaust to focus discussions on the future of Europe and his plan for a European Union and European Empire.¹³² In many ways Mosley's denial was symptomatic of the problems which would face the 'populist' and 'recidivist' parties of the far right in the 1970s: the desire to construct and promote a past which consolidated the ideological positions of the movement and would also appeal to a wider public.

As Macklin has shown, when Mosley was actively denying the Holocaust, he used the same stock tools that Leese employed, but in a rather different, more democratic tone.¹³³ Mosley may have seen the politically expedient possibility of denial, but recanted such views in public. As his biography demonstrates, by 1968 Mosley had accepted that the Holocaust had taken

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 117-118.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 118.

¹³¹ *Ibid*, pp. 117-118.

¹³² *Ibid*, p. 119.

¹³³ *Ibid*.

place.¹³⁴ This reason for this is multilayered. By 1968, the trial of Adolf Eichmann had recast what had taken place against the Jews during the Second World War into a narrative where Jewish suffering and Jewish particularity were central. The world had been forced to revisit the Holocaust in a different context and the specific Jewish dimension of Nazi persecution and genocide was publically identified. Mosley recognised that Holocaust denial was not a viable option of attracting mass support to his movements and ideas. Mosley had also given up active politics after his failure in the general election of 1966, and had tried to divorce himself from his earlier fascist roots. This revision of his own political past demonstrates how far right figures recast history to not only deny the Holocaust, but also as a means to expunge past failures. Mosley should not be viewed in this a context as having ‘converted’. His remoulding of his own image and his ideology was just as politically expedient as most of his political career had been. His views on the Jews and the Holocaust no doubt remained steadfast behind closed doors.¹³⁵

In publically admitting the Holocaust Mosley was attempting to disentangle himself from the clarion calls of Holocaust denial and Jewish conspiracy of other far right figures and movements. His biography demonstrates that while ‘utterly condemning’ the crimes of Nazis against Jews, he remained unclear as to the scale and nature of the crimes. In a passage in which he draw on parallels between Hitler, Napoleon and Bismarck, Mosley claimed that it was incomprehensible that the latter two figures would have allowed ‘what occurred during the war in the German concentration camps, even if only a fraction of the record be true.’¹³⁶ Despite publically distancing himself from denial Mosley’s rhetoric cast doubt on the historical narratives of the Holocaust. That ‘only a fraction’ of the record could be true was a deliberate attempt to present a confused picture about the scale of Nazi crimes. Mosley’s acceptance of the Holocaust was based on opaque reading of what it actually entailed. These obscure references to what the Holocaust actually entailed or its importance as a historical event would become dominant in the far right parties of the 1990s, partially the BNP under Nick Griffin, when BNP party literature proclaimed that it had no position on the Holocaust ‘because true or untrue ... [it] is none of our business.’¹³⁷ Mosley’s obstinate obscurity about what actually took place during the Holocaust is further evidence in his biography. The lack of

¹³⁴ When Mosley appeared on The BBC programme Panorama in 1968 he conceded the truth of the Nazi genocide. See: G. Macklin, *Very Deeply Dyed in Black*, p. 123.

¹³⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 140-42.

¹³⁶ O. Mosley, *My Life*, p. 311.

¹³⁷ For discussion on this quote and its full content see Chapter Four, p. 197

any specific details relating to the genocide or references gas chambers and specific names of death camps are notable by their absence.

Other antisemites would also attack the Holocaust and its basic tenets but would not attempt to rehabilitate Hitler, and in some cases were considered anti-Nazi and anti-fascist.¹³⁸ Douglas Reed was one such man. Reed went as far as to claim Hitler was a Jewish Messiah who had, in expelling Jews from Germany, opened the door for Jews to countries which previously would not have accepted them.¹³⁹ In the wake of Nazi atrocities, Reed would attack the basis for the figure of six million Jews killed and the Nuremberg Tribunals themselves in a joint attack in his 1951 book *Far and Wide*. In the work Reed, quoting from the *World Almanac* and *Whitaker's Almanac*, states that the figures for Jews in the world's population found prior to the war and after the war mean that the 'six million figure' was not possible and that the numbers had in fact *increased* by one million.¹⁴⁰ Reed states that the 'six million figure' was a product of the Nuremberg Tribunals and 'if by any turn of chance the American and British representatives who bandied it about at Nuremberg were ever called to answer for it, they might be hard pressed for a defence, for any impartial tribunal might tear it to pieces.'¹⁴¹ Reed was not affiliated with a political party and despite his antisemitic treatises his work continued to be published by the reputable publisher, Jonathan Cape of London, and was widely available and read.¹⁴²

Reed represents a different type of an antisemitic figure from that of Leese or Mosley but was still a man who believed in the control of Jewish power. His opinions on the Nazi atrocities and the figure of six million Jews killed stand as testament to this. Like Mosley and Leese, Reed was still primarily concerned with the power and control of Jews and Jewish agencies. What we now call the Holocaust was 'inspected' by Reed, but only alongside examples of Jewish control and only expressed as a rudimentary form of denial. To characters like Leese, Reed and Mosley, and others like them, the Holocaust was a new problem which impacted on their own antisemitic rhetoric regarding Jewish control, and it appears that they treated this 'new problem' with little regard. Instead they offered a staunch denial based in little actual pseudo-

¹³⁸ For information on Reed see: R. Thurlow, 'Anti-Nazi anti-Semite: the Case of Douglas Reed', *Patterns of Prejudice*, (Vol. 18, No. 18: 1984), pp. 23–34.

¹³⁹ This was Reed quoting a German Rabbi See: D. Reed, *Lest We Regret* (London, J. Cape: 1943), p. 272. See also: D. Reed, *Insanity Fair* (London, J. Cape: 1938), pp. 152-5.

¹⁴⁰ D. Reed, *Far and Wide* (London, J. Cape: 1951), pp. 309-310.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 308.

¹⁴² For the impact of Reed's publication see: T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination*, pp. 224-225.

academic argument and instead chose to rely on traditional antisemitic rhetoric to validate their arguments.

Through scrutinising the various trajectories of those who sought to deny mass atrocity in the late 1940s and 1950s distinct similarities and differences appear. The main similarity found between Leese and Mosley is the varied evolution of their response. Leese, it appears initially, accepted the reality of the Holocaust and approved of the methods employed as a means to rid Europe of the Jews. Leese also originally blamed the Jews for their misfortune for instigating the Second World War. Leese's response was rather muted and cryptic in its response, but closer inspection of his publications and his fanatical desire to rid Europe of Jews demonstrates his approval of the crimes committed. Leese would later abandon this approval in favour of denial but a denial which hypothetically approved of the murder of millions of Jews as long as it was done in a 'humane way'.

Douglas Reed did not change his position on the Nazi genocide and remained steadfast in his belief it was a Jewish hoax. As a journalist and writer, Reed's motivation was born, like Leese, of a desire to reveal 'hidden hand' behind government power. Reed was more of a 'mainstream' writer than Leese and was more widely published both by his publishing company and the journal *Truth*. His influence on the wider public should not, however, be overstated because his views still belonged to an isolated and 'small group of sympathisers.'¹⁴³

These three men cannot be said to encompass the entire circle of the British far-right individuals and antisemites who sought to minimise the crimes of the Nazis against the Jews. Other individuals who engaged in revision of the Holocaust were also publishing and disseminating similar ideas.¹⁴⁴ These three men do, nevertheless, represent a collection of individuals approaching the news of Nazi atrocities from a common base of antisemitism but from differing trajectories with differing ideas over how to absorb the information and reinvent it to suit their own political or ideological locations. Leese, Mosley and Reed represent the early incarnations of the far-right responses to Nazi crimes and are emblematic of the categories espoused by Eatwell. While Reed was not an active member of the far-right, his 'populist' writing in regard to Jewish persecution and extermination bore an overt similarity to later movements which wanted to hide or camouflage their far right beliefs. Mosley's denial was representative of the 'recidivist' far-right: he looked nostalgically to the past but in order

¹⁴³ T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination*, p. 225.

¹⁴⁴ For example: A.K Chesterton, John Beckett, and Hastings William Sackville Russell who through the mouthpiece the *People's Post* would give column inches to anti-Nuremberg rhetoric and Holocaust denial. See: G. Macklin, *Very Deeply Dyed in Black*, pp. 123-126.

to attract support he did not publically declare his allegiance to past fascisms and publically denounced Hitler. Leese and his denial was characteristic of the 'radical' far right. As a staunch defender of Hitler and National Socialism his approval and later denial of the Holocaust constituted the very embodiment of a redemptive antisemitic ideology, an ideology for which he would not apologise. Each of these men demonstrate the different ways in which far-right thought absorbed the news of the Nazi atrocities against the Jews according to different ideological imperatives. Yet in order to understand why they chose their different stances on the Holocaust an understanding of the British context in which they operated is needed.

Responding to Leese: Britain in the Aftermath of Genocide

When looking for responses to Leese caution must be exercised so as not to overstate the impact of him and his publications on the public (*Gothic Ripples* and *The Jewish War of Survival* only numbered a few hundred copies).¹⁴⁵ Leese attracted the attention of the British government on a number of occasions. In a report from Special Branch in 1946 the Home Office enquired into prosecuting Leese for his publication of *The Jewish War of Survival*, but the Attorney General found no grounds to prosecute or any action that could be 'usefully' taken regarding the statements made by Leese in the book.¹⁴⁶ The Home Office and Special Branch notes on the issues published by Leese.¹⁴⁷ There was often little inclination to prosecute Leese and in a letter to the Director of Public Prosecutions in 1949 a member of the public tried to draw the attention of the government to an article in *Gothic Ripples* entitled 'Jewish Atrocities in Palestine'. The office of the Director of Public Prosecutions replied claiming that the article did not contain any unlawful material from the point of view of 'sedition or being obscene.'¹⁴⁸ These agencies continued to observe Leese, but did not take any legal action on the advice of the Attorney General.

It would not be until September 1950 that the Home Office would take action against Leese in relation to comments he had made about the Commissioner of Police Sir Harold R. Scott. The comments appeared in *Gothic Ripples* (No. 67) 14 August 1950, and suggest that the police

¹⁴⁵ However despite the relative low number of copies they still remain part of the early historiography of Holocaust denial and deniers. Debates on Leese can be found today on the radical far-right blogs and websites: Stormfront: <http://www.stormfront.org/forum/t92865/> (accessed: 12/11/11); <http://theforbiddentruth.net/15103-jewish-blood-libels-sacrifice.html> (accessed: 12/11/11); 'Would Arnold Leese have Lied? I don't think so': <http://wakeupfromyourslumber.com/node/9525> (accessed: 13/11/11).

¹⁴⁶ See Correspondences dated, 28th January 1947 3rd February 1947; and report dated, 25th February 1946 in HO 45/24968.

¹⁴⁷ Government notes are kept on issues numbers 1- 25 in HO 45/24968.

¹⁴⁸ See Correspondence dated 8th July 1949 in HO 45/24968.

commissioner was in the pay of Jews to stop any man who 'dares to mention the word Jew in any derogatory sense.'¹⁴⁹ A legal prosecution was brought against Leese, on 12 December 1950, at the Central Criminal Court for defamatory libel. Leese was found not guilty and discharged. In fact, Department of Public Prosecutions had been reluctant to bring the case to court. In a memorandum dated 21st September 1950, the Department argued that Leese would contend that his publication was an 'expression of opinion, and seek to justify it as a fair comment.'¹⁵⁰ This was the defence that Leese used at his trial. In a separate memorandum, a more revealing issue as to why the department of Public Prosecutions was reluctant to support Sir Harold R. Scott's and the Home Office's decision to take legal action against Leese is unveiled. The Attorney General, Hartley Shawcross, wrote that while the issue was a 'troublesome matter' and did constitute criminal libel; 'this is not the first time that this wholly odious and scurrilous publication has published criminal libels and, hitherto, no action has been taken against it on the grounds that it really is not worth powder and shot. It would be unfortunate if it were thought that it is only when the police are hit at that we bother to prosecute publications of this kind.'¹⁵¹ The government's response to Leese and his publication was indicative of responses to other antisemitic and far right movements.¹⁵² What emerges from these comments was that the British Government and civil servants felt that the best course of action to dealing with this kind of publication was silence. As the above memorandum demonstrates, as do the records of the Home Office that relate to Leese's support, Leese could have been put on trial on several occasions for his publications and his articles. The fact that he was not suggests a fear on the part of the British Government that it may have given his publications support or undue attention and have given Leese more of an audience than he already had.¹⁵³

This fear may not have been misplaced. Mass Observation diaries from the period demonstrate examples of antisemitism which at times bordered on genocidal. In one example from 1946 a diarist notes the comments of her husband which state, 'Husband said this morning that he has only one sorrow about the Nuremberg thugs, and that is that they did not

¹⁴⁹ Leese had previously labelled Police Commissioner Sir Harold R. Scott as 'an obvious Jew' in *Gothic Ripples* No. 66 (15th July 1950).

¹⁵⁰ HO 45/24968.

¹⁵¹ See correspondence date 10th December 1950 in HO 45/24968.

¹⁵² In a separate occasion in 1946 when the Attorney General sought to prosecute Leese, cabinet minutes demonstrate that the Prime Minister Clement Attlee, on hearing the news that there was 'good evidence' for charging Leese, was firmly opposed to giving a public statement on the matter. In this instance, no charges were brought against Leese. See: C.M. 31 (46), 8th April 1946.

¹⁵³ Leese was euphoric at his victory in the case. See: A. Leese, *Gothic Ripples*, No. 71 (23rd December 1950).

exterminate the Jews before they were stopped at it. Husband went on to say Jews are parasites.¹⁵⁴ While this statement could have been simple offhand comment by a woman's husband frustrated in his work, it demonstrates an inclination to agree with the opinions of Leese.

Other examples of such beliefs can be found in relation to Holocaust denial itself. Tony Kushner highlights one example in which a Mass Observation diarist, after being 'incredulous' at reading an article by Douglas Reed in which he denied the figure of six million Jews killed, began to think the claims by Reed were right and that the Nazi persecution of the Jews was a hoax 'being magnified by the propaganda of international Jewry to obtain special privileges.'¹⁵⁵ Kushner also demonstrates other examples from the Mass Observation Diaries which show an enduring antisemitism in British society.¹⁵⁶ Although the examples above and in Kushner's work are specific to those in society with a predisposition to antisemitism there were other examples of people who found antisemitism and the horrors of the Holocaust deeply shocking.¹⁵⁷

Tony Kushner demonstrates how in Britain there was a failure to connect the crimes of Belsen and Buchenwald with the specific programme of extermination implemented by the Nazis against Jews in occupied Europe.¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, Kushner demonstrates how this was in part due to the strength of the British government's liberal opposition to any form of Jewish separatism. Kushner demonstrates this opposition to Jewish separatism in a government document in which the producers of a film about Belsen and Auschwitz was told that 'it would be desirable to documents the extent to which non-Jewish German nationals' were the victims of concentration camps.¹⁵⁹ Kushner also notes that the word 'Jew' is conspicuous by its absence in British and the American media in relation to Nazi atrocities.

Kushner's findings are particularly useful in relation to the characters considered in this chapter. First it disproves the arguments of the antisemites who claimed that the Jews control the media and governments. Second it opens questions about why the British government and media were so unwilling to promote Jewish suffering. Kushner suggests that that the silence could have been due to a fear of giving credence to the Zionist cause. As this chapter has

¹⁵⁴ Mass Observation Archive: Diarist no: 5447, 27th July 1946.

¹⁵⁵ T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination*, p. 225

¹⁵⁶ See: T Kushner, *We Europeans?: Mass Observation, 'Race' and British Identity in the Second World War* (Ashgate, Aldershot: 2004), pp. 166-188.

¹⁵⁷ T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination*, pp. 213-220.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 213-215.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p. 216.

demonstrated, it could also equally be due to inbuilt mechanism of the government which feared, that in giving Jewish suffering a preferential place in the reports, far right and antisemitic mentalities and world views would be validated. That is not to suggest that the British government and media were constantly aware of what the far-right was reporting from its relative obscurity. However as this chapter, and chapter one have shown, antisemitism and the idea that Jews had some kind of 'secret hold' over the country had been prevalent in some areas of society. Given the way in which individuals like Leese, Mosley, Reed and others responded to the crimes against Jews it would have indeed been beneficial for them if more attention had been given to the Jews in order to give their arguments some weight.

What is apparent from the responses of the British Government to Arnold Leese and the reactions of some sections of the British public to the Holocaust is the reluctance to appreciate the horrors which were committed against the Jews of Europe. This is seen in the treatment of Leese when the government failed to prosecute him for his representations of Jews in the United Kingdom and in relation to his views of the crimes committed against the Jews by the Nazis. In suggesting that his publications did not present the criteria of sedition or being 'obscene', a culture is observed in the British government, which appeared to care little about the suffering of Jewish survivors of the Holocaust.¹⁶⁰ Even when the government did act against him it was for a relatively minor comment in one edition of his *Gothic Ripples*. The government could have tried to prosecute Leese for the multitude of other trouble making, libellous and obscene comments that he had made but did nothing about them.

Leese had very little impact on the mainstream media and, while the government observed him and his publications, he was not seen as real menace to society at large. While some of his views may have had a resonance with some individuals in society it would seem that the numbers were negligible and did not contain the radical and fanatical antisemitism and action Leese needed to make any real impact on society or the media. This does not diminish his role as one of the founders of Holocaust denial in the aftermath of the Nazi genocide. What is discernible from this chapter is that Holocaust denial, even in its initial stages of dissemination, was never more than a fringe product of the radical right and antisemites who espoused conspiratorial notions of Jewish control. And while the government may have been overly

¹⁶⁰ This position of the British Government was seen in chapter one and has been examined by L. London, *Whitehall and the Jews, 1933-1948: British Immigration Policy, Jewish Refugees and the Holocaust* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 2000); see also: D. Stone, *Responses to Nazism in Britain*; T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination*, pp. 119-145.

cautious in the initial stages of confronting it, Holocaust denial and historical revision were not going to hold much sway in ordinary society or mainstream politics.

In this chapter we have seen how the initial responses to the Nazi persecution of the Jews by the British far right was marked by a confused response to what the persecution actually meant and how to best to respond. As we have seen, it essential to view the publications of far right individuals as *initial responses* to the Nazi war crimes and persecution of the Jews. The benefit is located in escaping a teleological way of presenting the Holocaust in the immediate aftermath of the war in relation to contemporary knowledge of the Holocaust. Furthermore it locates early far-right discourses firmly in the historiography and work of Bloxham, Kushner and Reilly in their conclusions about what war crimes and Nazi persecution actually signified from late 1945 to the mid to late 1950s.

Arnold Leese represented the quintessential expression of a draconian redemptive antisemitism and initially greeted the news of a Jewish genocide with approval and justification. As such Leese is not only significant because of his extreme views and as a barometer and expression of ideology of the extreme British far right. His arguments and thought are also indicative of the basic foundation and nucleus of where the arguments of later Holocaust deniers were forged. The arguments and battle grounds in which he chose to fight were expanded and appropriated by his contemporaries and later Holocaust deniers in the British far right.

The influence of Leese should however not be understated. Leese mentored and left his legacy to Colin Jordan, the leader of the British National Socialist Movement, and influenced John Tyndall, future leader of the National Front. Yet, Leese cannot be viewed as the sole inventor and early disseminator of Holocaust approval and Holocaust denial. As the previous chapter demonstrated, Leese had been influenced by the publications of Alexander Ratcliffe. Leese's arguments were indicative of a far-right thought which was locked into viewing the world with a Manichean paranoia. His views on the Nazi crimes against humanity were in line with the similar thinking of other far-right individuals who also subscribed to a racial and conspiratorial view of the world. Yet what is significant is the way in which such views presented and incorporated the arguments within the different contexts of the far right. Oswald Mosley denied that the atrocities had taken place and dubbed them 'fairy tales'. As Macklin had shown, Mosley's political ambitions are key to understanding how he disseminated his positions and why they were so fluid because they were designed with political and personal expedience at the centre. Douglas Reed's 'account' of Nazi crimes, while

not being specifically bound to a political far-right way of thinking, was highly congruous with antisemitic thought and a conspiratorial world view.

Mosley, Leese and Reed tried to recast the history of the Second World War in line with a broad conspiratorial and antisemitic world view. This broad conspiratorial view was marked by differing presentational styles. The sites of attack and details questioned by these men were, however, the same. All were in broad agreement that the Nuremberg tribunals and war crimes tribunals had been run by Jews; all were clear that Jews had been instrumental in bringing about the Second World War; all saw and attempted to demonstrate that a clandestine body or protocols of Zion network was running the world and all were eventually convinced (even in the case of Mosley who was not publically prepared to admit it in his later life) that what we now call the Holocaust was a Jewish hoax.

Leese may not have initially been a denier, but it is very significant that the arguments he marshalled to *justify* the crimes committed by the Nazis were identical to those used by those who sought to *deny* the crimes of the Nazis. This demonstrates the redemptive nature of Holocaust denial. In arguing that the murder of the Jews was justified and deploying 'examples' of 'Jewish power' and recasting the history of the Second World War along racial lines, we see not only how Holocaust denial sought to deny Jewish victimhood it also was an expression of the same ideological world view which drove and led to the Holocaust itself. Initially, Leese saw the Nazi persecution and murder of the Jews as a legitimate recourse to Jewish power and advocated further removal of the Jews from society and celebrated the Nazi genocide. His later denial was marked by the same arguments, and an approval of a theoretical Holocaust. His 'conversion' to denial may seem problematic, because it would seem that advocacy of the Holocaust should have been his primary and anchored position. However, to understand his conversion we must recognise that denial was actually far more suited to his ideological and dogmatic belief in Jewish power and conspiracy. Denial was politically expedient but it also made more sense to Leese, and other far-right figures, if a Zionist network had invented the Holocaust because it justified the developments that were taking place in the world. For Leese and other members of the far right, Holocaust denial was far more suited to their ideologies than Holocaust justification (or celebration). The men recognised that denial allowed for the continuation of a far-right history that viewed the past as the product of Jewish dominance of the world.

The intractability of such an ideology explains an apparent incongruity within the initial discourse relating to Nazi crimes outside the far right. As the work of Kushner, Bloxham, Reilly

and discourses within the historiography of the Nuremberg tribunals and British responses to the Holocaust have shown, the Jewish dimension of the Nazi crimes was lost in a litany of other crimes and marked by an inability to report the extent of what had taken place. Jewish victimhood was situated in more passive and universal narratives of suffering. The far-right's focus on Jewish victimhood stood in direct contrast to the liberal contexts of suffering advocated by the western powers. The far right could not use the past established in immediate post-war liberal narratives and therefore set about building their own. Jews had always been central to far-right identities in defining the 'other' and the 'enemy' in racial theory and therefore it continued in this type of thinking. To an external observer it would have appeared logical to adopt a similar liberal narrative in which universal suffering was preferred. However, the world of bigotry does not follow such logic, and Jews were central to the racial far right ideologies. Jews and conspiracy theories were fundamental to the 'history' that the far-right wanted to build. Far from being cast as victims, the Jews were presented as victors. This recalibration of the recent past was central to creating a renewed attack on Jews as the directors of world power. For individuals like Leese, Reed and Mosley the resent past could only be understood by adhering to pre-war antisemitic tropes and Jewish conspiracy theories.

Part Two: Building Holocaust Denial in the Far Right

Chapter Three: Colin Jordan, the Revolutionary Far-Right: the Presentation and Persistence of Holocaust Denial

The economic and social history of Britain from 1961 to the mid 1980s has been described as ‘a traumatic process of self-examination, self doubt, and declining morale, a perception of external weakness and internal decay.’¹ This image of ‘declinism’ has been challenged in recent historiography, with British ‘decline’ moving from a much lamented established ‘fact’ to a problematic historical category.² As, Tomlinson opines, ‘The picture we now have of British economic performance in the ‘golden age’ (1950–73), and even in the much denounced years of the mid-1970s, makes this notion of decline something to be treated with the same scepticism.’³ Despite historical revision of the post-war period, it is clear that there was an endemic perception in British society that Britain was in decline. Her waning in influence on the world stage, quantified in The Suez Crisis and the retreat from Empire and perceived poor economic performance pervaded the mind of contemporary Britons until the ‘resurgent’ economic boom in the 1980s under the Thatcher government.

Changes in law and social attitudes were also subject to change in this period. Labour Home Secretary Roy Jenkins vision of a ‘civilised society’ in the mid 1960s, ended corporal punishment, made divorce more accessible, legalised abortion, decriminalised homosexual acts and abolished theatre censorship. The ‘swinging sixties’ had an indelible impact on culture and British society and eventually began to supplant the out date Victorian social attitudes which had pervaded British society in the 1940s and 1950s.⁴ From the 1940s onwards Britain had seen increase in immigrants from British colonies, in the 1960s onwards the trajectory of those numbers increased. While immigration was not new to Britain and had a long history, the public perception of increasing black and Asian immigration to Britain, created both a political and cultural debate on the nature of the ethnic, make up of British society.⁵ These public and political discourses over immigration and shifting social attitudes would provide the main political platform for British far right. This platform and its relationship with far right Holocaust denial the main focus of the next two chapters.

As explained in the previous chapter, Holocaust denial was disseminated and ‘packaged’ differently according to the different contexts in which it operated in the early post-war

¹ K. O Morgan, *Britain Since 1945: The Peoples Peace* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 2001), p. 197.

² J. Tomlinson, ‘Economic “Decline” in Post-War Britain’ in P. Addison and H. Jones (eds), *A Companion To Contemporary Britain 1939–2000* (Oxford, Blackwell: 2005), p. 164.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ K. O Morgan, *Britain Since 1945*, p. 107.

⁵ For an outline of the history of British immigration see: J. Solomos, *Race and Racism in Contemporary Britain* (London, Macmillan: 2003), pp. 35-47.

incarnations of the British far right. This chapter explores how Holocaust denial was absorbed and disseminated in 'radical' or 'revolutionary' circles in the British far-right after 1960. The 'radical' and 'revolutionary' movements contained within the far right spectrum sought power by revolution. Colin Jordan, his movements and publications illustrate the type of denial which emerged from such circles. Jordan represented a figure of longevity in the most extreme echelons of the British far right and neo-Nazism. He began his career in the mid 1950s under the direction of Arnold Leese and continued to express extreme and radical views until his death in 2009. As Nigel Copsey has noted, Colin Jordan 'had stepped into Leese's shoes (or more appropriately his jackboots) as Britain's Führer.'⁶This chapter will show how the extreme and radical statements made by Jordan and others in the revolutionary far-right provide the historian of Holocaust denial with the raw, unmasked face, of redemptive antisemitism and how this antisemitism was the core factor which motivated these movements and Holocaust denial. These expressions of denial will then be compared in chapter four with the presentation of denial in the 'recidivistic', 'populist' and 'hybrid' forms of the far-right to show that the 'radical' incarnations of denial were essentially the main message of all forms of denial found in the British far-right.

Jordan represented the continuation of the Leese tradition and adopted many of his positions as his own. Jordan remained steadfast in his support for Nazism and Hitler and like Leese proclaimed that 'Hitler was right.'⁷ In comparing and contrasting his publications in the period under study with others of the same radical ilk, this chapter will demonstrate that Holocaust denial in the radical and revolutionary right was part of a wider 'history' which wanted to recast the history of the Second World War in line with universal far-right racial ideologies. Just as the Second World War was an integral part of collective identity in mainstream British society, the war was for the revolutionary right an essential component of how it viewed the past and the present.⁸ The protocols established by Leese, that the war was a racial war waged by world Jewry on Nazi Germany would be a keystone in the radical and revolutionary right's view of the past and shape its Holocaust denial. This chapter will argue that while such groups

⁶ N. Copsey, *Contemporary British Fascism: The British National Party and the Quest for Legitimacy* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2nd edition: 2008), p. 10.

⁷ This was a sentiment Jordan expressed at the 1962 Trafalgar Square rally he and Tyndall organised while in the White Defence League. It was expressed again in 1989 in Jordan's revival of Arnold Leese's *Gothic Ripples* to mark the centenary of Hitler's birth. See C. Jordan, *Gothic Ripples*, No. 20, (May 1989). Arnold Leese had made the same comments in his editions of *Gothic Ripples* see: A. Leese, *Gothic Ripples* No. 13 (21st March: 1946), p. 1. For an example of how this message was presented in party literature see Appendix Three.

⁸ M. Connelly, *We can take it!: Britain and the Memory of the Second World War* (Harlow, Longman: 2004).

and individuals would respond to changing information relating to the Holocaust and Holocaust related events, they remained remarkably static in their narratives. This chapter will show that while Holocaust denial was an integral part of constructing an extreme, radical and revolutionary past, the axiomatic arguments which motivated denial did not change from the initial National Socialist narratives which had been established in Nazi propaganda and by Arnold Leese.

Holocaust denial in Britain's radical and revolutionary far right.

The British revolutionary and radical far right from 1954-1966 contained a plethora of groupings, some of which were short-lived or were amalgamations of former movements and parties. Holocaust denial or more specifically the presentation of the Holocaust was intrinsically linked to these changes. The previous chapter demonstrated how there was a confused initial response to the information which emerged from the Nuremberg trials and media reports regarding the fate of European Jews under Nazi-occupied Europe. Scholarly attention on the period in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War and into the 1970s has posited the notion that a 'silence' existed in relation to the Holocaust. This notion is being currently challenged and it is now being suggested that rather than a notion of 'silence', what took place were dialogues over the Nazi persecution of the Jews but that these conversations had not crystallised into a discourse which was recognisable in relation to the current monolithic label 'the Holocaust'.⁹

This chapter will support the current scholarly work in the field by presenting publications from the far right which denied the murder of the six million Jews; blamed the Jews and the Allies for thrusting war upon Germany in 1939 as well as highlighting the carpet bombing of German cities as the worst atrocities of the Second World War; proclaimed Anne Frank's diary a forgery, and attacked the legitimacy of the Nuremberg trials as well as the evidence presented during the trials, all of which are stock tools of Holocaust denial literature and demonstrate that notions of 'silence' are misleading and incongruous.¹⁰ Such publications and arguments demonstrate that what we now understand as 'the Holocaust' was being actively

⁹ See: David Cesarani and E. J. Sunquist (eds), *After the Holocaust: Challenging the Myth of Silence* (London, Taylor & Francis: 2011), Introduction and T. Lawson, *Debates on the Holocaust* (Manchester, Manchester University Press: 2011), chapter one.

¹⁰ For a comprehensive list of the tactics of Holocaust deniers, see: D. E. Lipstadt, 'Denial' in P. Hayes and J. K. Roth (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies* (London: Oxford University Press: 2010), pp. 560-580. See also an earlier list of the tactics of deniers from Lipstadt based on the writings of Holocaust denier Austin J. App in: D. E. Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (New York, The Free Press: 1993), pp. 99-100.

denied in this period and as such demonstrate the presence of a discourse over the crimes committed against the Jews. This is further compounded by the fact that the material from far right groups would not have engaged with the discourses emerging relating to the Holocaust from 1950 to 1970 as they did, if they were not part of public knowledge and attention. As explained in the previous chapters, a preoccupation with racial and conspiratorial assumptions about the Jews galvanised the far right against a common enemy. Additionally, this chapter will show how discourses over increased immigration to the United Kingdom were absorbed into antisemitic conspiracy theories.

In the previous chapters, the initial responses to Nazi the persecution of the Jews were marked by their provisional narratives and adaptive nature because they were responding to information as it was emerging. By the 1960s historical discourses relating to the Holocaust and Nazi antisemitism were absorbed into more general discussions over the Nazi regime and key figures like Hitler, Himmler, Göring and Goebbels. Global discourses over the Second World War had become more entrenched and ultimately more sophisticated, yet were locked into Cold War narratives and contexts. The same was true in Britain and post-war memory in the immediate aftermath was directed towards a very Anglo-centric vision of the war. British academia and the media focused on the British role in winning the war rather than addressing the place and shape of Nazi antisemitism and its persecution of the Jews. It is not to say that the persecution and extermination were wholly absent from these academic publications, but its place in the historiography of the Third Reich was part of a collection of the themes rather than a field in its own right.

This inability to grasp the importance of antisemitism in the Nazi state is observable in the British historiography of the early 1960s to the early 1980s. In the works of A.J.P Taylor, Alan Bullock, Hugh Trevor-Roper and John Toland the Jewish persecution and role of antisemitism is minimal in its appearance compared to current scholarship.¹¹ To take one current example, Peter Longerich's recent *The Holocaust The Nazi Persecution and Murder of the Jews*, placed the murder and persecution of the Jews at the centre of Nazi Ideology and as the key proponent in starting the genocidal war against the Soviet Union. For Longerich, Nazi antisemitism and racial theory are the agencies upon which the entire Second World War was fought upon. For historians like Taylor, and his generation of scholars, the war was a continuation of the World War One and the product of factors which were explained in relation to diplomatic relations and the national aims of Nazi Germany. The far right certainly

¹¹ For a review of this early scholarship see: L. Dawidowicz, *The Holocaust and The Historians* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press: 1981), pp. 31-34.

sought to challenge the scholarship of historians but it also wanted to cast its own 'history' of the past in order to make sense of what they found in the present, and *strengthen* the narratives they had constructed around the history of how they perceived the Second World War and Nazism.

It was within this context that Colin Jordan attracted considerable attention in both the media and far-right circles in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Throughout his career he was often used as the archetypal Nazi and as an incarnation of extreme hate by the British government. In one House of Commons debate MP Tom Driberg characterised Jordan as the most extreme variant in the British far-right, 'Mr. Colin Jordan's little gang of criminal psychopaths, even more extreme in their abusive provocations than the Mosley gang.'¹² In the Parliamentary Commons and Lords debates, Jordan would not only be characterised as a 'psychopath' and criminal, but also used as an emblematic expression of hate and prejudice, in various debates over Race Relations Acts and even in debates over fair employment.¹³ In one debate, over fair employment in Northern Ireland, Lord Monson used Jordan as illustrative example to argue his point over inconsistencies in the law:

I will cite an example which will be more *easily understood* by your Lordships. In the extremely unlikely event of Mr. Colin Jordan applying for a job with a Jewish employer in London, the employer would be perfectly entitled, politely or otherwise, to decline the offer of Mr. Jordan's services. In Belfast, this would not be possible.¹⁴

It is clear that Jordan was characterised as an extreme and symbolic example of British far-right thought.

Jordan represented the figurehead of continuing Nazi and fascist ideology in the 1960s. Jordan had been educated and schooled by Arnold Leese and had given speeches for Leese's National Workers Movement (NWM) as well as a variety of other movements associated with the Britons Society.¹⁵ When Arnold Leese died in 1956, he left his house to Jordan with Leese's Widow Mary serving as administrator of his estate. Jordan's control of the house is a key factor in understanding the course and shape of the British far right from 1956 to 1967 or what

¹² Hansard, HC Debate 1 August 1962 Vol. 664 cols 591-638.

¹³ For examples of Jordan in debates over race relations in the House of Lords and House of Commons, see: Hansard, HC Debate 3 July 1962 Vol. 662 cols 279-284; Hansard, HC Debate, March 23 1965 Vol. 709 cols 378-453; Hansard, HC Debate 30 January 1974 Vol. 868 cols 415-417; Hansard, HL Debate 16 December 1981 Vol. 426 cols 248-249.

¹⁴ Hansard, HL Debate 19 April 1975, Vol. 360 cols 1050-1051. Emphasis my own.

¹⁵ HO 45/24968, Bath City Police Report dated 28th June 1950.

Martin Walker has dubbed 'the lunatic fringe'.¹⁶ The house located in London at 74 Princedale Way, provided the far right with a headquarters to operate around and was the command centre for several organisations such as the White Defence League (WDL), The British National Party (BNP), the National Socialist Movement (NSM) and the British Movement (BM). The house, as Martin Walker explains, provided a base for the radical far right and was a powerful bargaining tool in making movements (some with very little or no capital) join Jordan.

Jordan's control of the property serves to explain the schismatic nature of the far right at this time. This was primarily because many groups wanted to join with Jordan and have access to his resources, yet because Jordan remained irreversible in his view that a German National Socialist model was the best way forward for the far-right, such unions were often short lived. His constant Hitler worship was deemed by many in the far-right to be an obstacle in their quest for power and as such many individuals formed new groups and left Jordan's movements. This constant formation and disintegration of movements often left him with the rump of old National Socialist movements from which he amassed radical and extreme support.¹⁷

Jordan therefore represents not just 'the old guard' of the far right but also a bastion of National Socialist policy in Britain. Jordan, like his mentor Arnold Leese, believed that 'Hitler Was Right' and that the salvation of Britain and the world lay in National Socialism. This proved problematic for many of the earlier followers of Jordan because they felt the need to stress the advantages of a British derivative of National Socialism concerned with British issues. The issue which captured their attention and chimed with their ideological views was the rising public concern over immigration. Jordan did not want to work within a democratic system and preferred to promote revolution and preparation for what he saw as the inevitable decline of democracy. Much like his mentor, Arnold Leese, Jordan felt that his movements should raise awareness of the 'hidden hand' behind democracy, communism and capitalism, and he and his movements should ready themselves to seize power when the moment of revolution came.

Jordan also endeavoured to use the political climate in Britain to advance his National Socialist cause and Jordan was quick to exploit the growing issue of immigration in Britain. Unlike the 'recidivistic' or 'populist' travellers on the far right, Jordan did not see the issue of immigration as a way to gain political capital. Jordan wanted to exploit the issue to 'educate' the population

¹⁶ M. Walker, *The National Front* (London, Fontana: 1977) pp. 25-51.

¹⁷ For information on the shape and politics of these different movements and the role the house on 74 Princedale Way played, see: *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28, 33-37, 39-50; S. Taylor, *The National Front in English Politics* (London, Macmillan: 1982), pp. 3-18.

about his own views of race and the value of National Socialism which he believed would lead to revolution in Britain.

Academics have studied the issue of race relations and its relationship to immigration in great detail.¹⁸ There has been, as Tony Kushner explains, a tendency in modern British text books to 'provide a standard chronology of post war race relations,' which begins with the arrival of the *Empire Windrush* in 1948 with the next reference normally being the Notting Hill race riots in 1958 closely followed by the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act. This approach is attacked by Kushner for good reason; he explains such a view provides 'a pathological view of black people. Black people arrive, create a 'race problem', and are opposed by the public and then by the state and finally rebel on the streets.'¹⁹ This view ignores the complexities of both the black experience and white responses in Britain. While such debates are part of the makeup of understanding race relations in Britain they are not discourses located wholly in the political sphere of the far right and there is not space in this thesis to rehearse them all here.

For Jordan and the radical far right debates over 'race relations' or more specifically immigration were used by to get the population to think along 'racial lines'. For Jordan, world Jewry and communists had funded the influx of black and Asian immigrants, as shown in his first edition of *Black and White News*.²⁰ This sentiment was expanded on by Jordan and the White Defence League and in his later National Socialist movement. For Jordan and other radical variants the influx of immigrants was only symptomatic of the larger issue: that of Jewish world domination and a Jewish desire to dilute the white race. Jordan's aim was to get the public to think along far-right 'racial lines'. This policy was seen in a number of the publications, like *Black and White News*, *The Nationalist*, *The British Patriot* and *Combat* which were produced by Jordan and other members of his movements in the 1960s.²¹

While immigration was used by Jordan and other members of the revolutionary far right as a means to further their cause, Jordan also responded to developments that were taking place in relation to the Holocaust. One event which was highly publicised by Jordan was the Eichmann

¹⁸ For Example the *Historical Journal Immigrants and Minorities* began in 1982, C. Holmes, *John Bull's Island: Immigration and Society 1871-1971* (London, Macmillan: 1988); J. Solomos, *Race and Racism in Contemporary Britain* (London, Macmillan, 3rd edition: 2003); P. Rich, *Race and Empire in British Politics* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2nd edition: 1990) and P. Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black In the Union Jack: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation* (London, Routledge: 1992).

¹⁹ T. Kushner, 'Immigration and "Race Relations" in Post War British Society' in P. Johnson (ed.), *Twentieth Century Britain: Economic, Social and Cultural Change* (London, Longman: 1994), p 412.

²⁰ *Black and White News*, No. 1, September (1958).

²¹ P. Jackson, 'Colin Jordan's Merrie England' and Universal Nazism', *Radicalism and New Media: Working Papers*, (Vol. 1, No. 2: 2011), pp. 1-6.

trial. In March 1961, writing in *Combat*, a newspaper of John Bean's BNP, he gave an account of the charges Eichmann was accused of according to far-right perceptions of the past. The account corresponded very closely to contemporary Holocaust denial but also drew on the founding positions established by Ratcliffe and Leese. The attack contained three main arguments: that the crimes of the Jews were greater than those of the Germans; that the crimes with which Eichmann was charged had not taken place and finally that the trial was a Jewish propaganda exercise.

The headline of the supplement 'The Eichmann Trial: Jews and Atrocities'. The implication was that the crimes of Eichmann were not as great as those of Jews. Today it would be considered 'Holocaust inversion' in which the crimes of 'Jews', usually associated with the state of Israel, are comparable to the Nazi genocide and worse.²² Jordan used the hanging of British police sergeants in Palestine in 1947 to claim that the deaths of the two British men, Clifford Martin and Mervyn Paice, were equal to the Holocaust. However, Jordan still sought to deny the Holocaust in the article and demonstrates the warped epistemological position from which he cast his views.

The supplement was a direct attack on the trial itself, yet the attack was rooted in the belief that the Jews had orchestrated the Second World War and that they were 'the greatest war criminals of all' and were responsible for 'the deaths of millions of Gentiles, and mutilation of millions more.'²³ The supplement used the headline from the *Daily Express* dated 24 March 1933 which read 'Judea declares war on Germany', a headline used by Jordan (and Arnold Leese) throughout his life and career, to justify the argument that the Second World War had been brought about by Jews.²⁴ The article in the *Daily Express* related to a 'worldwide' Jewish boycott of German goods in March 1933, in order to 'stand by and support the 600,000 German Jews terrorised by Hitlerist antisemitism.'²⁵ However, for Jordan this article was an explicit example, in a mainstream newspaper, which 'supported' his view. The headline of 'Judea declaring war' was, as Berel Lang has shown, a gift to Nazi propaganda in consolidating its notion that Jews were fighting a war against the German race. It was also a notion very

²² See: M. Gerstenfeld, 'Holocaust Inversion: The Portraying of Israel and Jews as Nazis' at <http://jcpa.org/article/holocaust-inversion-the-portraying-of-israel-and-jews-as-nazis> (accessed, 23/2/14)

²³ Supplement, 'The Eichmann Trial: Jews and Atrocities' in *Combat*, No. 10, Jan- Feb (1961), p. 2

²⁴ This headline will be discussed below on, p. 169.

²⁵ *The Daily Express*, (Friday 24th March, 1933), p 1.

suiting to the British far right and later Holocaust deniers who had constructed a 'history' where the Jews had been the instigators of the Second World War.²⁶

These arguments over the role of Jews in instigating war were derived from Nazi Propaganda. The presence of them in Jordan's work is confirmation of the influence of Arnold Leese in developing the larger framework in which Holocaust denial was situated. The argument that Jews brought Britain into the war against Germany rested on the premise that Jews had exploited events in the build-up to the war to force other nations to attack Germany because of the antisemitic ideology of Hitler and Nazism. In line with this thinking, Jordan claimed that when the Jewish attempt to bring about war via the Sudeten crisis in 1938 failed the Jews manufactured war by murdering Ernst vom Rath. Jordan claimed that the assassination of vom Rath, the German Diplomat shot by Herschel Grynszpan which sparked Kristallnacht, resulted in the British assurance to Poland that, if Germany invaded, it would be forced to declare war on Germany. Jordan claimed that this had the direct effect of 'encouraging her [Britain] to oppose truculently the thoroughly reasonable German demand for the return of undeniably German territory and population taken from her by the penal and pernicious provisions of the treaty of Versailles.'²⁷ This far-right reconstruction of history was central in the argument which Jordan formulated against the trial of Eichmann.

Having 'established' the guilt of world Jewry for instigating World War Two, Jordan then drew attention to the crimes of Jews in Palestine against the British and Palestinian Arabs. Pages one and four of the supplement were dedicated to such crimes. Jordan drew extensive attention to the actions of the terrorist organisation the Irgun. He used the group's actions to 'prove' his argument that Jewish crimes were equal to those of the Nazis, the two main actions he highlighted were the murder of the British Sergeants in Palestine in 1947 as well as the Deir Yassin Massacre in 1948.

Jordan then set about 'proving' that crimes with which Eichmann was charged were lies. Unlike his arguments regarding the Jewish involvement in instigating the war, in which Jordan gave an alternative far-right and antisemitic historical narrative, he attacked the reality of the crimes with which Eichmann was accused. They were not specific to the arguments of the crimes with which Eichmann was charged; instead what he provided was simply a rehash of the old arguments of Arnold Leese and Alexander Ratcliffe and even used the same sources. Like Ratcliffe he responded to the photographs of the victims from liberated camps as 'Jewish

²⁶ B. Lang, *Philosophical Witnessing: The Holocaust as Presence* (Lebanon, Brandeis University Press: 2009), chp. 8, especially pp. 131-132.

²⁷ C. Jordan, *Combat*,

faked photographs'. Again, like Ratcliffe, he used Arthur Ponsonby's *Falsehood in Wartime* and compared the information in the book to the pictures of the Jewish victims of the Holocaust, stating that all the images in the book were 'so reminiscent of the Jewish propaganda about the Nazis atrocities.'²⁸

Jordan expanded on the claims which are comparable to those of Ratcliffe, stating that the corpses in Buchenwald which were shown to the residents of Cassel in Germany in 1948, were in fact the victims of the Allied bombing in Dresden.²⁹ Jordan went further in attacking the Holocaust and claimed that 'the lie of six million' was 'used to discredit the Nazis'. He used similar rudimentary sums to those which Arnold Leese had attempted to 'prove' that the figure of six million was impossible.³⁰ What is striking about these arguments, which take up the majority of the third page of the supplement, is the strong resemblance which the arguments had with those of Ratcliffe and Leese. The page had the appearance of being based on an amalgamation of these two men's arguments. Jordan added other information but the basic outline remained the same: the Holocaust was a Jewish propaganda hoax. Jordan highlighted this in one example in which he claimed that 'American Jew, Capt. Strauss' had built a false gas chamber and a new crematoria with four ovens at Dachau.³¹ In fact, the gas chambers were delousing chambers and occasionally used for medical experiments.³²

Jordan's last attack on the trial was by proclaiming it a 'Jewish propaganda stunt.' This was the main thrust of his argument and was closely linked to his desire to get the public to 'think along racial lines'. To facilitate this end Jordan wrote, the:

Eichmann show trial has been designed as a great counter-measure against the growing anti-Jewish feeling around the world. The Jews aim to revitalise their vicious propaganda against the Nazis in order to smear and discredit, by association, any form of criticism and opposition to their world power.³³

According to Jordan, the entire principle of the trial was unfair and unjust and Eichmann's defence council was handicapped, 'if his defender really started defending him he would probably get the sack so the trial did not deviate from presenting the Israeli "true picture" to

²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 3

²⁹ This argument would later be used again by McLaughlin, Jordan's successor in the British Movement in 1975. See: M. McLaughlin, *Death of a City* (Deeside, Phoenix Publications: 1982), p. 17.

³⁰ Supplement, 'The Eichmann Trial: Jews and Atrocities' in *Combat*, No. 10, Jan- Feb (1961), p 3.

³¹ *Ibid*.

³² See: <http://www.nizkor.org/hweb/camps/dachau/> (accessed: 23/07/12). Holocaust deniers are not alone in making mistakes in relation to the gas chambers at Dachau. Fred Zinnemann's 1948 film *The Search* contains a scene in which a girl describes seeing a small boy escaping being gassed in Dachau.

³³ Supplement, 'The Eichmann Trial: Jews and Atrocities' in *Combat*, No. 10, Jan- Feb (1961), p 3.

future generations.³⁴ While Jordan's view of the trial was congruent with his own ideology, and portrayed in a framework of Jewish vengeance (just as Leese framed the Nuremberg and post war tribunals) and as being designed to continue Jewish 'world power', his views were indicative of an awareness among other groups (both Jewish and non-Jewish) that the trial was about fostering Jewish identity and reclaiming a Jewish-specific victimhood from initial post war narratives of Nazi atrocities.³⁵

Such notions were also explored by Hannah Arendt in *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. Arendt accepted and supported the Israeli authorities' right to prosecute and execute Eichmann. She was, however, condemnatory about the trial becoming 'the show Ben-Gurion had in mind ... or rather [about] the "lesson" he thought should be taught.' Arendt felt that Ben-Gurion had made trial about making sure the generation of Israelis who had grown up since the Holocaust did not lose 'their ties with the Jewish people and, by implication, with their own history.'³⁶ Arendt's description of the trial as a 'show trial' for proving that the Holocaust was the biggest antisemitic pogrom in history was met with hostility by many other commentators and even earned her the title a 'self-hating Jewess' in the one Jewish newspaper.³⁷ Arendt's thesis may have been controversial and bore some similarities in the arguments with Jordan about the trial being Jewish propaganda or a 'show trial'. Yet, Arendt was in favour of Eichmann's trial, but was not comfortable with the way in which it had been conducted. Therefore any similarities between Arendt and Jordan are divergent in by their fundamental epistemological positions. Jordan was using the trial as means to solidify and strengthen the assumptions he had made about the history of the Second World War being the product of Jewish influence and control. Whereas Arendt was trying to argue that the trial had questionable political motives as many of the critiques of Nuremberg and other post-war allied tribunals had also argued.

It is clear that the Eichmann trial did force the world to revisit the horrors of Nazism and awakened, and formulated, a Jewish identity in relation to the crimes invested on the Jewish community by the Third Reich. As Peter Novick explains, the term 'Holocaust' has been recast in the popular lexicon as firmly attached to the murder of European Jewry as a result of the Eichmann trial.³⁸ As Novick explains in the mid to late 1960s 'the Holocaust as a distinct - and

³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 3.

³⁵ See: P. Novick, *The Holocaust and Collective Memory: The American Experience* (London, Bloomsbury: 1999), pp. 127-134.

³⁶ H. Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on The Banality of Evil* (London, Penguin: 2006), pp. 7-10.

³⁷ P. Novick, *The Holocaust and Collective Memory*, p. 134.

³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 133.

distinctly Jewish - entity' had arrived, but it was 'by no means as distinct, or as distinctly Jewish as it would later become.'³⁹

Jordan's perspective that the Eichmann trial was about fostering Israeli identity may have been shared by Arendt but these arguments were contextualised in a specifically radical far right view reconstruction of the past. Jordan viewed Israel with contempt and like his forbearers felt that Israel was the command centre for the Jewish conspiracy. In 1955 Jordan wrote *Fraudulent Conversion* in which he discussed what the 'hidden' meaning was behind the establishment of Israel in 1948. Jordan wrote, 'the creation of the State of Israel as the Zionist base for Jewish world power was a piece of indefensible aggression and plain theft; and its recognition by the sanctimonious Western Powers ... was one of the meanest and most disgraceful acts of modern times.'⁴⁰ Jordan believed that the creation of the state was based on the 'absurd lie' of genocide.⁴¹ These depictions of Israel were a reflection of the views espoused by Leese and Ratcliffe, however Jordan tried to explain the inherent conflicts within the Jewish conspiracy between 'Jewish' controlled communism and Jewish nationalism in the form of Zionism. Jordan explained that the two groups represented different 'factions' of Jews, both of which were trying to achieve the ultimate goal of world domination. Jordan justified this claim on the basis that intrinsic qualities of the Jewish race were directed towards world domination.⁴² For Jordan Israeli was the product of the Zionist faction seeking world domination by militarily expansion and control of capitalism. He claimed that antisemitism was a myth perpetuated by Zionists to encourage Jews around the world to immigrate to Israel. This explains why Jordan would see the Eichmann trial through this prism.

Jordan's critique of the Eichmann trial was indicative of his anchored sense of 'history' from which he made sense of the present. His narratives are strikingly static, and were drawn from the annals of a past which had initially been cast by individuals like, Ratcliffe, Leese, Mosley and Reed. From this perspective the Eichmann trial was an extension and reincarnation of Jewish control of past events and confirmed that far-right history of the past that Jordan viewed as sacrosanct was correct. The Holocaust remained a 'myth' and the arguments which validated this view in the mid 1940s to the late 1950s remained as accurate as they had when they were first formulated. New events like the Eichmann trial only made sense in reference to a previously established far-right narrative of the past.

³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 134.

⁴⁰ C. Jordan, *Fraudulent Conversion: The Myth of Moscow's Change of Heart* (London, Britons Pub. Society: 1955), p. 129.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 34.

⁴² *Ibid*, p. 120.

Jordan's characterisation of the Eichmann trial and Zionism has wider implications that went beyond the printed page. Jordan's characterisation of Eichmann has wider implications that went beyond the printed page. He launched a campaign against the Eichmann trial and used posters which proclaimed that Menachim Begin, leader of the Zionist paramilitary group the Irgun, was wanted for murder. The posters demanded that if Eichmann was brought to trial, Begin must also be put on trial and were distributed by Jordan and his supporters. John Bean, the leader of the BNP, described how Jordan wanted make the trial of Eichmann a propaganda campaign. Bean was less keen and wanted to use other methods which would attract a wider membership to his party.⁴³ Bean described how a compromise was reached in which Jordan could have the propaganda campaign as long as it centred on the call for the trial of Begin. Bean's reluctance was located in his fear that Jordan's propaganda campaign would alienate the BNP from more mainstream support. Like other individuals who had split with Jordan before, Bean was moving closer to the idea of gaining power by more democratic means and felt overt and radical neo-Nazism held no political capital in Britain.

Bean explained how 'against his better judgement' he drove Jordan and other members of the party around London with posters calling for the trial of Begin. On one occasion in April 1961, Bean describes how he escorted Jordan and more radical elements of the BNP to the Princes Theatre 'where unbeknown' to him 'a Jewish meeting to commemorate the Warsaw uprising was being held' (Bean claimed that he found out later that Jordan knew about the meeting beforehand). Jordan and the men brandished posters and banners which proclaimed 'Eichmann trial - Jews caused World War Two' and 'punish atrocities by Jews'.⁴⁴ Bean, Jordan and the other men with them were stopped by the police and at the subsequent trial they were each given a £15 fine. This event marked the end of Bean's alliance with Jordan and on 10 February 1962 Jordan and Tyndall were expelled from the BNP by Andrew Fountaine (president of the BNP) and Bean because of their pro-Nazi sympathies.⁴⁵

This event was not just significant because it ended the union between Bean and Jordan and again called into question the use of overt National Socialist ideology by the British far right. The event was also indicative of an *actual* and *physical* battle over the past. It was a public and physical attack by Jordan on Jewish history, the Holocaust, and Jewish memorialisation. Jordan was not just 'supporting' Eichmann, he was also casting the responsibility of the Second World

⁴³ J. Bean, *Many Shades of Black: Inside Britain's Far Right* (London, New Millennium: 1999), pp. 150-151.

⁴⁴ The details of this event were also reported in *The Times*, see: *The Times*, (Tuesday April 18th 1961), p.

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⁴⁵ J. Bean, *Many Shades of Black*, pp. 151-153.

War onto the Jewish people. Jordan remained obstinate that his 'history' was correct and was validated by the present trial of Eichmann. As such Jordan and the BNP were on the streets decrying the Eichmann trial but also promulgating their own self-constructed ideological 'history'. Without this connection to their 'history', their view of the Eichmann trial made little sense to either themselves or external observers. The banner 'Eichmann trial - Jews caused World War Two' was indicative of such a relationship. It was the direct dredging up (and mendacious construction) of the past to make sense of an event in the present. It was a direct example of how the radical and revolutionary British far-right saw the present through the lens of the past they had constructed. This direct collision of memorialisation and 'historical revisionism' and Holocaust denial did not capture many headlines and passed without significant note.⁴⁶ Yet it marks the point at which a very real battle was taking place on the streets over who had ownership of the Second World War, and how the consequences of that war should be observed, memorialised and historicised.

With his expulsion from the BNP, Jordan along with Tyndall moved to create the National Socialist movement. Without Bean and Fountaine's loathing for overt National Socialism and antisemitism, they were free to disseminate their neo-Nazi ideologies. The Nazi tones were evident from the launch of the movement which took place on 20 April 1962 the anniversary of Adolf Hitler's birthday. The movement wasted no time in publishing its ideology and antisemitism and held a rally in Trafalgar Square in June 1962.

The rally attracted a large amount of attention, both from the media and from the government. Jordan and Tyndall spoke and distributed leaflets which proclaimed 'Hitler was right'; in his speech Jordan proclaimed: 'the result of this Jewish government of Britain is the disregard of real British interests at every turn, including the present, scandalous coloured invasion of our country ... The Jews want it because the breakdown of racial identity and racial pride, the encouragement of a mongrel population, is essential for the long-term security of their overlordship.' Jordan went on to say that by undermining Britain's 'Anglo-Saxon stock' the consciousness of race which 'brings the awareness of the Jew' would be destroyed and the Jews would not have to fear a revolt against their domination. Jordan went further and extended his conspiracy thesis to direct involvement of the Jews in the increase in immigration, claiming 'the Jews are financing this immigration, making it possible for these people to fly or sail here by advancing them money through loans companies, thus killing two birds with one

⁴⁶ The *AJR (Association of Jewish Refugees) Information Journal* in the months of April and May 1961 made no mention of Jordan and the BNP's presence at the Commemoration, nor did it appear the later August issue.

stone, getting them here and getting a fat percentage out of them at the same time.⁴⁷ This rhetoric was not without historical radical right parallels. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler had stated that 'it was and is the Jews who bring the Negroes into the Rhineland, always with the same secret thought and clear aim of ruining the hated white race by the necessarily resulting bastardisation, throwing it down from its cultural and political height, and himself rising to be its master.'⁴⁸ The similarity between Jordan and Hitler's words are overt and exhibit Jordan's commitment to National Socialist values. The pervasive paranoia that Jordan exhibited in relation to the Jews was due to his adherence to iconic Nazi text. The form and structure of his words when compared to those of Hitler demonstrates the continued presence of Nazi ideology and thought in the radical British far right. This strand of thinking explains why the 'histories' they produced had to be formulated to correspond to the propaganda espoused by the Nazis. In order to defend National Socialism Jordan needed the public to believe that the threat from Jews against Nazi Germany had been a historical reality, to do this he had prove the threat was still present in contemporary society.

The rally 1962 broke down into a riot when anti-fascist groups and communists attacked the meeting. Jordan and Tyndall were arrested under the Public Order Act of 1936. The rally attracted a large amount of media attention and questions about the rally were asked of the Home Secretary Henry Brooke in the House of Commons. The main question centred on whether an amendment to stop neo-Nazi public rallies was required in the Public Order Act.⁴⁹ The main problem with an amendment to the law was summed up by Brooke when answering questions in the House: '[t]he problem is, as I think the House will agree, how to preserve the right of free expression of opinion while effectively discouraging wanton incitement to racial hatred.' Brooke looked into the question and then reported to the Cabinet in the form of memoranda in 1962 and 1963. In the first memorandum, Brooke acknowledged that 'the persecution suffered by millions of Jews before and during the war makes propaganda of the type now being put about by the so-called National Socialist Movement to the effect that "Hitler was right" particularly inflammatory to our large Jewish population.'⁵⁰

Brooke was unsure if any change to the Public Order Act of 1936 or the law was necessary, and if there were to be a change what the amendments would look like. The Home Secretary proposed increasing the fine and prison sentence when such a crime was committed but felt

⁴⁷ Jordan's speech is recorded in and quoted from: T. Rowe, *Racist Movements: West Midlands* (University of Warwick, Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations: 1974), pp. 2-3.

⁴⁸ A. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, introduction by D.C. Watt (London, Hutchinson & co: 1974), p. 295.

⁴⁹ Hansard, HC Debate 2nd August 1962 Vol. 664 cols 795-804.

⁵⁰ T. Rowe, *Racist Movements West Midlands*, pp. 2-3.

that although the bill would have general support 'in the present atmosphere it would be widely criticised as not going far enough.' Brooke also proposed restating,

[A]nd bringing up to date the law relating to seditious libel, which at present appears to me to be ineffective. ... Alternatively we could simply make it an offence in any public place or at any public meeting to use words intended to promote hatred towards any section of the public on grounds of race, or to publish display or distribute any notice sign or circular containing words or other matter so intended.

However Brook felt there would be ambiguity in interpretation of the law: How should race be defined? 'It might be held to apply to the Scots, the Irish and the Welsh as well as the English.' What would constitute incitement to hatred? 'Could for instance exuberant remarks on St. Patrick's Day or Burns Night be prevented from giving rise to prosecutions?' In the conclusion of the memorandum Brook suggested that the Cabinet should wait to see how the current law would work in the prosecutions against Tyndall and Jordan. Although there was wide condemnation of what Jordan and Tyndall said, the Home Secretary's main concern was to change the law to prevent the 'communists and young trouble-makers [who] deliberately break up meetings' from gaining 'public sympathy'. Brook, therefore, had to juggle this with his view that the freedom to hold meetings and express opinions in both written and oral form was a fundamental principle, and 'the main distinction between fascist and communist systems' and British democracy, while also trying to find a compromise which stopped public meetings which propagated overt racial discrimination.⁵¹

The prosecutions of Tyndall and Jordan that Brook referred to were not just for violations of the 1936 Public Order Act in relation to the rally at Trafalgar Square, but were also regarding the illegal formation, under section two of the 1936 Act, of the paramilitary organisation Spearhead. At the trial, the prosecution presented evidence which showed that the Spearhead group were planning to build explosive devices from sodium chlorate weed killer and had crossed out 'weed killer' to read 'Jew killer'.⁵² Tyndall and Jordan were found guilty on both counts under the Public Order Act and were sentenced. Jordan received nine months in prison, Tyndall six months and two other co-conspirators received three months each. In relation to the public disturbance at Trafalgar Square, Tyndall and Jordan received six weeks and two months imprisonment respectively.⁵³ Brook concluded in 1963 that the law was adequate to

⁵¹ Fascist Activities and Public Order, Cabinet Papers 129/111 (19th October 1962).

⁵² R. Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain: From Oswald Mosley's Black Shirts to the National Front* (London, I.B. Tauris: 2000), p. 237.

⁵³ For detailed reports on the trial see: *The Times* 04 Oct, 1962; *Ibid.*, 03 Oct, 1962; *Ibid.*, 06 Oct, 1962; *Ibid.*, 11 Oct, 1962; *Ibid.*, 13 Oct, 1962; *Ibid.*, 16 Oct, 1962.

deal with disturbances of such kind, although in July of that year the fines and sentences for disturbances under the Acts were increased.⁵⁴

The above attest to how radical far-right groups managed to stretch the elasticity of their antisemitism to include this new battle against black immigration and demonstrate how old rhetoric still maintained at the core of the movement's ideology, even when incorporating 'new' enemies. That is not to say that the new attacks on immigrants were 'window dressing', as clearly the ideas of racial hygiene were part-and-parcel of Jordan's mind-set and that of his fellow travellers. The issue of increased Black and Asian immigration to Britain was a new issue, or a 'hot topic', which fitted comfortably into far-right political ideology. Antisemitic conspiracy theories were absorbed into new arguments about 'Mongrelisation' (mixing of races) and 'One-Worldism' ('socialism of races' or a world without racial identity). It is also clear that Holocaust denial was able to fit smoothly into these pre-existing ideologies.⁵⁵ While the government was reluctant to engage in changing the law, as demonstrated in the memoranda from the Home Secretary at the time, it was keenly aware that such groups and meetings attracted media attention and that 'television [gave] immediate nationwide publicity even to quite minor disorders.'⁵⁶ As such the government was concerned that it must be seen to be doing something, and while it felt the laws like the Public Order Act were adequate to deal with situations like the Trafalgar Square rally, it is clear that the prevailing mood in Britain was against men like Tyndall and Jordan.

This negative portrayal and move against radical far right British neo-Nazism is something which is seen after Tyndall and Jordan were released from prison and marked the end of Tyndall's Association with Jordan. The events of 1962 lead to a souring of relations between the two men and resulted in the end of their political and personal affiliation. Their split can be explained, in part, by personal reasons. Jordan had married Tyndall's fiancée Françoise Dior. Dior was a committed National Socialist. On the day of their wedding, after Jordan and Dior had declared their vows in Coventry registry office, they gave the Nazi salute to waiting photographers. Later at a 'blood mingling' ceremony the couple dropped their blood over a virgin copy of *Mein Kampf*. The wedding itself was extremely unpopular especially given its location next to Coventry cathedral (a potent symbol of British identity, fostered by the collective memory of solidarity during the blitz) and many anti-Nazi protestors were arrested.

⁵⁴ Fascist Activities and Public Order, Cabinet Papers 129/113 (26th April 1963).

⁵⁵ These phrases are taken from *Combat* see: *Combat*, No. 10, Jan- Feb (1961), p. 1.

⁵⁶ Fascist Activities and Public Order, Cabinet Papers 129/111 (19th October 1962).

The unpopularity of Jordan and the event can be seen in the riots and protests in the Pathé news reports of the wedding.⁵⁷

The reaction to the wedding in the media also gives further indication as to why the union between Tyndall and Jordan dissolved. Tyndall felt, like John Bean before him, that the overt German Nazism of Jordan and the NSM was a bar to progress in the pursuit of power. Tyndall therefore split with Jordan and created his own faction, The Greater British Movement (GBM) in 1964. In essence what was taking place was a move away from the unpopular Nazi and National Socialist image which Colin Jordan wished to uphold. On the far right it was beginning to be understood that it was unwise to link extreme British nationalism to the swastika, and that *British* rather than *German* traditions should be emphasized.⁵⁸ These developments will be discussed in the following chapter.

With Tyndall gone, Jordan was again left alone with the rump of a former movement. The NSM went on and was active during the 1964 general election in Smethwick and campaigned for the Conservative candidate Peter Griffiths. Jordan and the NSM exploited concerns over immigration or the 'coloured invasion' as he called it to promote his own ideological leanings about race and often his speeches turned to the Jews and antisemitic tirades. The election is notorious for the slogan (which Griffiths denied coining or endorsing) 'If you want a nigger for a neighbour, vote Labour.' Jordan was aware that in helping the Conservative candidate he was jeopardising his traditional monopoly on the issue of immigration but explained why he supported a mainstream political party's candidate on an issue which he had placed at the cornerstone of his movement:

I was certainly aware of this danger, but equally aware that once people started to think racially, their own logic would take them well beyond any position the Conservatives could ever adopt. We may have helped Griffiths, but we knew how much the Conservatives were to blame for immigration in the first place the Smethwick result proved what we had been saying that immigration was the election issue. And this was a victory for us.⁵⁹

Jordan's comment proves illuminating because it shows he was unable distinguish between the two different points at hand. While for Jordan the immigration issue may have been a way to get the populace to 'think racially' the reality was that concerns over immigration were as far as the majority of the public were 'willing to go'. Concerns over immigration do not necessarily lead to racial hatred or more specifically radicalised political positions. This was

⁵⁷ British Pathé News Archive 'A Very Nazi Wedding' 1963 Film ID: 1776.07.

⁵⁸ R. Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain*, pp. 231-2.

⁵⁹ M. Walker, *The National Front*, p. 55.

demonstrated in 1978 with Margaret Thatcher's infamous 'swamping' remarks which drew traditional conservatives and voters away from the National Front when they felt their concerns were being addressed by a legitimate democratic party. Thatcher and the other democratic parties did conversely adopt the rhetoric of the National Front (in albeit more toned down and with less racist language) which gained them votes, yet the immigration issue in these parties was immersed within wider democratic manifestos which proved far more appealing to the public at large. Jordan's comments relating to the Smethwick campaign also demonstrated how he saw the world. Jordan's view that the British populace was ignorant of racial discourses and that, once they began to 'think racially', support for him and others like him would increase dramatically was far-fetched but he was very cognisant that a debate over race was taking place. Jordan wanted to capitalise on the race discourses taking place at the time and provide the public his own pedagogical insights into how immigration was connected to a wider Jewish conspiracy. For Jordan the 'race' issue which could only be solved by radical revolution and a British National Socialist State, whereas the vast majority of the population wanted the 'race' issues solved within a democratic system.

This was indicative of the ultimate reason why the extreme far right was a failure. While Jordan had identified the issue of immigration among the British populace as congruous with his own ideology, he could not understand that wider issues and sentiments in British Society prevented him from attaining any sort of power or mass support. These sentiments, which included a strong democratic ethic and a historic and cultural pride in its fight against Nazi tyranny, were predisposed to rejecting extremist ideologies. Jordan had recognised a public discourse on which he had much to say and was in accord with his own ideology. He was unable to gain any political capital from this discourse however, as the public looked to solutions from parties and movements which were devoid of the extremist rhetoric and action displayed by Jordan and his supporters. In essence there was not the political space on the far right British politics for Jordan and his movements. His voice became lost in the crowd of far right voices and remained isolated on the lunatic far right fringe of British politics.⁶⁰

Despite not being able gain any real political capital from increased immigration to the United Kingdom, the issue remained of the upmost importance for Jordan. He passionately believed that the immigrants were sub-human or not of the same racial calibre as the British and her 'Aryan peoples'. His worldview explains why he related this issue to his traditional enemy and

⁶⁰ See: M. Cronin (ed.) *The Failure of British Fascism: The Far Right and The Fight for Political Recognition* (Basingstoke, Macmillan: 1996), especially R. Griffin, 'British Fascism: The Ugly Duckling' pp. 141-165 and M. Durham 'The British Extreme Right and the Problem of Political Space, 1967-1983'. pp. 81-98.

placed the blame for immigration on international Jewry. It is clear that Jordan was unashamedly pro-Hitler and pro-Nazi. Jordan unlike John Bean, A.K. Chesterton and other founding members of the National Front, would keep a distinctly Nazi version of the past alive in the United Kingdom, while also absorbing new issues like black and Asian immigration into a distinctly Nazi world view. To a large extent the views of Jordan (like those of Arnold Leese) are comparable to those of Hitler found in *Mein Kampf*, *Hitler's Table Talk*, and Hitler's Political Testament. This fact is seen in his next major political action. Jordan not only sought to create a National Socialist Movement in the United Kingdom but a unification of all 'Aryan peoples' in the world.

Jordan's desire to unify the Aryan people of the world was demonstrated explicitly in 1962 when he organised a meeting in the Gloucestershire Cotswolds. The 'Cotswold declaration', as the meeting became to be known, outlined the principles of a new world movement called the World Union of National Socialists (WUNS).⁶¹ The choice of the Cotswolds, a site designated for its outstanding natural beauty, naturally appealed to Jordan's predilection of traditional values, an expression of his (ultimately unattainable) vision of England as a rural idyll. The leader chosen for the movement was, however, not Jordan but George Lincoln Rockwell, America's post-war founder of the American Nazi Party (ANP). The principles of the movement were to form a 'monolithic, combat efficient, international political apparatus to combat and utterly destroy the international Jewish communist and Zionist apparatus of treason and subversion' and build 'an eventual world order based on race' with the 'Final Settlement of the Jewish problem.' The Union also stipulated that 'no organisation or individual failing to acknowledge the spiritual leadership of Adolf Hitler' would be admitted to membership.⁶² By 1965, the WUNS had operative chapters in over twenty countries, and later in the decade would have derivatives in Africa, Australia and Asia. While the movement had active members and dependencies in every inhabited continent in the world, it was still constrained by the infighting of the members of individual factions.⁶³ Jordan remained a member and organiser within the movement until his death in 2009 and are indicative of his desire to build a world based on racial lines.

⁶¹ A copy of the declaration is available on the WUNS: <http://nationalsocialist.net/cotswold.htm> (accessed: 2/5/12).

⁶² F. J. Simonelli, 'Thriving in a Cultic Milieu: The World Union of National Socialist, 1962-1992', in J. Kaplan and H Lööw (eds), *The Cultic Milieu: Oppositional Subcultures in an Age of Globalisation* (Oxford, Altamira Press: 2002), p. 213.

⁶³ For a detailed history of the WUNS see: F. J. Simonelli, 'Thriving in a Cultic Milieu: The World Union of National Socialists, 1962-1992' pp. 211-224. For details of current membership see: <http://nationalsocialist.net/members.htm> (Accessed: 02/05/12).

While establishing connections internationally Jordan still remained active in the United Kingdom. After his imprisonment for creating the underground movement, Spearhead and the NSM rally in Trafalgar Square and subsequent split with Tyndall over his marriage to Francoise Dior, Jordan was left with a movement with a small membership. His exclusion from the National Front, imprisonment in 1967 for distributing a leaflet entitled 'The Coloured Invasion', led to Jordan reorganising the NSM into the British Movement (BM). The movement's ideology changed little from that of the NSM and is evidenced by the way in which the BM contested the parliamentary by-election Birmingham Ladywood, in 1969. During the campaign it was unapologetic and brazen about its Nazi Beliefs. It did not hide any of its Nazi credentials; members openly wore the Nazi swastika and the party literature featured pictures of Hitler. Jordan came fourth in the election, capturing three percent of the vote (282 votes). The result was however deemed a success by the BM given its overt use of Nazi rhetoric and use of Nazi iconography.⁶⁴The BM campaigned for the seat again in the 1970 and 1974 elections with a similar campaign strategy and attracted a similar proportion of the vote.

While he was leader of the BM, Jordan gave numerous speeches to spread the message of 'White power for Britain.' The propaganda of the BM essentially consisted of conjuring up images of a 'fair and pleasant land' in which a particular 'breed of people' made 'their country great by their greatness as a race' only to have it destroyed by an 'invasion' in which 'their land gradually became largely the land of others.' Again, Jordan attributed the Jews and international Jewry as the cause of the 'invasion.'⁶⁵ Jordan's leadership of the BM and the platform from which he based his election campaigns were indicative of the enduring antisemitic ideas and 'histories' which had been constructed by the far right prior to and in the immediate aftermath of the World War Two. Jordan's political outlook remained obstinate in the face of public opinion which saw no value in his political outlook and style. Jordan would have remained intent on this political path had it not been for a rather odd incident in 1975 which would cost him the leadership of the BM.

Michael McLaughlin replaced Jordan as leader of the BM in 1975.⁶⁶Jordan removal from power came after he was arrested for shoplifting women's underwear from a Tesco's store in Leamington Spa. Jordan was ridiculed by fellow members of the BM and nicknamed 'knickers

⁶⁴ R. Hill, A. Bell, *The Other Face Terror: Inside Europe's Neo-Nazi Network* (London, Grafton: 1988), pp. 36-38. Ray Hill was a Searchlight mole in the underground and neo-Nazi movements of Europe.

⁶⁵ C. Jordan, *White Power for Britain* (Speech at Wolverhampton: 15th May 1971),pp. 1-4.

⁶⁶ For more detailed information on the rise of McLaughlin, see: J. Kaplan, *The Encyclopaedia of White Power*, pp. 147-48.

stealer'.⁶⁷ However it was not just the item stolen which was the reason for his removal, what was worse, in the eyes of his far-right followers, was that he stolen the item from the 'Jewish-owned' store, Tesco. Jordan attempted to claim he had been framed by Jews, but it was clear to all that Jordan's leadership of the BM was over and McLaughlin seized on the opportunity to take control.⁶⁸

Jordan spent some five years out of the public view and emerged from his 'self-imposed exile' in the early 1980s. Jordan's political activism was, however, greatly reduced and he spent most of his time publishing material, much of which dealt with or related to the Holocaust. Jordan attempted to provide a template from which the far right could achieve power. Jordan devised a six-point plan which essentially called for all groups on the British far right to put aside their differences and unite. Jordan proposed a combined approach. Those on the far right who sought power by the ballot box were to be supported by underground terror organisation movements. Jordan also appealed for 'agents' to carry out acts of terror or sabotage who would be willing to spend large amounts of time in jail or hiding underground until the far right gained power.⁶⁹ Jordan's idea stressed the unification of the far right under the banner of National Socialism and was a theme which dominated all his publications from the 1980s onwards. This was largely due to his role in the WUNS and his lack of direct control over a British party.⁷⁰

In addition to his plan for far-right power, Jordan also identified the Holocaust as a 'Jewish weapon of war' which was used by the Jews to attack nationalist ideologies.⁷¹ Although not explicitly stated, judging by Jordan's earlier writings, this 'weapon' was another product of the world Jewish conspiracy, and its 'propaganda machine' which produced material to support Jewish interests. This notion was not exclusive to Jordan. John Tyndall, then Leader of the National Front, also presented the Holocaust as an obstacle to 'genuine' discussions over race and nationalism and will be discussed in the next chapter.⁷²

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 145-151.

⁶⁸ R. Hill, A. Bell, *The Other Face Terror*, pp. 119-120.

⁶⁹ G. Gable, 'The Far Right in Contemporary Britain' in L. Cheles, R. Ferguson and M. Vaughan (eds.), *Neo-Fascism in Europe* (Harlow, Longman: 1991), p. 258, in the chapter Gable claims that Jordan began to publish again in 1986 but there are articles from Jordan in 1981 and relate to his ideas regarding moving the British far right forward, see: C. Jordan, *National Socialism: World Creed for the 1980s* (Harrogate, Gothic Ripples: 1981).

⁷⁰ For detailed critique of Jordan's plan see: G. Gable, 'The Far Right in Contemporary Britain' in L. Cheles, R. Ferguson and M. Vaughan, *Neo-Fascism in Europe* (Harlow, Longman: 1991), pp. 258- 61.

⁷¹ C. Jordan, *National Socialism*, pp. 6-8.

⁷² J. Tyndall, *The Eleventh Hour: A Call for British Rebirth* (London, Albion Press, 2nd Edition: 1988), p. 108.

Jordan was keen to stress that this Jewish ‘weapon’ of war had been used before to bring about ‘insane fratricidal inter-Aryan war which brought about the physical downfall of what, despite any and all its shortcomings, was the finest achievement of the self-conscious Aryan spirit and will [Nazi Germany]’. Jewish international radicalism had, Jordan claimed, destroyed the possibility of the ‘union of the Aryan spirit’ under Hitler.⁷³ He argued that defeat at the hands of Jews stood as a monumental lesson and ‘Never must happen again!’⁷⁴ Jordan’s comments were a direct reference to the ‘never again’ a pledge often made in reference to the Holocaust and are emblematic not of the history which Jordan wanted to destroy but an envy of the ‘power’ of the history of the Holocaust - a power which he wanted for his own ‘history’.

In viewing the Holocaust as Jewish propaganda, Jordan and the far right could blame their own political failures on Jews. In stating that Jewish propaganda controlled society (in this instance their belief the Holocaust was a hoax) they could claim that the population had been brainwashed against far-right ideologies. They believed that if this ‘propaganda’ was exposed as a lie then the British populace and the world would see the true value of their political philosophy. From such a perspective it was not that their ideas were repugnant to the population, it was that ‘Jewish propaganda’ was all powerful. This ‘knowledge’ invested the far-right cause with meaning and a mission: to defeat Jewish propaganda. It also confirmed the Jews as the primary enemy in far-right thought. The forms that the far right thought this Jewish propaganda took will be discussed in the final section of this chapter.

To expose what he saw as a Jewish propaganda Jordan revived the journal of his mentor Arnold Leese, *Gothic Ripples*. The journal was published occasionally and infrequently and was labelled ‘an occasional report’ by Jordan. By all accounts the Journal had a low readership and was restricted to revolutionary far-right circles.⁷⁵ In *Gothic Ripples* the Holocaust was linked to the power of Jews and linked Jewish individuals to the government to show the ‘hidden hand’ behind the scenes. Again Jordan’s Holocaust denial represented nothing new and used sources from early forms of denial seen in the previous two chapters, such as Arthur Ponsonby’s *Falsehood in Wartime* and the same national news headlines from the 1930s which claimed the Jews ‘declared war on Germany’.⁷⁶

Jordan (like Leese) used the journal to demonstrate links between Jews and the British government. ‘Exposing’ the ‘links’ between the British government and Jewish lobby groups

⁷³ *Ibid*, pp. 12-13

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p. 13.

⁷⁵ R. Hill, A. Bell, *The Other Face Terror: inside Europe’s Neo-Nazi Network*, pp. 120-121.

⁷⁶ C. Jordan, *Gothic Ripples* No. 16.(1986).

and individuals was key to 'validating' and providing 'evidence' for world Jewish conspiracy. In propaganda style reminiscent of Arnold Leese (who in his editions of *Gothic Ripples* had regular features 'Jews in the news' and listed all members of the government who he perceived to have Jewish ancestry) Jordan would link news stories about Jewish figures in government or pictures of Jews with government figures as conclusive 'evidence' of Jewish control.

In the 1987 'election special' of *Gothic Ripples*, a front page picture under the heading 'The old gang, their betrayal of the race and nation makes them the biggest criminals we have' shows Edwina Currie, Nigel Lawson, Malcolm Rifkind and Keith Joseph surrounding a hangman's noose. The picture was situated next to a caption which reads 'DONT VOTE! A vote for this gang is a vote for alien domination.'⁷⁷ A picture of Margret Thatcher next to a Star of David was also prominently displayed on the cover. The intimation of the front page was that the presence of in government of individuals with Jewish heritage was evidence of Jewish control.⁷⁸ Jordan's answer to this control was execution of these individuals and was demonstrated by the presence of the hangman's noose. The cover also includes a picture of Norman Tebbit as a guest of honour at the Waltham Frost Hebrew congregation dinner and ball. The picture shows Tebbit meeting with Rabbi E. Salasnik. Again the intimation was that Jews controlled government. This image demonstrates the fanatical nature with which Jordan believed in a Jewish conspiracy. That a government figure pictured near Jews was evidence of supposed Jewish control demonstrates the rudimentary simplicity on which the theory rested.

In 1988, *Gothic Ripples* dedicated an entire issue to the question of the Holocaust. As the election special displayed Jordan believed that the Jews were in control of the Thatcher government. This directly influenced his view that because of the presence of Jews they were directly responsible for promoting Holocaust 'myth'. Jordan used a combination of approaches to attack the Holocaust and perpetuate his notion of Jewish propaganda and control. First, he used the same tactic of presenting government officials in pictures near members of the Jewish community to suggest that they had 'control' over the government. In one picture Efraim Zuroff and Marvin Hier from the Simon Wiesenthal Centre are pictured with Home Secretary Douglas Hurd. Jordan claimed that this was evidence that Hurd was being pressured into prosecuting Nazi criminals hiding in the United Kingdom. This may have been in fact true, as prosecuting Nazi war criminals was an issue in the late 1980s and culminated in the 1991 War Crimes Act. Jordan's point was erroneous, and demonstrated a pathological and obsessive

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 18. (1987).

⁷⁸ A image of this cover of *Gothic Ripples* is in Appendix Four.

antenna for all things Jewish. In actively and fanatically looking for 'examples' Jordan found Jews everywhere, which in turn validated his view of Jewish domination. Jordan second approach in the issue was to attack the Holocaust directly. Jordan stated, 'the "Holocaust", the myth of six million Jews exterminated by the Nazis, is world Jewry's most powerful propaganda.' ' Jordan suggested the myth was perpetuated by the newspapers and particularly singled out 'the muck-mongering Sun newspaper of the half-Jewish' Rupert Murdoch as a main disseminator of Holocaust propaganda and protection of Jewish interests. Attack on newspapers, was again emblematic of his ideas about Jewish propaganda blinding the nation to the truth about National Socialism. This was evidence in the issue when he wrote 'Gothic Ripples ... condemns all those concoct and market atrocity stories to generate hatred against Hitler's Germany.'⁷⁹

In the issue Jordan claimed that because the 'myth' of the Holocaust had been made prevalent in the media the real 'war criminals ... got away with [it]'. The 'real' criminals were Winston Churchill, Stalin and Franklin D. Roosevelt. Jordan directed his readers to the crimes of Stalin and states that the 'twenty million people killed under communism, makes the Jewish claim of six million, even if it were true, minor in comparison, yet while we never cease hearing daily of this Jewish "Holocaust" we hardly ever hear a word regarding the infinitely greater holocaust of the victims of communism.'⁸⁰ This attack on the Allied crimes of war was symbolic of a tactic of Holocaust deniers which sought to direct attention away from Nazi crimes while minimising or denying Nazi crimes in the process. This tactic also had a further purpose in denying the Holocaust and highlighting the crimes committed by the Allies in the Second World War, Jordan was also discrediting two ideologies that he found repugnant, democracy and communism. The purpose of this was to recast the abhorrence the public felt about Nazism on to democracy and communism, although the latter was already an unpopular ideology in the United Kingdom as a result of Cold War tensions.

In the issue Jordan did not debate the existence of the Holocaust nor did he use any of the literature from the likes of Richard Verrall or Arthur Butz. For Jordan, his validation that the Holocaust was a hoax was situated in the position the Holocaust held in the media in society. This was not new to Holocaust denial and was a key argument often used by Holocaust deniers, but it was usually used in coalition with some form of material questioning of the existence of the Holocaust. Jordan did not do this. The reason appeared to be located in Jordan's objective of exposing a Zionist conspiracy so, for him, the Holocaust remained just one example in a

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, No. 19. (1988), p. 2.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 19. (1988).

range of other factors which 'proved' his belief and justification for 'Jewish world control'. The fact that the Holocaust was a 'hoax' was for Jordan axiomatic and reflects Jordan's retreat into a radical and revolutionary far-right 'historical' bunker. Jordan's justification for his world view and ideology was located in not only what he perceived as happening in the present but what he 'knew' had happened in the 'past'.

Jordan's overt antisemitism and publications which related to Jewish control demonstrate his position in the 'old guard' of the far right. His overt and unapologetic statements on Jewish control were the core of his political platform and ideology. The blunt rhetoric and tone of his work seems to suggest that he was engaged in a dialogue with an audience who may have already accepted his point of view. He did not engage in detailed explanations of why the Holocaust was a 'hoax', but rather used the prominence of the Holocaust in society as evidence of Jewish control. This differed to the publications of Holocaust deniers who employed a 'scholastic' apparatus to dispute the facts of the Holocaust. The aim of both groups was the same but the methods differed. Jordan and his fellow radical far-right travellers used overt antisemitic language, because they were convinced of a Jewish conspiracy and were essentially engaged in a dialogue amongst themselves. Whereas the deniers who employed more 'scholarly' approaches were trying to convince the wider public that there was a Jewish conspiracy by attempting to debunk the Holocaust. The far-right deniers who employed 'scholarly' language and presentation will be investigated in next chapter with the discussion of 'recidivist', 'populist' and 'hybrid' movements in the far right.

Jordan's fellow radical-right Holocaust deniers.

The radical variant of the far right used the Holocaust to demonstrate how Jewish propaganda controlled the world. For the radical variant ideologies of the far right the Holocaust represented an arm of the Jewish controlled world. By the early 1980s, Jewish control had been given a new name in far-right circles, 'ZOG', which stood for the Zionist Occupation Government.⁸¹ Holocaust Denial was used by Jordan's fellow travellers as a method to attack 'ZOG'. One example of such a publication was Lady Jane Birdwood's *The Longest Hatred*.⁸² Birdwood's style differed from that of Jordan in that she did include the arguments of more

⁸¹ Jordan adopted the phrase 'ZOG' in his writings from the late 1980s and it is included in an article entitled 'Colin Jordan Versus ZOG' which related to the publication of his novel *Merrie England: 2000*.

⁸² J. Birdwood, *The Longest Hatred* (London, Christian Defence League: 1991), pp. 35-36.

'recidivist', 'populist' and 'hybrid' deniers such as Richard Verrall; she also included the findings of the Fred Leuchter report in her publication.⁸³

Birdwood attacked the validity of what she dubbed the 'Anne Frank story'. She claimed that because Anne Frank had not been gassed at Auschwitz and died in Belsen, that there were no gas chambers at Auschwitz. Birdwood wrote, 'If the "Holocaust" horror-story accounts of Auschwitz are to be believed, Anne would have been an early candidate for the "gas chamber" as she was too young and not strong enough to perform hard physical work.'⁸⁴ Birdwood combined this statement with the 'evidence' of the Leuchter report to demonstrate that there were no gas chambers at Auschwitz. Birdwood attempted to use a form of Holocaust denial which had the 'appearance' of scholarly rigour. Birdwood drew on the Leuchter report to justify her claims and attacked specific totems of the Holocaust like the Anne Frank diary and Auschwitz. Birdwood's arguments and Holocaust denial led her to conclude: '[t]his big lie, together with the monopoly control which Jewish bankers exert over the mass media, constitute the principal means whereby the majority of Gentiles is kept in a passive trance of guilt, fear and ignorance.'⁸⁵ Again it is apparent that the radical far right used the Holocaust to explain how 'the passive trance of guilt, fear and ignorance' in which Gentiles lived prevented them from accepting far-right ideology. This belief in a Jewish propaganda hoax therefore drove the radical far right to attack the Holocaust.

Birdwood, like Jordan, attacked a past that was incompatible with her world view and instead used a radical far-right 'history' of Jewish domination and control to explain events in the present. Once she had established her conclusions, Birdwood offered a solution to Jewish control. This solution drew on historical precedents; she stated that the Jews should be expelled from the country as they had been under Edward I in 1290 and that non-whites should also be banished as they had been under Elizabeth I in 1596. To this end, Birdwood wrote

⁸³ The Leuchter collected samples from the sites the gas chambers in Poland, specifically the sites at Auschwitz- Birkenau and Majdanek, in the report he claimed to have identified only trace amounts of residual cyanide from the gas chambers where as he identified a concentration 150 to 1000 times higher in the chambers for delousing clothing. To Leuchter and Holocaust deniers this was hailed as conclusive proof that the gas chambers were a myth and the Holocaust a falsification of history. Leuchter had no background in chemistry nor did he have any supporting credentials for his profession as an engineer. Leuchter's report had not taken into account that much lower levels of hydrocyanic acid were needed to kill humans than lice, or the fact that the gas chambers took less time to kill their victims than in the delousing chambers which had to operate for hours and thus explained the presence of higher levels in the delousing chambers. Furthermore, it was impossible to explain why there should have been any levels present in the gas chambers which deniers claimed were mortuaries.

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 37-38.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p. 38.

A great harm has befallen Britain as a result of King Edward's and Queen Elizabeth's laws being swept aside. Jewish usurers dominate our economy and warp our culture as a result of their domination of the opinion-forming media—and we have an Afro-Asian and half-caste population said to be as many as 12 million persons. If the British people wish to survive they will have to find the courage, the energy and the leadership to unite and take action to re-impose these wise laws.⁸⁶

In this statement there was a link between immigration to Britain and Jewish control which had characterised Jordan's earlier speeches and writings; it was emblematic of a far-right thought which saw the world divided along racial lines.

Birdwood's conclusion had a similar ring to the protocols established by Leese. Edward I was venerated for his expulsion of the Jews and as emblematic of an 'English' leader who had been aware of a Jewish conspiracy and fought and won against the Jews. This was nonsense and it is evidence of the way in which the radical far right searched the past to construct a 'history' which was entirely suited to their ideology. As Steinweis opines, This reconfiguration of a medieval history in line with modern international conspiracy and neo-nazi ideology had a strong correlation with the history constructed in Third Reich history university history departments.⁸⁷ Birdwood was given a three-month suspended sentence for her publication in 1994 under the Public Order Act of 1986.

Birdwood was not alone in this type of attack. Another publication from the far right took the form of a cartoon.⁸⁸ *Tales of the Holofoax* was American, but distributed and republished by the Briton Simon Sheppard, on his extreme website *The Heretical Press*. In a section called the 'six chimneys' the website published jokes about the Holocaust and Jews which were exhibited in the form of cartoons intermixed with extreme provocations. One such example was the statement:

We apologise in advance to any Jewish person who is offended by our jokes, but bad things happen to everyone, and claiming that your suffering deserves some sort of pity to a level beyond the respect that Catholic sainthood has given people is so fucking self-centred that it makes us sick. You are not special because you suffered. Can you say Salem Witch Trials? Did the witches get their own country after the church tried to exterminate them? Shut your self-serving mouths and get over it.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, p. 39.

⁸⁷ A. E. Steinweis, *Studying the Jew: Scholarly Antisemitism in the Third Reich* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press: 2006), pp. 92-122

⁸⁸ *Tales of The Holofoax: A Journal of Satire* (Vol. 1 No. 1), p. 1.

This paragraph may suggest that because a reference to suffering was made the website accepts the reality of the Holocaust. This was far from true. The website did not engage in direct historical 'revisionism'; instead, like Jordan's writings, it took for granted that the Holocaust had not taken place and simply referred to 'The church of the Holy Hoax.'⁸⁹

The comic, *HoloHoax*, was deeply antisemitic and represented a growing trend among the more extreme edges of the far right to create disturbing and offensive material in relation to the Holocaust. *Tales of the HoloHoax* used the arguments of the Holocaust deniers and presented them in cartoon form. The aim of the cartoons was to present what the far right saw as the absurdity of the information which related to the Holocaust. The subtitles of the cartoons were designed to cause offence; in one example the character of Alice from *Alice in Wonderland* is depicted in 'Alice in Lampshade Land' where the Cheshire Cat's face is in a bar of soap and lampshades have human faces. The magazine used this example to demonstrate 'even HoloHoaxers sometimes get fed up with the more egregious aspects of the hoax' and that 'Deborah Lipstadt and Raul Hilberg have admitted stories about bars of soap and human skin lampshades are false.'⁹⁰ This use of what Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman have dubbed 'the human soap controversy' is often used by deniers to justify their positions.⁹¹ Essentially the argument rests on the fact that historians do not agree with war and imitate post-war propaganda, and some eyewitness testimony, that the Nazis' mass-produced soap out of the dead bodies of Jewish and other victims of Nazi genocide. Historians do accept that soap may have been made on a small scale at the Stutthof concentration camp, but not that it produced on a mass industrialised scale. As Shermer and Gorbman explain, 'deniers exploit the confusion, claiming that this is a clear example of Holocaust myth-making, the unreliability of eyewitness testimony, and poor historiography.'⁹²

Such material was also matched by British publications and the actions of underground far-right organisations. *Combat 18* (which had direct links to Colin Jordan) published a magazine entitled *Combat 18*. It also contained crude cartoons like those found in *Tales of the HoloHoax* but also featured members of the movement who had climbed into the crematoria ovens at Auschwitz.⁹³ This type of extremist Holocaust denial and Holocaust desecration was largely contained in and disseminated by the extremities of the far right. It was emblematic of a crude

⁸⁹ <http://www.heretical.com/holofun/shoah1.html> (accessed: 25/05/12).

⁹⁰ *Tales of The HoloHoax: A Journal of Satire*, Vol. 1 No. 1, p 10.

⁹¹ For a detailed explanation of this tactic used by deniers see: M. Shermer and A. Gorbman, *Denying History: Who Says the Holocaust Never Happened And Why Do They Say It?* (Berkeley, University of California: 2009), pp. 112-117.

⁹² *Ibid*, p. 115.

⁹³ *Combat 18*, Issue No. 1 and No. 3.

and far-right 'sense of humour' which saw the Holocaust a complete fabrication and lacked any need for a 'scholarly' approach to denial. *Tales of the Holofoax* circulation was relatively low but still brought questions in the House of Commons regarding the feasibility bringing criminal proceedings against the authors and distributors.⁹⁴

Other individuals from the 'radical' camp of the British far right continued to publish written Holocaust denial tracts. Michael McLaughlin head of the BM, who took over from Jordan in 1975, published *For Those Who Cannot Speak* in 1979. The book was not only an attack on the Holocaust but was also a rigorous defence of Nazism. Its tone was reminiscent of Arnold Leese's and Colin Jordan's early publications, in which the Jews were blamed for declaring war on Germany in 1933.⁹⁵ McLaughlin used the same sources as Leese and Jordan including the well-known headline 'Judea Declares War on Germany' as the basis for the familiar far-right hypothesis that world Jewry declared war on Germany. McLaughlin like Birdwood attacked the diary of Anne Frank as a 'fake' and claimed that the Holocaust was a 'gigantic rip-off' by the Jews.⁹⁶ In the conclusion, McLaughlin called for the re-establishment of the Nazi regime to save Europe.⁹⁷ McLaughlin used his arguments to build to a conclusion in which he could call for the ultimate aim of the British Movement, the reestablishment of Nazism and National Socialism. The propaganda of the piece is therefore clearly identifiable as being influenced by the early works of Leese and the later works of Colin Jordan and the ideas of the WUNS. The title of the piece identifies it as a work of Nazi apologia but also again posits the argument that Jewish propaganda had prevented the 'truth' about National Socialism being known. The 'truth', for McLaughlin, was that National Socialism was an attempt to unite the Aryan races of Europe to create a perfect civilisation, but this aspiration was destroyed by Jewish power that drew the allied countries into the war against Nazi Germany to destroy the ideology.⁹⁸

McLaughlin continued rewriting the past with a far-right analysis of Allied war crimes. In 1982 he penned a book, entitled *Death of A City*, primarily based on David Irving's *The Destruction of Dresden*.⁹⁹ The work was an attempt by a Holocaust denier to present the arguments familiar to historians of Holocaust denial in another way. While the comparison between the crimes of the Allies and Nazis was nothing new in the arsenal of denial or the constructed 'histories' of the far right, McLaughlin used the Dresden bombings as an example of British

⁹⁴ Hansard, HC debates, 13th March 1991, Vol. 187, col 501.

⁹⁵ M. McLaughlin, *For Those Who Cannot Speak* (Uckfield, The Historical Review Press: 1979), p. 17.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 19.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 32-34.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 19.

⁹⁹ An advertisement of Irving's book was placed on the inside cover, M. McLaughlin, *The Death of a City* (Deeside, Phoenix Publications: 1982).

aggression and 'Churchill's penchant for satanic sadistic crimes on an unprecedented scale.'¹⁰⁰ While McLaughlin did not address the Holocaust in a direct way, the book was peppered with snide references and attempts to undermine the Holocaust. McLaughlin described the 'cold-shoulder' given to Dresden by the British media and claimed 'yet this same media wastes no time giving full publicity to tales of Jewish suffering, even if the tales are of dubious authenticity. And so, by means other than outright censorship, the lies and cover-ups continue to destroy balance of opinion.'¹⁰¹ McLaughlin also claimed that the pictures of bodies killed during the raids were 'put to the most dreadful use when after the war allied propagandists claimed that these dead German civilians were killed by Nazis.'¹⁰²

McLaughlin's tract was, at times, an extremely graphic portrayal of horrors which took place during the bombing of Dresden and Hamburg. Its purpose, however, was overt, it was not so much about creating a memorial to those killed during the raids, rather it was an attempt to create a type of *Tu quoque* argument which was based on presenting the Allies' behaviour during the war as equivalent to those of the Nazis. McLaughlin's work moved this argument further and he claimed that the Allies were in fact worse than the Nazis.¹⁰³ McLaughlin's work demonstrates the increasing trend of the far right to dedicate energy to revising a wider history, in this case the Allied bombing of Germany. In the pamphlet the Holocaust was derided and attacked but was cast into a wider history which sought to venerate, and preach the virtues of National Socialism. The aim was the rehabilitation of Nazism, which chimed with McLaughlin's own political movement. McLaughlin's book, when combined with his earlier work *For Those Who Cannot Speak*, demonstrates how the far right was using different methods to facilitate its cause. McLaughlin's use of Dresden demonstrates a strand of argument that was employed to discredit the Holocaust, but also with the larger goal of rehabilitating National Socialism.

The publications of individuals like, Jordan, Birdwood, Sheppard and McLaughlin represented the extreme expression of neo-Nazi ideology. Their view that revolution was the only way to achieve power meant that their work had a militaristic overtone. Their publications therefore were not attempts to convince or provide persuasive arguments about the Holocaust to a wider public, rather radicalise their own political foot soldiers. Jordan's politics and publications were predicated towards a radical far-right revolution. In an interview in *Blood*

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, p. 15.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, p. 13.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, p. 17.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, p. 3, 15, 17.

and Honour Jordan made this clear. When asked about what the BNP should be doing in the mid-1990s Jordan responded 'my advice to the BNP leadership, advice which is certain to be rejected, would be to quit compromise in the futile pursuit of electoral victory, and instead put quality above quantity in the pursuit of a seizure of power.' Jordan also reflected upon his own shift away from contesting elections in the mid-1970s:

I favoured contesting elections and contested them myself up to and during the period of my leadership of British Movement, which ended in 1975. Subsequently, and especially since 1980, I came to see, in the circumstances which had by then developed, the futility of electioneering. Those circumstances were the advanced effects of the conditioning of the public mind ... achieved by the media, and the increasing repression brought about by the politicians allied to that media.¹⁰⁴

Jordan was no longer writing for a mass audience and was now pandering to a small group of radicals whom he hoped would bring about revolution. In this context There was no need to convince his audience with a detailed denial of the Holocaust because they already believed him and saw the Holocaust as an expression of Jewish propaganda and control. The Holocaust could simply be minimised to simple slogans like 'holo-hoax' or just placed in inverted commas and the message was clear. Jordan's writings therefore offered little new material regarding the Holocaust, something which is evident by his republication of the 1961 *Combat: Supplement* about the Eichmann trials in 1986.¹⁰⁵ Jordan should not be cast aside because of the intransigent stance of his arguments about the Holocaust. On the contrary, Jordan's vision and language provide the historian of Holocaust denial with a deeper understanding of the core beliefs from which denial radiates.

Jordan's perspective of the present and Orwellian vision of the future, *Merrie England: 2000 and Uprising!*: Holocaust denial, Holocaust awareness and conspiracy theory

The final section of this chapter will examine Holocaust denial in relation to the development of Holocaust consciousness. The main trajectory of this chapter has studied denial in relation to the chronology of denial in the United Kingdom, and in relation to 'gutter' denial which uses overt antisemitic labels. It has seen how static and intransigent the arguments of Holocaust denial remained. The extreme far right may have attacked and responded to contemporary events which related to the Holocaust, yet it did so with the same discourse which had been

¹⁰⁴ *Blood and Honour*, No. 30 (c. 1997).

¹⁰⁵ C. Jordan, *The Eichmann Trial: Jews and Atrocities* (Harrogate, Gothic Ripples: 1986).

established from 1942 to the late 1950s. Holocaust denial was not a single linear historical narrative, it was part of a wider history over what the Second World War had been about, or more precisely how the war had been a Jewish war of domination. For the extreme far right, the Holocaust and its entry in British collective memories in the late 1970s to the present day were emblematic of a growing success of a Jewish propaganda campaign.

Connecting denial to developments in Holocaust consciousness reveal how denial in the radical and revolutionary far right responded to changes in society; especially in relation to a growing Holocaust awareness. The intractable and static version of the past and commitment to neo-Nazism Holocaust created by the radical far right meant that denial remained a key and explicit component of radical far right. Holocaust denial did not dissipate in 'radical' echelons of the far right. In the 'popular' and 'hybrid' groups of the far right, however, Holocaust denial became less prominent as a higher level of Holocaust 'awareness' grew in British society. This was part of a tactic which was designed to broaden the appeal of such groups and will be discussed in the next chapter. Jordan and his brigade of 'radical' followers do not follow the example of the 'popular' and 'hybrid' groups and saw the fight against the growing Holocaust awareness as part of a wider battle against Jewish propaganda. This seems to be a battle the radical right thought they were losing due to a rise in Holocaust memorial, education and scholarship in British Society. Yet while the far right felt they might be losing their imagined 'battle' against the Holocaust and Jewish propaganda, the radical far right were quick to capitalise on the growth of Holocaust memory. They used the increasing awareness of the Holocaust as an example to prove the existence of a Jewish campaign of misinformation. This far-right concern over a growing Holocaust 'consciousness' in society was apparent in Colin Jordan's fictional novels *Merrie England: 2000* and *The Uprising!* which will be explored below.¹⁰⁶

There can be no doubt that the 'memory work' on the Holocaust since the late 1970s has grown exponentially.¹⁰⁷ This is not to say that there was a 'silence' regarding the Holocaust in Britain before this date. However, information regarding Jewish suffering in popular programming was as, James Jordan demonstrates, a regular presence on British Television from 1955 onwards (albeit a presence filtered through narratives of the British experience of war and it was not until the mid-1960s that the victims were afforded the voice to tell their

¹⁰⁶ C. Jordan, *Merrie England: 2000* (Harrogate, Gothic Ripples: 1993); C. Jordan, *The Uprising!* (Wyandotte, NS Publications: 2004).

¹⁰⁷ See: A. Pearce, 'The Development of Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain, 1979-2001' (Ph.D. Thesis, Royal Holloway College, 2010).

own stories).¹⁰⁸ In 1974 the Thames Television documentary series *World at War* produced an episode entitled 'Genocide' in which the horrors of the Holocaust were portrayed to the British public. In 1978 The miniseries *Holocaust* had been watched in millions of British homes with increasing viewing figures each week.¹⁰⁹ In 1983, the first British public memorial to the Holocaust was erected in Hyde Park.¹¹⁰ In 1991, the Holocaust was included on the British History National Curriculum. The year in which Jordan published *Merrie England: 2000* was also the year in which Steven Spielberg would release *Schindler's List*, a film which generated further interest in the Holocaust and contributed to a growing demand for Holocaust commemoration.¹¹¹

By the early 1990s the awareness of the Holocaust and desire to commemorate it caused great alarm with in all sectors of the British far right. They could see that their efforts to expunge the Holocaust from historical narratives of National Socialism was failing. For the far right however, it was not their methods and beliefs that had proven to be wrong, rather they chose to frame a growing Holocaust awareness within the familiar narrative of conspiracy. They saw the increase in Holocaust memorials, museums, films and education as the product of a Jewish propaganda campaign. Colin Jordan's radical far right response to this increased interest and desire to know commemorate the Holocaust amongst the British public came in the form of a fictional novel. *Merrie England: 2000*, was set in the dystopian world of the year 2000 in which the Orwellian styled 'Ministry of Harmony' has taken control of the United Kingdom. The story began with an old woman named Annie, who was walking her dog through London. The dog had the same name as the dog 'in the Dam Busters film of decades past'. In the city, old street names have been replaced with names like 'Holocaust Place' and 'Humanity Park', while walking in the park Annie let the dog go and 'He immediately disappeared under a car parked a little in front of her. "Nigger! Nigger! Come out at once!" she commanded in a suitably muffled tone. Seconds later a somewhat different "Nigger" did shoot out on a low mechanic's trolley.' The mechanic reported her remarks to the 'Harmony Force' and because "'racism" always ensured an instant response as a top priority of crime equalling if not exceeding murder' two

¹⁰⁸ J. Jordan "'And the Trouble is Where to Begin to Spring Surprises on You. Perhaps a Place You Might Least like to Remember.'" *This is Your Life* and the BBC's Images of the Holocaust in the Twenty Years Before *Holocaust*.' C. Sharples and O. Jensen (eds), *Britain and the Holocaust: Remembering and Representing War and Genocide* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan: 2013), pp. 90-114.

¹⁰⁹ T. Cole, "'Marvellous Raisins in a Badly Cooked Cake": British Reactions to the Screening of the Holocaust in *ibid.*, p. 83.

¹¹⁰ Initial proposals to locate the memorial near the Cenotaph were rejected which arguably symbolised a distancing of Holocaust from official British Memory. See: C. Sharples and O. Jensen 'Introduction' in *ibid.*, p. 5.

¹¹¹ *ibid.*

officers of the arrived on the scene immediately.¹¹² Annie was subjected to solitary confinement and to an intensive programme 'designed to rid her of every vestige of those prohibited thoughts which arose from an outmoded and thoroughly reprehensible awareness of [her] racial ancestry.'¹¹³ The opening of *Merrie England* demonstrates the tone with which the book was written, a combination of a far-right Orwellian vision for the future, and was symbolic of Jordan's retreat into fantasy after his own political failures. The most relevant section in the book for this chapter was entitled 'the staging of the Holocaust'. In the chapter Jordan tell the story of Annie's niece who was 'fortunate enough to be selected as spouse by Martin Fisher, one of the Chosen ones, namely a Jew'. Jordan explained that this marital union was 'no small distinction' in the England of the late 1990s because of the 'august precedence' assigned to Jews 'primarily due to the stupendous success of a most brilliant propaganda operation of theirs called "Holocaust"'.¹¹⁴

Jordan then went on to state that the basic tenets of the Holocaust were false, but that because of the control of Jews and the success of their propaganda, the figure of six million had increased to ten million:

Thus in 1999 there came the world-startling and world-agonizing discovery of hitherto unknown underground gas chambers and crematoria and huge deposits of human ash in artificial caverns in Germany's Black Forest. This allowed the total of Jewish victims of the "holocaust" to be raised to ten million. It was conceded where necessary that this exceeded the total of Jews previously accounted for as living in Europe at the time, but readily explained away as due to the evil anti-Semites having managed to falsify pre-war statistics as part of their foul efforts to belittle the Jews.

There are two salient points to be made about this passage. First is that Jordan uses a standard tactic of deniers which claimed that the number of Jews in Europe prior to the Holocaust was substantially lower than six million. This again represents nothing new in the arguments of deniers and is reminiscent of the claims made by Arnold Leese in the early 1950s.¹¹⁵ The second point to be made concerns Jordan's use of dramatic irony and comment about 'evil anti-Semites' belittling Jews. This statement attests to his frustration that his ideology was not accepted in society; he was trying to show how his ideologies were also used by Jews as part of their propaganda campaign. This suggests that Jordan saw himself as victim, suffocated by the Jews and their propaganda; that the 'the truth' of his ideology and his version of past was

¹¹² C. Jordan, *Merrie England: 2000*, p. 4.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 7

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

¹¹⁵ See chapter two, p. 95.

suppressed because of Jewish power. Jordan could not believe that his ideology was repugnant or that it did not contain the solution to a better world; for him it was because the world had been brainwashed against National Socialism and extreme nationalism that his words went unheeded.

Jordan went on to claim that in the future of Merrie England memorials to the Holocaust have reached preposterous levels:

Never an hour of the day passes without the media administering the desirable dose of 'holocaust', sustaining and reinforcing the fixation in the public mind. Daily newspapers carried on their front pages inset demanding 'don't forget the Holocaust!' supermarket shopping bags and all other suitable articles from cars to carpets were emblazoned with such words as 'remember Auschwitz!' Holocaust shrines appeared at roadsides the length and breadth of the land where travellers could rest and recite poems of remembrance inscribed on walls. At 11 o'clock every morning sirens and bells called a halt to life throughout England for two minutes, not on account of some long forgotten armistices in some war of 1914-18, but because of the extermination of the Jews in the World War for Democracy of 1939-45.¹¹⁶

Jordan went on to explain that this memorialisation brought privileges and Jews began to wear the yellow Star of David to denote their special status:

In stark contrast to the horrific days of old when our dear Jews were obliged to wear a yellow Star of David to distinguish them as predatory strangers, they were now able and keen to wear one as a mark not only of honour but of valuable privileges as well. The wearers enjoyed a vast range of advantages from priority car parking to access to a seat in an already fully-occupied train, bus, theatre or other public place; non-wearers being obliged to stand up and make room for this aristocracy of the yellow star.¹¹⁷

Jordan's work provides the historian of denial with an insight into the worldview of a Holocaust denier. By presenting a nightmarish vision of a world gone 'politically correct' mad, we can see how the development of Holocaust consciousness had impacted on the far right as an eroding force in their attempt to gain power. For radical far right deniers like Jordan, a world in which the memory of the Holocaust is honoured and respected means that their particular brand of neo-Nazi bigotry is discredited. As such, they lash out at the memory of the Holocaust and present an absurd vision of the future that is found in *Merrie England*. Jordan had been arrested numerous times before witting *Merrie England*. In fact his home had been raided while writing the piece and police seized a first draft of the work (Jordan eventually won

¹¹⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 35-6.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 38-9.

an appeal based on a faulty search warrant). To Jordan the character of Annie was a reflection of how he felt he had been treated by society and Jewish power. He did not want to change his personal dedication to National Socialism and as such, when he could not find mainstream support, it was not because his views were not shared by mainstream society, but because his views and publications were suppressed by the government and organisations run by Jews. The same thesis can be found in the work of Alexander Baron, a radical far-right author and publisher, who attacked anti-fascist institutions like Searchlight.¹¹⁸

Jordan's depiction of an England consumed with Holocaust memorialisation is one which is clearly influenced by the developments which have taken place in the United Kingdom. While Jordan painted an extreme and hyperbolic dystopia of British society, it was his actual vision of what he believed was happening in society. As Tony Kushner noted in 1994, 'despite efforts of the revisionists, interest in the subject of the Holocaust continues to grow across the world' and 'the Holocaust in a matter of a decade became a subject of major interest.'¹¹⁹ For Jordan, events like the creation of a Holocaust Memorial Garden in Hyde Park in 1983, demonstrated the power of Jewish lobby groups not a genuine expression of memorial or sorrow over the crimes committed against the Jews of Europe. While it would be an overstatement to suggest that such a memorial in Hyde Park was a moment of seminal significance in the development of Holocaust consciousness or attracted a large amount of public attention, for Holocaust deniers like Jordan it was of extreme significance. In searching and scouring newspapers for examples of 'Jewish control' and 'Zionist conspiracies', all events took on a significance which is out of line with the actual context in which the events takes place. In mounting together such examples Holocaust deniers are validated in their worldview and the evidence to them becomes unequivocal. This is driven further in the mind of Holocaust deniers because they do not believe in the reality of the Holocaust; so a memorial to an event they consider fictional compounds their belief that conspiratorial factions are at work.¹²⁰

The place of the Holocaust in society therefore compounds 'the conspiracy'. For Jordan and other deniers of the 'radical' variant of the British far right, the Holocaust is indicative of the power of worldwide Jewry. The Holocaust for these groups represents a 'triumph' for world Jewry because they view it as invention, and as such it has become a subject which the radical

¹¹⁸ A. Baron, *Hate Comes To Town: The Lies and Poison of the Searchlight 'Educational' Trust, Documented, Exposed and Deconstructed* (London, Anglo-Hebrew Publishing: 1994).

¹¹⁹ T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination*, pp. 277-278.

¹²⁰ A similar point is made in M. Shermer and A. Gorbman, *Denying History*, pp. 18-19 and M. Shermer, *Why People Believe Weird Things: Pseudoscience, Superstition, and Other Confusions of Our Time* (New York, Saint Martin's Press: 2002).

groups attack as part of the conspiracy. These variants were at odds with those of the 'populist' form and 'hybrid' forms of denial, because the connection between the two are much more overt and explicitly antisemitic. In essence what Jordan's *Merrie England* represented was an expression of conspiratorial belief that the Holocaust had afforded the Jews of the world a privileged position which was gained after a magnificent propaganda ploy.

Unlike the denial of the 'populist' and 'hybrid' groups in the far right, Jordan was able to present this view because he did not need to, and could not, appeal to a mass electorate. Jordan's position was that power could only be gained by revolution, or to be more precise National Socialism will only prevail with revolution because the public, as depicted in *Merrie England*, has been brain-washed. This was demonstrated in the last chapter of the book in which a literal and physical mind-control device was used by the 'Ministry of Harmony'. Jordan wrote that the state started beaming rays that would control the minds of white people forcing them to submit to the system:

It was announced with fanfares that there would be another free gift from the benevolent government to the beloved people. All television sets would shortly be fitted free of charge with a new device whereby colours and Coloureds would appear even more colourful ... What was not made public ... was that the main function of the device was to make the set's vision two-way, so that while the family watched the set, the set watched the family, a service of surveillance by the Ministry of Harmony to ensure even better public order in the new century. To partner this great advance in public care, the Ministry was confidently expecting very soon to perfect and put into use another great aid to Harmony: secret transmissions nationwide of 'PP' standing for 'Passivity Promotion'. These were extremely low frequency radiations from microwave towers disguised as television relay stations: radiations capable of inducing a tendency to submission in the targeted populace.¹²¹

Jordan's vision of the future was an extreme exercise in radical and racial fantasy and propaganda which aimed to critique the changes which had taken place in the United Kingdom since the Second World War. Jordan believed the only way to overturn multiculturalism and Jewish power of ZOG was by revolution and Jordan acted his fantasy out in his last full publication, *The Uprising!*¹²²

The Uprising!, billed as the British equivalent to *The Turner Diaries*, tells of an uprising against a British government and society run by Jews, in which the last vestiges of white freedom had been stripped away. The story, set in 2006, follows the assassination of a Jewish Home

¹²¹ C. Jordan, *Merrie England: 2000*, pp. 48-49.

¹²² C. Jordan, *The Uprising!*

Secretary. After the assassination, a fictional underground force of neo-Nazis (the British Freedom Fighters or BFF) revolt and overthrow the government to create a resurgent white-only order. The work was a radical far right utopian vision of the future. Although the characters were different, the book seems to be the far-right answer to the situation contained within *Merrie England*. The book was well received within the extreme revolutionary corners of the far-right; because it was banned in the United Kingdom, reviews encouraged readers to order the book from the United States.¹²³ The book was a provocation to extreme violence and called for the assassination and murder of individuals that Jordan deemed deviant. One example of the parodies Jordan employed centres on a Jewish writer who writes for a magazine 'Stopligh' and is murdered by the BFF fighters. The character that Jordan was referring to was Gerry Gable head of Searchlight.

The book glorified revolution and revolutionary activity and decried far-right movements contesting elections:

The unimaginative nationalists of the conventional parties, captivated by their ingrained veneration of majorities ... derived from the illusion known as 'democracy,' propagated by the exploiters of that illusion, had always decried militant, political warfare as an impractical fantasy. ... Their argument had been that the indispensable and preceding requirement for the success of such political warfare is a sufficiently substantial, and indeed massive, base for it within the general public, something conspicuously lacking at the present and likely to remain so for the immediate future.¹²⁴

This was a central part of Jordan's belief and plan for power. As the last two sentences show, he believed, that because the public did not support far-right ideologies, he and his fellow travellers must seize power. To him the 'recidivist' and 'hybrid' approach to power was futile as support would not, and could not, be gained through democratic means. This goes some way to explaining why the radical variants of the British far-right and their presentation of Holocaust denial was so overt and interlinked to the history of the Second World War. The radical far right had to remain staunchly militant and fanatical in their beliefs because they believed that only they had the will and power to destroy what they perceived as Jewish control over society and seize power. Jordan did not want to curtail his message through the democratic process and as such his message and those of his supporters remained resolute and unapologetic. The prevailing culture in the radical far-right was militarised and so was their

¹²³ For far-right reviews of the work see: *Blood and Honour* (Issue No. 31); Storm Front: www.stormfront.org/forum/t530776-2/ (accessed 23/04/12).

¹²⁴ C. Jordan, *The Uprising*, p. 21.

propaganda message.¹²⁵ In essence *The Uprising*, and the views of the radical-far right echoed the prophecies given by Hitler given in his last will and testament: that the Jews would one day be held responsible for bringing about the war and there would be a resurgence in National Socialism. This was ultimately the message and 'history' Jordan and the radical and revolutionary right believed and wanted to promote; Holocaust was used in that message as the prevailing example of 'Jewish control' and 'power' over the past.

The Uprising! is a fitting ending to this chapter not only because it marks the last major publication of Jordan before his death in 2009 but also because it provides a symbolic vision of how the radical far right sees its future and how it envisages it will achieve power. Jordan represented the enduring legacy of this vision and radical activism and remains a dominant figure in that branch of the far right. On his death, the British People's Party (BPP) claimed Jordan as its 'spiritual leader'. The BPP demonstrates its commitment to revolution and states

We say we are not a party but a MOVEMENT. Sure, elections are important but they are only one part of a much greater whole- the building of a mass movement of the white people of this country at all levels which will penetrate and eventually completely replace the Old Sick System in a National Revolution. Our Movement should not put all its eggs in the corrupt election basket.¹²⁶

The movement is clearly designed to appeal to hard-line antisemites and radical British nationalists and reflects the movements and individuals that have been examined in this chapter. It is clear that these individuals were overt and proud radicals, Nationalist Socialists and antisemites. These groups differ from those that will be discussed in the next chapter because there is no attempt to appear 'populist' and even express this in their ideology.¹²⁷ It is quite clear how this has manifested itself in the presentation and dissemination of Holocaust denial because, as this chapter has shown, there is little attempt to couch denial in a way that lends itself to populism. The Holocaust is not discussed in any real detail in the publications of Jordan, McMcLaughlin and Birdwood and when it was it was a rehashed version drawn from the annals of Arnold Leese, Oswald Mosley, Alexander Ratcliffe and Douglass Reed, because the fact that the Holocaust did not occur was simply understood as self-evident. Jordan did not change his arguments, or in fact change their presentation, as evidenced by Jordan's republication of the 1961 *Combat* supplement in 1989. Some element of the radical far right,

¹²⁵ For information on these underground movements and Colin Jordan political vision of revolution see: G. Gable, 'The Far Right in Contemporary Britain' in L. Cheles, R. Ferguson and M. Vaughan (eds), *Neo-Fascism in Europe*, pp. 256-261; G. Gable 'Britain's Nazi Underground', *ibid*, pp. 258-271.

¹²⁶ <http://www.bpp.org.uk/objectives.html> (accessed 23/04/12).

¹²⁷ See: 'White Nationalism Versus Opportunist-Populism' <http://www.bpp.org.uk/objectives.html> (accessed 23/04/12).

like Lady Birdwood and McMcLaughlin, did use material from individuals like Richard Verrall and Richard Edmonds, which has less overt antisemitic content, but this content was incorporated into more radical and overtly antisemitic and revolutionary discourses. In such movements and publications the Holocaust remained an overt expression of the 'ZOG' or New World Order. This is evidence in the BPP manifesto, which stated: 'the New World Order will ALWAYS use the Holocaust as a whip to beat down White Nationalists.'¹²⁸

Holocaust denial for the 'radical' variant of the far right was a key tenet of the cause and will always be so. It was expressed in a violent and deeply antisemitic way which serves to demonstrate the fundamental nature of such groups and their deeply ideological belief in the world Jewish Conspiracy. For such movements, all the ills and problems of the world lead back to Jewish operations and the activities of the mythic and mysterious ZOG. Immigration, for example, was explained through the prism of the Jewish Conspiracy. As Paul Jackson has observed with radical movements and individuals like Jordan 'two major targets come through, Jews and non-white migrants. The latter, predominantly Asians and Black people ...are seen as symptoms of social decay, but not its instigators. This active role is given to Jews.'¹²⁹ It is not surprising to find this in such movements which are so intrinsically linked to Hitler and National Socialism, and represents the continuation of Nazi antisemitism. The Holocaust in this radical group is indicative of such hatred and can be traced back to the pro-Nazi protocols established by Arnold Leese.

The radical variant of Holocaust denial is on the extreme and revolutionary edge of the far right which has remained steadfast in its support for National Socialism and Hitler. The sentiments expressed alter very little and when they do they merely absorb new facets and traits which have changed in British society; a case in point here is Jordan's chapter on 'The Staging of the Holocaust' in *Merrie England: 2000*. This steadfast resolve was because of the intransigent nature of the ideology and followers who refuse to see their beliefs compromised. The next chapter will identify and appraise the variants of the British far right which can be labelled 'hybrid', 'recidivist' and 'populist' in order to show the different ways in which such groups have dealt with the deeply unfavourable legacy left to them by the Nazis' murder of European Jewry. It will look at how such groups had a more 'flexible' approach to the Holocaust and Holocaust denial. What irrefutable, and contrast with the groups examined next, is that the radical variants of the far right place their vision of the past at the very core of the movement. Holocaust denial was part of history that saw a past teaming with Jewish control

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ P. Jackson, 'Colin Jordan's "Merrie England" and Universal Nazism', p. 14.

and propaganda. This was also mirrored in the way they saw the present controlled by Jews. The radical far right therefore did not seek popular public opinion and made no apologies for their commitment to overt and vulgar antisemitism, National Socialist policies or Holocaust denial.

Chapter Four: John Tyndall, Holocaust Denial in the National Front and BNP

A. K. Chesterton, founder of the National Front (NF), had a clear message to give at the inaugural meeting of the NF in 1967:

The man who thinks this is a war that can be won by mouthing slogans about 'dirty Jews and filthy niggers' is a maniac whose place should not be in the National Front but in a mental hospital ... A nation once noble and very great cannot be rescued from the mire by jackasses who play straight into the enemy's hands by giving the public that image of us that the enemy most clearly wants to be given.¹

This statement would dominate the initial years and policies of the NF and the way in which they presented Holocaust denial. Chesterton's words demonstrate the 'recidivistic' and 'populist' direction in which some members of the far right chose to follow in the pursuit of power.

Publically these members of the far right were not the 'radical' revolutionaries found in the movements of men like Colin Jordan. Yet, as Ray Hill has shown in the British far-right:

[A]rguments raged ... between 'open' and 'closet' Nazis. While [open Nazis] paraded proudly with swastikas on [their] sleeves and published photos of Hitler on the covers of the journals, the National Front was playing a different game. There was virtually no disagreement [among them] on policy or ideological matters, but the leaders of the NF had decided to abandon any public expression of Nazi sympathies to attract broader support from people who were worried about immigration. Every Nazi might be racist, but not every racist was a fully-fledged Nazi. These were the people they were after, hoping to ... get them involved over immigration and then slowly bringing them round to accepting the more obnoxious elements of National Socialist ideology.²

Hill's observations demonstrate how collectively the British far right was united in its ideology yet sought different methods to achieve power. This divergence over the image which the far right wanted to present also translated to the way Holocaust denial was disseminated and packaged. This chapter will consider how the recidivist, hybrid and popular incarnations of the British far right presented Holocaust denial and what this tells us about the 'histories' they constructed and how they differed from the 'radical' groups.

The individual on which this chapter focuses on is John Tyndall. Tyndall was leader of the British National Front (NF) from 1972 to 1980 and leader of the British National Party (BNP) from 1982 until 1999. As the leader of these parties, he impressed his vision of what can be

¹ *Candour*, No. 469 (October, 1967).

² R. Hill, *The Other Face Terror: Inside Europe's Neo-Nazi Network* (London, Grafton: 1988), p. 38.

dubbed 'recidivist' and 'hybrid' policies in the far right. In the last chapter we saw how Colin Jordan and his followers maintained a 'radical' form of neo-Nazism and how Jordan's form of Holocaust denial was disseminated with a revolutionary message which was constructed alongside an overtly National Socialist reading of the past. Jordan's and Tyndall's movements represent differing paths on the way each saw the future of the far right in Britain. What is of significant note is the way in which both began working together in 'radical' movements. But as Tyndall moved away and sought to distance himself from his neo-Nazi origins, Jordan would maintain these overt links to his past and proclaim 'Hitler was right', whereas Tyndall had a much more cloaked approach to revealing his true far-right and neo-Nazi beliefs.

This chapter examines the shape of Holocaust denial under Tyndall in the National Front as well as the other individuals, and structures, in the NF that shaped a 'policy' towards their dissemination and presentation of Holocaust denial and antisemitism. Especially pertinent in this chapter will be dialogues which relate to the 'Jewish question' or worldwide Jewish conspiracy. This chapter traces the how the protocols established by A.K. Chesterton at the first meeting of the National front in 1967 shaped the way in which antisemitic arguments were framed to the public and how this affected the presentational forms of Holocaust denial found in the NF and later the BNP. It will argue that the relationship with Holocaust denial and antisemitism was complex, as the NF's initial approach (under A.K. Chesterton) to such subjects was to not engage with such issues in an overt, radical or extreme way. However as Tyndall assumed power he, along with other neo-Nazis like Richard Verrall, Martin Webster and Richard Edmonds began to present more of these views as they consolidated their power. It will also show how these arguments attempted to be 'more scientific', 'rational' and 'academic' than the arguments of the individuals discussed in the previous chapter. It will demonstrate how the material they published had a strong pedagogical tone that was designed to convince the wider public that the Holocaust did not take place in the way history had recorded. This will be achieved with an examination of the publication of *Did Six Million Really die?* and Tyndall's own biography and political treatise *The Eleventh Hour: A Call for British Rebirth*, as well as other documents and pamphlets from the NF and other recidivist and hybrid parties. The chapter illustrates how Holocaust denial the presentation and presence of Holocaust denial in recidivistic and populist parties of the far right were not, like the revolutionary far right, a linear constant. It explains how denial was presented differently or how, in certain cases, it was quietly shelved as a public policy while privately remaining a key facet of far right thought.

Tyndall was in control of one of the most 'popular' and familiar far-right groups in the country during the 1970s. While it may have been the most 'popular' it received very little *actual* support: as Richard Thurlow reminds us 'no British fascist has come anywhere near being elected to parliament at any stage.'³In trying to secure a democratic path to power the NF and BNP had to remain attuned to the public mood to attract mass support. This affected the way in which Tyndall and the NF presented their policies and Holocaust denial. Tyndall was the key figure in recidivist and hybrid movements from 1972 to 1999 and as such reveals a lot about his changing views, or rather the *presentation* of his views in line with changing public and political perceptions. This affected the way in which Holocaust denial was presented or expressed, as Nigel Copsey explains, 'the party's show of Holocaust denial fluctuated, and ... followed strategic concerns.'⁴The word presentation is key in this chapter because Tyndall's neo-Nazism was anchored in his character but the way in which these ideas were hidden or 're-packaged' allowed for a greater manoeuvrability when at the hustings.

The NF and its relationship with Holocaust denial and antisemitism

The forces which shaped the establishment and development of the NF, and the parties' commitment to gain power by democratic means, had a direct impact on the way its Holocaust denial was presented to the wider public. Tyndall was a central figure in the transmogrification of the NF, first by his attempts to infiltrate the party and second by his leadership of it. The National Front was born out of a desire by A.K. Chesterton to unite the fragmented far-right groups of the late 1950s and early 1960s into one umbrella movement.⁵ Chesterton however had strong beliefs on what the movement should and should not do in order to gain electoral success. Not all movements and parties would be invited to join the NF. Oswald Mosley and his Union Movement (UM) were not invited to join because of its pro-pan European beliefs; Colin Jordan and his National Socialist Movement (NSM) were also frozen out of the movement because of its overt Nazi ideology. Tyndall and his Greater Britain Movement (GBM) were also not welcome because of its pro-Nazi beliefs. However, Tyndall, as an individual with a large amount of support and his personal magazine *Spearhead*, was regarded by Chesterton and others to have been a welcome addition to the movement but only if the GBM were disbanded. The initial grouping under the banner of the National Front was a union between the League of Empire Loyalists (LEL) under Chesterton and John Bean's British National Party (BNP) as well as

³ R. C. Thurlow, *Fascism in Modern Britain* (Stroud, Sutton: 2000), p. vii.

⁴ N. Copsey, *Contemporary British Fascism: The British National Party and the Quest for Legitimacy* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2nd edition: 2008), pp 92-93.

⁵ For information on Chesterton and the formation of the National Front see: D. Baker, *Ideology of Obsession: A. K. Chesterton and British Fascism* (London, I.B Tauris: 1996), pp. 187-188, 197-198.

some elements of Robin Beauclaire's Racial Preservation Society (RPS).⁶ At this time it was not ideological differences which divided the far-right (perhaps with the exception of the UM which wanted to achieve a united Europe). Their overall ideological beliefs were congruent, yet their view of how to achieve power, and how to present their ideologies to the public was the main source conflict. For Chesterton and Bean the overt vulgar antisemitic rhetoric and commitment to National Socialist iconography found in the GBM and NSM were incompatible with the disposition of British public. Chesterton had made this message clear on the opening meeting for the NF in 1967.

Chesterton's and Bean's commitment to this approach should not be read as a commitment to change of policy; rather it must be understood as a means to an end. As the statements at the opening meeting indicate, the NF leaders still saw the country as in 'the mire' but believed that for their 'war' to be fought and won a different approach was needed. Their approach did not include the use of extreme and overt racist language, rather it was a presentational and public relations 'makeover' of far-right ideology. Chesterton was a staunch believer in the 'Jewish conspiracy', something that in turn influenced Tyndall's views on 'the Jewish question', something which will be discussed below.⁷ The NF still held the core beliefs in racism and forced deportation of Non-white immigrants and nationalism however; as Nigel Copsey explains, they kept their 'iron hand in a velvet glove'.⁸

Tyndall's appropriation of power in the National Front was a calculated affair and owed much to the structure of the NF's directorate, which had distinctly democratic structure in order to present its commitment to electoral politics. Tyndall manoeuvred his way into the leadership with the support of Martin Webster and Richard Verrall. Tyndall's acquisition of power also owed much to the declining health of Chesterton; Chesterton often wintered in South Africa, and as such the Front was often left in a state of warring tribes between the radical coterie of Tyndall and the more populist approach of Bean. Tyndall remained loyal to Chesterton while he remained as chairman of the NF, but once Chesterton left the NF directorate in 1970 Tyndall moved to take control.⁹

⁶ For information regarding how the LEL, BNP and RPS united in 1967 to form a Tyndall-less NF see: M. Walker, *The National Front* (London, Fontana: 1977), pp. 57-63.

⁷ A. K. Chesterton's views on the Jewish conspiracy can be found in A. K. Chesterton, *The New Unhappy Lords* (London, Candour Publishing: 1965). For the career and life of A. K. Chesterton, see: D. Baker, *Ideology of Obsession*.

⁸ N. Copsey, *Contemporary British Fascism*, p. 15.

⁹ For detailed information on Tyndall's takeover see: M. Walker, *The National Front*, pp. 89-132; S. Taylor, *The National Front in English Politics* (London, Macmillan: 1982), pp. 18-23; R. Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain: A History 1918-1998* (London, I.B Tauris: 1998), pp. 249-251.

The formation of the National Front owed much to the desire to unite the far right. Tyndall had written in 1966 'where is the right?' in which he stated that 'the little men who talk about uniting Britain, the white race, Europe or whatever you prefer cannot even unite themselves.'¹⁰ The unification of the far right was a means to respond and unite against the changes which the far right saw as part of the moral decline of Britain and this was not just limited to immigration. It also was an attempt to respond to the social changes taking place in the United Kingdom. These changes were seen by the collection of groups which would form the NF as a reflection of the moral decline of Britain. John Bean leader of the BNP wrote:

As the swinging sixties progressed, these were others who were attracted by the NF's opposition to the undermining of the nation's moral standards. Home Secretary Roy Jenkins, ever more liberal and the archetypal champagne socialist, was in the vanguard of those who claimed to be "advancing our civilisation" by hastening our moral decline.¹¹

The desire to revoke the changes by Jenkins would become part of the NF's policy.

In conjunction with revoking the policies enacted by Jenkins, the other key component of the NF's policy addressed immigration and promoted a policy of the removal of non-whites from Britain. It also sought British independence from the international community; advocated the withdrawal of Britain from the United Nations and NATO and campaigned against entry to the European Economic Community. These policies were pursued by Tyndall once he obtained power over the NF directorate in 1972. The initial years of Tyndall's leadership were the most successful for the National Front. This success has been attributed the NF's exploitation of the fears in the British populace over the influx of 27,000 Asian Ugandan refugees who had entered Britain fleeing persecution from the Idi Amin regime in Uganda. The membership of the party at this time is speculated to have grown as high as 17,500 members.¹² However success in improving membership of the NF did not translate to votes in parliamentary elections, and in the two elections in 1974 the NF polled poorly. As a result of the election failure members within the party sought to get rid of Tyndall and Webster in favour of the more 'moderate' populists and former Conservative Party members, John Kingsley Read and Roy Painter. Kingsley Read and Painter had control of the NF between 1974 and 1975.¹³ Tyndall regained power over the NF directorate in 1976 and support for him and the NF was again buoyed up through the exploitation of the arrival of immigrants from Malawi. Although a

¹⁰ *Spearhead*, no. 12, (July 1966).

¹¹ J. Bean, *Many Shades of Black: Inside Britain's Far Right* (London, New Millennium: 1999), p. 199.

¹² N. Copey, *Contemporary British Fascism*, p. 18.

¹³ For information about this period of time in the NF and Tyndall's regain of control in 1976 through legal action see: M. Walker, *The National Front*, pp. 172-190.

lot fewer than the Uganda immigrants (130), the press coverage was exploited by Tyndall and the NF and in the Greater London Council elections in 1977 the NF polled 120,000 votes.¹⁴ In the light of this success, Tyndall pledged to contest 300 seats in the 1979 General Election. However the 1979 elections were a dismal failure for the NF - not only did they fail to gain a single seat but they were also financially crippled by the loss of candidates' deposits.

One of the reasons for this failure is particularly pertinent for this chapter. Since regaining control of the NF Tyndall had placed Richard Verrall as editor of *Spearhead*. Under Verrall's editorial leadership the NF began to express more radical neo-Nazi views and decided to reverse the initial protocols of the NF which had been in place since Chesterton's leadership. Articles began to appear in *Spearhead* like: 'The Jewish question: out in the open or under the carpet?'¹⁵ NF publications also started presenting 'scientific evidence' that 'Negros' were evolutionarily inferior to Europeans. The use of 'scientific racism' was not new in the far right, yet its presentation in NF journals was. Prior to the 1970s such arguments were implicit in the statements they made but by the mid-1970s statements were being supported by racist 'scientific' journals like *Mankind Quarterly* which attempted to 'prove' the supremacy of the white race.¹⁶

It is necessary to understand how the 'Jewish question' was presented and explained. In Tyndall's book, *The Eleventh Hour: A Call for British Rebirth*, he explained how he was driven in the 1950s to 'accept the case for a [Jewish] conspiracy was a strong one ... I began to form a picture of the conspiracy theory, which I put to the test at every stage of study by comparing it with my own observations of national and international politics.'¹⁷ Tyndall criticised the weakness of the material which had been published on the issue and stated one of the errors in the material was 'a tendency, at times, to absurd oversimplification, while another was the presentation of mere supposition and hypothesis as if it were a fact beyond dispute.'¹⁸ Tyndall wanted to correct this and as a result attempted to present his arguments as 'scientific' and 'informed'. In a passage from the book he explained the 'conspiracy' as follows:

It is that there is a power behind the scenes in modern politics dedicated to the destruction of the existing nation states of the world, and of the distinct

¹⁴ N. Copley, *Contemporary British Fascism*, p. 19.

¹⁵ *Spearhead*, No. 96 (March 1976).

¹⁶ For information on *Mankind Quarterly* and Scientific racism in Britain see: G. Schaffer, "'Scientific' Racism Again?" and R. Gates, 'The Mankind Quarterly and the Question of "Race" in Science after the Second World War', *Journal of American Studies*, (Vol. 41, No. 2: 2007), pp. 253-278 and G. Schaffer, *Racial Science and British society, 1930-62* (London, Palgrave: 2008).

¹⁷ J. Tyndall, *The Eleventh Hour*, pp. 95-96.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 96.

... races that make up those states, and their replacement by an international order, eventually to become a world government. This power works almost in secret, aiming to obtain manipulation of the affairs of nations by exerting the pressure over their governments by means of control of key strategic points of political influence such as finance and banking, press and broadcasting and other areas of mass media. That most of the subversive movements of the modern world, including particularly communism, are the creation of this power; that in fact the power of which we are speaking [world Jewry] has had a greater influence in the shaping of modern history than any other agency, including the world's leading nations.¹⁹

Tyndall's attempt to correct what as he saw as oversimplification and conjecture in other explanations of how the conspiracy worked failed. His description of the Jewish conspiracy still resembled that of individuals like Arnold Leese, Colin Jordan, A.K. Chesterton and Alexander Ratcliffe. He did, however, attempt to present the argument in a more pragmatic and populist way than either Leese or Jordan. Tyndall actively distanced himself from Leese, writing 'the works of 'Arnold Leese tends to over-state the Jewish role to a point, at times, of absurdity.'²⁰ Tyndall was attempting to cast his views as more 'rational' than those of his more radical antecedents and contemporaries, yet his arguments were the same. It was a power play to capture public support: a way to present himself and his movements as 'different' from the extreme radical and revolutionary right and their overt National Socialism and yet Tyndall still venerated Hitler and Nazism. He did not openly support or validate the Nazi model for Britain, but did praise his own awareness of the 'Jewish problem' and his adoption of antisemitism as 'a defence mechanism on the part of many peoples of many nations against Jewish power.'²¹ Like Jordan and Leese, Tyndall was building his own 'recidivistic' history which explained the present. Despite all his rhetoric and presentation Tyndall remained convinced of a world Jewish conspiracy which had brought about the Second World War. For him, Jews controlled both the Soviet Union and western governments:

On a global level, we have the supposed conflict between western 'capitalism' and Soviet 'socialism'. This conflict is more apparent than real ... it pays for the masters [Jews] who control both systems to have functionaries spitting and snarling at against each other across the world stage, so as to maintain the illusion of the 'cold war'.²²

The idea that Jews were in control of both communism and capitalism was adopted by Tyndall from Colin Jordan's *Fraudulent Conversion* in which two rival Jewish factions were attempting

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 97.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 112.

²¹ J. Tyndall, *The Eleventh Hour*, p. 109.

²² *Ibid*, p. 157.

to achieve the overall aim of world domination.²³ Tyndall attempted to explain that ‘perhaps one stumbling block in the way of the theory of conspiracy behind world events is the idea that, to be proved to exist, such a conspiracy must be able to make happen everything that it wants to happen.’²⁴ Tyndall explained that this was not the case and that the conspiracy was based on what ‘shall not happen, and perhaps even more to the point, what shall not be said.’²⁵ Tyndall likened this control to a form of Soviet censorship in which British newspapers and journalist self-censored themselves in line with what they thought their ‘Jewish masters’ would want.²⁶ Tyndall stated that the notion of ‘Jewish press control’ was too ‘simplistic’ as ‘such a statement ... can easily be refuted by pointing to the large proportion of the press that is not under Jewish ownership.’²⁷ Instead, Tyndall suggested that world Jewry had the power to control and boycott newspapers and areas of the press which did not promote its opinions through its control of advertising revenues. Tyndall claimed that the primary aim of the conspiracy was to promote ‘internationalism’ and the ‘crowding’ out of every other ideology. Tyndall used David Irving’s *Hitler’s War* and *Churchill’s War* books to illustrate his point; he claimed that Irving had been ‘blackball[ed]’ and put on an international ‘Zionist hit list’ for ‘questioning some of the “holocaust” propaganda surrounding World War II.’²⁸ Tyndall’s use of Irving demonstrates how the far right used Irving’s record as a published military historian to give weight and authority to their arguments about the Holocaust. In depicting Irving as ‘victim’ of the conspiracy for questioning ‘holocaust propaganda’ Tyndall believed he had proven that his description of Jewish control of the media and history was accurate.

Tyndall believed that the conspiracy was perpetuated and dominated by the ‘multi-racial’ idea. This idea was similar to that presented by Colin Jordan, that Jews financed the arrival of black immigrants into Britain. Tyndall then attacked the ‘multi-racial’ idea by suggesting that the Jews themselves do not subscribe to the idea of assimilation amongst their own people. Tyndall stated, that in Israel what holds ‘the whole state and community together is the most intense nationalism to be found anywhere on earth today!’ He claimed the reason that this ‘paradox’ could exist was the ‘doctrine that the Jews call anti-Semitism and it has been

²³ See above, p. 150.

²⁴ J. Tyndall, *The Eleventh Hour*, p. 98.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp 101-106

²⁷ *Ibid.* p. 101.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 338.

acknowledged by writers of the so-called “holocaust” as being the theory that underlay the anti-Jewish doctrines of Hitler and the Nazis.’²⁹ Tyndall then went on to state:

[W]e are never allowed to forget ‘anti-Semitism’. It is hurled at us every day of our lives by means of television screen, newspapers and book trade. If two weeks of TV and film go by without reference to it, the guardians of the Semitic interest become greatly worried that the public maybe in the process of being permitted to forget this, the world’s most important issue!³⁰

Tyndall’s tone here was reminiscent of that of Alexander Ratcliffe’s *Twelve Falsehoods about the Jews: A Vindication* and Colin Jordan’s *Merrie England: 2000*.³¹ But while Tyndall attempted to present a more ‘rational’ argument he went on to state that the power of ‘anti-Semitism’ lay in its infallibility and its ability to ‘never be out of the spotlight’ but also never to allow a counter-point to it to be heard: ‘ask for any book putting forth the point of view of those accused of ‘anti-Semitism’ and you will be told that such books are not in stock!’³²

Tyndall’s control over the National Front meant that his arguments relating to the conspiracy theory remained the parties official position. As such they effected the way in which Holocaust denial was presented in the parties official magazine *Spearhead*. They also had a clear impact on the way in which the editor of the Journal, Richard Verrall, disseminated party ideology to its readership. Tyndall argued that the Holocaust was employed by Jews as a method to prevent debate about nationalism. For Tyndall the Holocaust was part of a wider picture of control, or a branch of the tactic of employing ‘anti-Semitism’ to stifle nationalistic debate and discussions over race. Tyndall returned to this theme and made explicit reference on the connection between the Holocaust and nationalism:

it would seem surely seem that our present day rulers react to words like ‘race’ and ‘racism’ as the legendary Count Dracula was supposed to react to the crucifix ... why this paralysis of reason on race? Without a doubt, the first explanation that comes to mind is the legacy of emotion produced by books, films and newspaper articles about Nazi Germany, indeed by the whole of what might be called the ‘anti-Nazi industry’ ... the Nazis were racists, the thinking goes, and in the end look what happened: their racism led to the gas chambers and the murder of six million Jews. The moral? Everyone who wants to preserve his own race is a Nazi.³³

²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 107.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 107-108.

³¹ A. Ratcliffe, *Twelve Falsehoods about the Jews: A Vindication* (Glasgow: 1946) and C. Jordan, *Merrie England: 2000* (Harrogate, Gothic Ripples: 1993).

³² J. Tyndall, *The Eleventh Hour*, p. 108.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 434. A similar argument is made almost word for word by John Bean in his work, see: J. Bean, *Many Shades of Black: Inside Britain’s Far Right* (London, New Millennium: 1999), p. 234.

Tyndall then went on to state:

There is a growing school of historians today that in fact challenges the accuracy of the allegation that the German Nazis ever had any intended extermination programme, and puts forward the counter-claim that the high death rate in the concentration camps was caused mainly by sickness, famine and a breakdown of food and medical supplies that was general in Germany at the time, and to which Allied bombing largely contributed ... [W]hether this revised view of that phase of history is correct or incorrect should not concern us here. Even if it could be proved beyond any possible doubt that the original and established view of what happened in Germany was factually correct, it would not have the slightest bearing on the validity or invalidity of 'racism.'³⁴

Tyndall then posed rhetorical questions to his readers and asked: if someone who subscribes to socialism must endorse the crimes of Stalin, if someone who subscribes to liberalism must endorse the terror of the French Revolution or if someone who is Christian must therefore endorse the Spanish Inquisition? This line of argument bore similarity to the tu quoque tone found in Oswald Mosley's biography. While Tyndall denied the Holocaust and Mosley accepted it had taken place (yet he refused to classify the specific nature of the genocide) Tyndall was employing a facsimile style adopted from Mosley. The style was predicated on deconstructing the historical reality of the Holocaust in order to frame the 'genuine' debates about white hegemony and ultra-nationalism in a context free of an association with the Holocaust. The Holocaust was presented in a framework in which it had no relevance or relationship to British far right thought or its own ultra-nationalistic policies.

Tyndall's pedagogical tone was an attempted to rehabilitate far-right ideology by linking it with what he presented as banal patriotism. The presupposition was that far right had been a victim of Jewish conspiracy, and this conspiracy manifested itself in the form of an obstinate anti-fascism and anti-racism which prevented 'legitimate' far right debates from having the oxygen of publicity. Tyndall wanted to take the stigma out of antisemitism by presenting the Jews as a legitimate threat. This was a very similar message propagated by the radical far right as was seen in the previous chapter. However, unlike the radical right, Tyndall did not call for revolutionary action, rather he wanted to gain support and sympathy, from the public. Like Jordan he wanted to present far-right ideology and Nazism as the victims of a Jewish conspiracy.

Seen through the Tyndall and the NF prism, the Holocaust was part of the Jewish conspiracy. It was seen as part of a wall which prevented debate on race and racism which Tyndall and his

³⁴ J. Tyndall, *The Eleventh Hour*, p. 435.

followers were keen to have. For Tyndall, the Jewish conspiracy was central to all the problems Britain and the world faced because it was the conspiracy which allowed all the issues he deemed problematic, namely the issue of immigration and the dilution of white racial stock, to exist. Tyndall attempted to present his version and vision of the conspiracy as based on logical argument. He was clear that, in terms of 'evidence that would be needed to convict a suspected person in a court of law', there would not be enough evidence to provide 'conclusive proof that a Jewish conspiracy exists' but, in terms of circumstantial evidence pointing to the role of certain Jewish elements 'in both the drive to internationalism and the influencing of nations along paths detrimental to their national interests', Tyndall felt there was a great deal of proof. This Tyndall's way of presenting a pedagogical and 'logical' argument to his readers, however it still represented an anti-rationalist and redemptive antisemitic style that had characterised the prototype-Holocaust denial seen in the work of Ratcliffe and Leese. That Tyndall could not provide evidence solid evidence for a conspiracy demonstrates the malleability of this world view, a view which was akin to faith: he could not prove the existence of the conspiracy nor could, to his mind, anyone disprove its existence.

In actuality Tyndall's argument represented nothing new in the writings on Jewish conspiracy theories. He presented his arguments as logical and scientific but they were little more than extended diatribes about the supposed power of 'the Jews'. What is striking in Tyndall's writings was the degree to which he located the Holocaust alongside his arguments about nationalism and what he perceived as the inability to talk about 'race' and 'racism'. Essentially Tyndall's discourses disclose why the far right felt that the Holocaust must be denied: The far right felt that the historical certainty of the Holocaust prohibited their ability to convince the population that their own ideologies and policies were not a precursor to genocide or that they contained genocidal intent. The totemic significance of the Holocaust in society, as a demonstration of the dangers and evils of fascism and Nazism, meant that the far right had to deny it for political expediency. Furthermore they could use Holocaust denial as a gateway to educate the population about the wider Jewish conspiracy they wanted to fight and in doing so they hoped to legitimate their own ideology to the public.

As Roger Griffin's research details this logic was deeply flawed the British far right had always been seen by the public as an 'ugly duckling'.³⁵ Tyndall believed that the Holocaust was a barrier to his political legitimacy and attacked it on two counts. The first being a direct denial of the Holocaust itself, in which Tyndall essentially summed up the arguments of Holocaust

³⁵ R. Griffin, 'British Fascism: The Ugly Duckling' in M. Cronin (ed.), *The Failure of British Fascism: The Far Right and The Fight for Political Recognition* (Basingstoke, Macmillan: 1996), pp. 141-165.

denial in one paragraph.³⁶ Tyndall used the standard claim that there was no extermination policy, and that the deaths of those in concentration camps were the fault of Allied bombing. He attempted to convince his readers that 'a growing school' of historians had challenged the Holocaust.³⁷ That he did not say who these historians were or provide any information as to where to find such material was indicative of a mendacious pedagogical style. In stating that 'historians' were challenging the Holocaust gave his words an authority, and corresponds to the views opined by Eaglestone that deniers seek the esteem with which history is held in society.³⁸ The second front on which he attacked the Holocaust was an extension of the first: if his readers did not accept his claims regarding the Holocaust he simply negated the issue stating that the Holocaust did not matter and that his issue was with how the Holocaust stops discussions over race and racism.

For Tyndall, the lack of debate over race was his primary concern, because he saw race as an actual part of life and evolutionary struggle. Gavin Schaffer has shown how race still prevailed as an issue in society post-war Britain, yet after the Second World War and the horrors of the Holocaust, race science had moved away from scientific laboratories to the social sciences. The 1951 UNESCO statement on race had stated that there were no different human races (but the term 'race' was still applicable to anthropological study) and *Homo sapiens* was one species. As Schaffer has shown, race still remained a hot topic and there was an oscillation and symbiotic relationship between discussions over race in society and science, but even though race was accepted to be unviable as a biological and scientific system of categorisation the decline of racial biology was 'slow, uncertain and divisive' and still remained entrenched in the 'social psyche'.³⁹

For Tyndall and the British far-right, racial biology was 'fact' and was rooted in 'scientific proof', and like with Holocaust denial, pseudo-scientific journals like *Mankind Quarterly* were employed to validate their racial theories. The result was that Tyndall, with Hitlerite overtones, could declare that racism 'has been the instinct of every healthy tribe and species on earth since life began.' Tyndall claimed that:

What is intolerable to those who wish to destroy our race is that there should be some amongst us who wish to defend it against destruction. That, and that alone, is why 'racism' is under attack - by which of course I mean

³⁶ J. Tyndall, *The Eleventh Hour*, p. 434.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 435.

³⁸ R. Eaglestone, *Postmodernism and Holocaust Denial* (Cambridge, Icon Books: 2001)

³⁹ G. Schaffer, *Racial Science and British Society*, pp. 170-171.

White Racism, because it is the White Race that is being attacked today.
Black, Brown and Yellow racism are not the object of any opprobrium.⁴⁰

For Tyndall the issue of racism was the product of a Jewish conspiracy designed to undermine the 'white race' which would disappear from history if the current situation continued.

Tyndall's position was shared within the National Front and later BNP under his leadership and was a key component of the ideology of the movement.⁴¹ Tyndall's views were reflected in the way that Holocaust denial was presented by the National Front, most notably by Richard Verrall, who wrote *Did Six Million Really Die?* That is not to say that Tyndall had complete control over the publications of the NF or the *Spearhead* magazine, but it is clear that the principle outlined by Chesterton has a place in the presentation of Holocaust denial espoused by the 'recidivistic', 'populist' and 'hybrid' groups of the far right. Holocaust denial was presented as a 'logical' and 'scientific' endeavour just as dialogues over race were. They were presented without the overt racist language found in the radical and revolutionary far right but the message remained the same. In reality for the 'recidivistic' populist' and 'hybrid' far right Holocaust denial was used in conjunction with an extended dialogue about 'race' and the danger which the myth of the Holocaust played in subduing discussions and concerns about the decline of the British 'race'. Holocaust denial in the NF was therefore was part of a wider anti-immigration superstructure and it was this superstructure that the NF hoped to exploit to gain power; the NF tried to relate Holocaust denial to wider debate over immigration through which they hoped to gain political capital and this will be explored further below.⁴²

Holocaust denial literature in the National Front: Method and message

In the 1970s the first major British publication on Holocaust denial, *Did Six Million Really Die?* was published by Richard Verrall, the editor of the NF magazine *Spearhead*. Verrall represented something akin to the National Front's spokesman on race and the Holocaust and shared the same ideological outlook as Tyndall. Verrall used the pseudonym Richard E. Harwood to publish the *Did Six Million Really Die?* The book published in 1974 would be defended in *Spearhead* using the same arguments which were seen in the publication.⁴³ The book attempted to place itself on a 'moral' footing. It questioned the place of Holocaust

⁴⁰ J. Tyndall, *The Eleventh Hour*, pp. 436-437.

⁴¹ For more detailed discussion on the Ideology of the National Front see: S. Taylor, *The National Front in English Politics*, pp. 53-81 and N. Copey, *Contemporary British Fascism*, pp. 76-100.

⁴² M. Billing, *Fascists: A Social Psychological View of the National Front* (London, Academic Press: 1978), p. 54.

⁴³ *Spearhead* No. 118 (June, 1978), *Spearhead* No. 119 *Spearhead* No. 119 (July, 1978), *Spearhead* No. 120 (August, 1978)

memorial, education and collective memory in society and suggested it posed a danger to the British 'race'.

The similarities between Verrall and the arguments put forward in the *Eleventh Hour* were overt as both sought to present the Holocaust as a barrier to 'genuine' discussions about 'race' they wanted the public to engage with. Verrall used contemporary global issues to underline his arguments put forward in the pamphlet. He focused on the creation of Israel and subsequent wars in the middle east to argue that Jewish race and state acted to extend their own territory and influence in the Middle East in order to 'preserve' their own race. The recent historical events of the six day war in 1967 and Yom Kippur war of 1973 were placed into this framework as examples of an ultra-nationalism designed to preserve the Jewish race. The intimation being that Israel behaved in a way which traditional ultra-nationalist nations and parties could not. Verrall used Nazi documents and arguments that had voiced concerns about Zionist policy and the formation of a new state of Israel in Palestine. Verrall stated that arguments predicted a 'revival of Israel as a Jewish state ... would result in perpetual war and disruption in the Arab world, which has indeed been the case.' These arguments were not unique to the Nazis and had proven to be a main sources of contention in the creation of Israel in 1947 and in the conflicts in the middle east. Verrall's decision to use the 'Nazi view of Jewish emigration' and defend it based on recent conflicts exhibited a deliberate attempt to stress the values and 'accuracy' of Nazi ideology and far right thought.

The introduction to the pamphlet continued the theme of Israeli policy and its relationship to Jewish racial integrity. The introduction outlined the main principles on which far right thought about the Holocaust rested and how it prevented the ideological and racist discourses the far right wanted to have. Below is a section from the introduction which requires extended evaluation:

When Enoch Powell drew attention to the dangers posed by coloured immigration into Britain in one of his early speeches, a certain prominent Socialist raised the spectre of Dachau and Auschwitz to silence his presumption. Thus any rational discussion of the problems of race and the effort to preserve racial integrity is effectively discouraged. No one could have anything but admiration for the way in which the Jews have sought to preserve their race through so many centuries, and continue to do so today. In this effort they have been assisted by the story of the Six Million, which, almost like a religious myth, has stressed the need for greater Jewish racial solidarity. Unfortunately, it has worked in quite the opposite way for all

other peoples, rendering them impotent in the struggle for self-preservation. The aim in the following pages is quite simply to tell the Truth.⁴⁴

This passage demonstrates the way in which the new 'packaging' of Holocaust denial was achieved. The piece seems to have adopted the protocols espoused by Chesterton. The issue of the Holocaust was widened to demonstrate the way in which it was used to prevent questions and national debates over race, as indicated by the reference to Enoch Powell and his infamous 'Rivers of Blood speech' in 1968. Powell was evoked in order to capitalise on the widespread public support for his views. Verrall had removed from the passage were the prototype knee-jerk antisemitic terms which were characteristic of the radical far right found in the work of Leese and Jordan. Instead, the reader was left with an impression of 'rational' argument. Verrall even used language which aimed at dissuading the reader that nothing antisemitic was going on: 'no one could have anything but admiration for the way in which the Jews...' However such sentiments were snatched back with the following statement about how it has 'worked in quite the opposite way for other peoples...' The mention of Auschwitz demonstrates new sights of attack were being brought into far right denial that correlated to public perceptions of the Holocaust. This was not without precedent, in the mid 190s Arnold Leese had focused on 'Belsen bunkum' in his attacks on narratives of Jewish suffering and in 1961 Jordan spoke of Dachau in his criticism of the Eichmann Trial. Verrall's attack on Auschwitz shows that deniers were engaged with narratives that permeated public understandings of the Holocaust.

The use of the word 'truth' suggests that Verrall was attempting to correct what he saw as a 'lie'; in locating his motivation in the apparent 'struggle for self-preservation', his intentions as a far-right writer were clear. In the closing sentence to his introduction, Verrall again tried to link his arguments to debates over immigration writing:

The distinguished American historian Harry Elmer Barnes once wrote that 'An attempt to make a competent, objective and truthful investigation of the extermination question... is surely the most precarious venture that an historian or demographer could undertake today.' In attempting this precarious task, it is hoped to make some contribution, not only to historical truth, but towards lifting the burden of a lie from our own shoulders, so that we may freely confront the dangers which threaten us all.⁴⁵

Verrall's politically expedient agenda was clearly identifiable. He like Tyndall felt that the 'burden' of the Holocaust was a barrier to far right success at elections. Verrall's words

⁴⁴ R. E. Harwood, *Did Six Million Really Die: The Truth at Last* (Uckfield, The Historical Review Press: 1974), introduction, p. 2.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 3.

essentially created an ultimatum for his readers: if you want the 'dangers' in society dealt with you must accept that the Holocaust is a lie so that far right groups may confront the threats to white hegemony. While these 'dangers' are not explained in detail it is clear from his references to Powell and Jewish racial preservation that Verrall was referring to the Jewish conspiracy and immigration. The appropriation of scholarly material in the passage is also significant. In the above passage, Verrall uses the 'distinguished' Harry Elmer Barnes to suggest that his arguments are well researched and sound. Barnes was in fact a scholar of American history, but lost his reputation in academic circles when he began advocating Holocaust denial in the late 1960s.⁴⁶ Verrall attempted to place himself alongside such scholars, to give his arguments a form of legitimacy from the outset. This attempt at gaining legitimacy was also seen in his choice of name and with the appropriation of position at a university. Verrall claimed that 'Richard E. Harwood' was 'at present with the University of London'. The University strongly denied this and it became apparent that the name was a fake.⁴⁷ The consequence of this raises two significant questions: First, did Verrall disguise his name to assume legitimacy by locating himself in proximity to a university or second, was it to hide his link with the far right? It would seem that the answer was both; it was clear that Verrall's pseudonym at the University of London would be uncovered. Therefore it stands to reason that Verrall used the name to distance the tract from being considered far-right propaganda.

Verrall attempted to establish 'legitimate' and 'scholastic' arguments throughout the work and attempted to camouflage the antisemitism contained within it, yet the intent and underlying racist agenda were overt. In the first section entitled 'German Policy towards the Jews prior to the war' Verrall stated:

Rightly or wrongly, the Germany of Adolf Hitler considered the Jews to be a disloyal and avaricious element within the national community [...] it is not part of the discussion here to argue whether the German attitude to the Jews was right or not, or to judge whether its legislative measures against them were just or unjust.⁴⁸

While the tone of this piece differs from that of Alexander Ratcliffe who denied any persecution of the Jews, and Arnold Leese who welcomed such measures, Verrall does not enter into debate. Verrall was attempting to present a scholastic 'objectivity' in his work and was trying to appear as an objective historian, making no judgements on the past. In making

⁴⁶ For information on Barnes's form of denial see: D. E. Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (New York, The Free Press: 1993), p. 22, 28, 67-71, 73-78.

⁴⁷ *The Sunday Times*, 23rd February, 1975.

⁴⁸ R. E. Harwood, *Did Six Million Really Die?* p. 2.

no comment on or condemning the discrimination against the Jews in Germany from 1933 to 1939, however, he was essentially supporting the treatment. He was suggesting that the measures against the Jews could be seen as 'just' or that the German attitude towards Jews was 'right'.

In the pamphlet Verrall later claimed that the Jews had 'declared war against Germany', citing an article from Chaim Weizmann in the *Jewish Chronicle*. This argument was not new, and was used in a similar context by Arnold Leese in *The Jewish War of Survival* and Colin Jordan in *Gothic Ripples*.⁴⁹ While the 'packaging' may have changed, arguments were still being drawn from the prototype deniers of 1950s and essentially operate on the antisemitic assumption that Jewish power existed and that it was capable of 'declaring war'. Such assumptions were inevitably a form of redemptive antisemitism in which the Jews were blamed for 'declaring war' and as such were responsible for the tragedies of that war. These arguments were not only paramount in rehabilitating the Nazis but in recasting a far-right 'history' of the Second World War. Inevitably, although obviously not explicitly stated, the tone of the piece was inherently genocidal too. It was emblematic of the wider 'eternal' struggle between the 'Aryan race' and the 'Jewish race.' *Did Six Million Really Die?*, Verrall's history of the Second World War, was the same as that of Jordan and other radical far-right movements seen in the previous chapter in which the Jews had brought about the war and had compounded their 'victory' by creating the Holocaust 'lie'.

In trying to prove his thesis, Verrall attempted for the first time to establish an academic form of Holocaust denial by including legitimate works of scholarship. One of the principal works he used was by Gerald Reitlinger, *The Final Solution* published in 1953. Verrall attempted to use the work to demonstrate that the Jews were to be moved to the east once the plan to deport them to Madagascar was shelved. He used Reitlinger's work to dispel the notion that the Jews were being exterminated by 1942, claiming that the 'Final Solution' was not mass murder but settlement to the east.⁵⁰ He stated that 'emigration was still favoured' and used Reitlinger again to support this theory by selecting specific quotations from the book. Verrall ignored information which related to evidence of the extermination of the Jewish populations of Europe. He stated that Reitlinger made 'the entirely unfounded supposition that because the Madagascar Plan had been shelved, the Germans must necessarily have been thinking of "extermination"'.⁵¹ Verrall argued that the plan in May 1944 for the Germans to exchange one

⁴⁹ See chapter two, pp. 87-89 and chapter three, pp. 122-123, 142.

⁵⁰ R. E. Harwood, *Did Six Million Really Die?*, p. 5.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 10.

million Jews for ten thousand trucks was indicative of the plan of the Germans to continue the emigration process. Verrall used this as an example to claim 'if the "extermination" writers are to be believed, there were scarcely one million Jews left by May 1944.'⁵² This argument was moot, the plan which Verrall held up as an example was never going to take place and the plan was not intended as a way to export Jews from occupied Europe, but as a way of establishing contact with the western allies.⁵³

Verrall's use of Reitlinger's, *The Final Solution*, is significant because Reitlinger foreshadowed the functionalist narratives of the Final Solution. Reitlinger's work posited the idea that antisemitic policy was a structural agency in the Third Reich and therefore removed the need for ideology to drive anti-Jewish measures or policy. In essence, perpetrators could respond to Hitler's 'Jewish problem' without having to be ideologically driven themselves. Reitlinger's position was that functional 'solutions' to the 'Jewish question' resulted in a 'Final Solution' that was not a predestined plan. While Verrall dismissed any notion of genocide or murder in Reitlinger's work, some of Reitlinger's arguments did in fact fit well into the narratives which Verrall wanted to construct. As the functional arguments demonstrate, the 'Final Solution' was a radicalising process. As such the narratives contained a process of 'radicalisation', but because it was a *process*, deniers like Verrall could stop the *process* at a point which was convenient to the narratives they wanted to construct. Verrall was happy to admit the Madagascar plan as an option the Nazis considered, but was not prepared to admit genocide, and thus claimed the Jews were *literally* evacuated to the east. The narratives of functionalists, therefore, were useful to Holocaust deniers. David Irving, in *Hitler's War* was able to take the arguments of the functionalist school regarding the role of Hitler in the actual decision making process of the 'Final Solution' to the extreme conclusion Hitler had not known about the genocide of the Jews until 1943.⁵⁴ The metanarratives of the intentionalist schools of Holocaust studies, however, were not conducive in the same way because they had genocide and murder sewn into the very fabric of all arguments relating to the implementation of the 'Final Solution'.

Verrall's main attack in the book came, as the title suggests, on the figure of six million Jews murdered. This has been the main attack of Holocaust deniers, and is seen in the early denials of the previous chapters. The rudimentary figures and sums which had taken up only a fraction of the page in the earlier denial pamphlets were replaced in Verrall text with several pages

⁵² *Ibid*, p. 14.

⁵³ S. Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews* (New York: Harper Collins, 2009), 403-405.

⁵⁴ See chapter five.

regarding the number of Jews murdered.⁵⁵ Verrall employed several arguments the over this question. The first was that precise figures were difficult to find, but where (in his judgement) 'reliable' statistics were found, 'not a fraction of six million Jews could have been killed.'⁵⁶ Verrall claimed that Jews were transported to the Urals in Russia by the Soviets and those that remained *were* killed but the numbers equated to 'no more than one hundred thousand persons.'⁵⁷ Finally, Verrall used the same sources as Arnold Leese in *Gothic Ripples*; using *The World Almanac* of 1938, he claimed that the an 'impossible birth rate' existed because of the large number of Jews who remained after the war.⁵⁸ Verrall explained that and the only way in which this figure could be correct was if six million Jews had been emigrants to the Soviet Union and the United States and not killed in the Holocaust.⁵⁹

Verrall's arguments essentially built on those of the initial deniers of the 1940s to the late 1960s. His arguments were more detailed than his forbears and contemporaries. This was attested to by the length of the work, whereas previous publication from far right groups had been limited to up to eight pages, Verrall's pamphlet was twenty-eight pages in length.⁶⁰ It was dedicated entirely to debunking the claim that the Nazis had murdered six million Jews. The length of the work is of significance for two reasons. First, it demonstrated that a British far right figure sought to infiltrate a wider international dialogue on Holocaust denial and use the debates from those discourses to promote British far right ideology and policy in relation to race and immigration. Second its length also meant that it was accessible to a public audience. Denial in the recidivistic British far right was not only about revising the past in line with far-right thought, it was also directed towards educating a wider public about Jewish conspiracy and convincing them to vote (and possibly join) the NF.

Verrall's work was the first example of British Holocaust denial that approached the subject with a facade of scholarly 'objective' rigour. It attempted to hide its deeply antisemitic undertones with suggestive sentences which left the readers to 'make up their own minds'. The style and organisation of the piece in actuality left no doubt that the ultimate suggestion was that the Holocaust was a Jewish plot. The final sentences of the text attest to this fact:

⁵⁵ R. E. Harwood, *Did Six Million Really Die?* pp. 17-24.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* p. 17.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁵⁸ A. Leese, *Gothic Ripples* No. 96 (12th December 1953).

⁵⁹ R. E. Harwood, *Did Six Million Really Die?* p. 24.

⁶⁰ Verrall's twenty eight pages did pale into comparison to other denial literature published in the 1970s. Paul Rassinier *Debunking the Genocide Myth* (1978) ran in to over 400 pages.

The question most pertinent to the extermination legend is, of course: how many of the 3 million European Jews under German control survived after 1945? The Jewish Joint Distribution Committee estimated the number of survivors in Europe to be only one and a half million, but such a figure is now totally unacceptable. This is proved by the growing number of Jews claiming compensation from the West German Government for having allegedly suffered between 1939 and 1945. By 1965, the number of these claimants registered with the West German Government had tripled in ten years and reached 3,375,00 ... Nothing could be a more devastating proof of the brazen fantasy of the Six Million. Most of these claimants are Jews, so there can be no doubt that the majority of the 3 million Jews who experienced the Nazi occupation of Europe are, in fact, very much alive. It is a resounding confirmation of the fact that Jewish casualties during the Second World War can only be estimated at a figure in thousands. Surely this is enough grief for the Jewish people? Who has the right to compound it with vast imaginary slaughter, marking with eternal shame a great European nation, as well as wringing fraudulent monetary compensation from them?⁶¹

As is seen here Verrall took the figure of three million as the number of Jews under Nazi control and all his arguments rested that assumption. Other Jews in Europe were simply explained away as having migrated to other countries. Verrall's language led the reader to the idea that a Jewish conspiracy was at work without explicitly using the words. This type of denial is indicative of the changing shape of Holocaust denial in Britain which took place from the 1970s and with the reform of the far right under the National Front. It is an echo of the protocols established by Chesterton and later adapted by Tyndall in the *Eleventh Hour: A Call for British Rebirth*.⁶²

The work is significant because it represented an attempt by Holocaust deniers to interact with the research that was conducted in mainstream publications. The book used quotations and sources from a variety of historians and writers. However, Verrall selected his sources to support his thesis and did not respect the conventions of historical scholarship. One example of this is seen his use of Colin Cross's *Adolf Hitler* published in 1973 from which selected the following quotation: 'The shuffling of millions of Jews around Europe and murdering them, in a time of desperate war emergency, was useless from any rational point of view.' Verrall used the quote to demonstrate that there was no logical explanation or reason for the Holocaust and as such supports his view that six million people were not killed. However, when we look at the book itself, Cross wrote the sentence but alongside examples of the irrationality of Nazi antisemitism.⁶³

⁶¹ *Ibid*, p. 33.

⁶² J. Tyndall, *The Eleventh Hour*, pp. 92-116.

⁶³ C. Cross, *Adolf Hitler* (London, Berkley: 1973), p 306-9.

Verrall also criticised academic arguments about how the orders for the Holocaust were disseminated. In a prelude to the one thousand dollars offered by David Irving to anyone who could provide a document - a written order - that Hitler had ordered the Holocaust, Verrall questioned the validity of the historical evidence of the Holocaust. In one example regarding the lack of written orders, Verrall writes 'Reitlinger again makes the convenient assumption that such orders were generally "verbal".' Verrall demonstrated a fundamental argument of deniers, which Irving would develop in *Hitler's War*, that without written evidence which categorically states x number of Jews were to be murdered, there was no evidence for the Holocaust.⁶⁴

Verrall did make small concessions which have not been seen in other examples of denial. He was willing to admit that some Jews were murdered as partisans or that 'a figure in the thousands was killed'.⁶⁵ Verrall's work marks a point at which British Holocaust denial moves beyond the rudimentary denial seen in the earlier works of far-right fanatics and is comparable to the dialogues found in Tyndall's *The Eleventh Hour*. The reason for this change was twofold. The first was in line with the transformation that had taken place in the far right since the establishment of the National Front in 1967. The National Front and its leaders had attempted to distance itself from its neo-Nazi past, and, as such, the overt racist language was toned down in order to present a viable nationalist alternative to the British two party system that would resonate with what the NF perceived as 'traditional British' values. This does not mean that the values or underlying principles on which the far right was based had changed. Rather what changed was the presentation of such values; they were modified to present "rational" arguments about racial hygiene, Jewish control, immigration and Holocaust denial which the NF and other recidivistic and hybrid movements hoped would attract the voting public.

The second explanation for this transition was the availability of academic texts with which to interact. In the early 1970s books had begun to appear on the Final Solution, however the subject still tended to be contained within the larger framework of books on Nazi Germany and Hitler and other leading Nazi biographies. This was seen in Verrall's bibliography and consisted of literature based general histories of the Third Reich such as William Shirer's *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, Willi Frischauer's *Himmler: Evil Genius of the Third Reich*, Manvell and Frankl's multiple biographies of Himmler, Goebbels, Hess, Göring and Hitler as well as their work *The Incomparable Crime: Mass Extermination in the Twentieth Century*.

⁶⁴ For detailed deconstruction of Verrall's arguments see: D. E. Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust*, pp. 104-121.

⁶⁵ R. E. Harwood, *Did Six Million Really Die?* p. 24.

While these books were not traditional academic scholarship as such, they represent a cross-section of literature which holds a perceived legitimacy because they were available in 'mainstream' bookshops and libraries. By using them, or arguing against the points made in them, denial literature takes on the appearance of a dialogue with accepted historical fact. Despite adopting legitimate materials into the bibliography, the book still contained materials found in early examples of denial. For example, Arthur Ponsonby's book *Falsehood in Wartime* (London, 1928) was used by Verrall to argue that 'the forgery of war-time atrocity photographs is not new.'⁶⁶ The same work was used by Alexander Ratcliffe in *The Truth about the Jews* in 1943.⁶⁷ Verrall also uses sources similar to those of Arnold Leese, such as the *World Almanac* of 1938 and 1942, to allege that the figure of six million Jews murdered was false.⁶⁸ This bridge between old and new variants of Holocaust denial demonstrates the continuity of old arguments and how such opinions were presented in a regenerated form. It underlines how Verrall's arguments were still informed by the deeply antisemitic publications of the 1940s, 1950s and early 1960s but had been altered in line with the more 'rational' and 'informed' arguments which the National Front wanted to present in order to attract support.

Verrall's *Did Six Million Really Die?* marked a point at which Holocaust denial changed in accordance with the shifts which were taking place within the 'recidivistic' and 'hybrid' far-right. It was emblematic of the protocols established by Chesterton in 1967, and was, in part, a response to transformations and perspectives taking place in the United Kingdom.⁶⁹ Verrall's pamphlet may have marked a break with the past and the 'radical' and 'revolutionary' forms of denial but it was still based on a loose bibliography of texts and simple arguments. Even though these arguments were expressed in a camouflaged form with leading language which stopped just short of the overt antisemitic rhetoric found in the publications of Ratcliffe, Leese and Jordan, they still contained the same message: the Holocaust was a Jewish hoax and was symbolic of a wider Jewish conspiracy.

The rebranding of far-right ideology was also reflected in the comments of prominent individuals in the NF's directorate like John Tyndall, Martin Webster, Andrew Fountaine and Andrew Brons. All these men had had some connection with the radicalism of the NSM or WDL and each were keen to distance themselves from the past connection with overt National Socialism. Stan Taylor, in his study of the NF, examined the extent to which the political views

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁶⁷ A. Ratcliffe, *The Truth about Jews*, (Glasgow: second edition, 1943), p 15; C. Jordan, *Gothic Ripples* No. 16. (1986).

⁶⁸ See A. Leese, *Gothic Ripples* No. 96 (12th December 1953).

⁶⁹ See S. Taylor, *The National Front*, pp. 18-51.

of such men had or had not changed since the late 1960s. Taylor identified that all the above men attempted to distance themselves from the neo-Nazi past, but concluded that the ideology of the National Front was based on three tenets which bore striking similarities to Nazi ideology. These three points were the shared belief in an autarkic economic programme; the need for British Lebensraum; and the establishment of a white-only Britain by means of forced expulsion of non-whites.⁷⁰ Taylor's points emphasise the NF as a recidivistic incarnation of the British far right. The NF's ideology did not explicitly support dictatorship or the extermination of races, yet their other policies demonstrated the inherently genocidal nature of their ideologies.⁷¹ The NF proposed 'obligatory repatriation of non-white races.' This ideology was seen in the 1974 ITV documentary *This Week* entitled *The National Front*. In the documentary, the leaders Webster and Tyndall attempt to demonstrate the way in which the National Front is dissimilar to a Nazi dictatorship and distance themselves from their past. However, in the process it was shown how their views were in essence Nazism with a human face. They attempted to claim that the forced repatriation would be done 'humanely' and in 'phases'. In a crude attempt at justification of the policy, Martin Webster (who would be in charge of the deportation) explained those to be deported would not 'go out on the first banana boats at the docks.'⁷² The very idea that 'obligatory repatriation' did not amount to a form of ethnic cleansing or genocide was preposterous. Such language was indicative of the way in which National Front leaders based policy on racial and racist lines but tried to hide the more extreme policies (or the implications of such policies) with euphemistic language and rhetoric.

Peer-review in Holocaust denial: Attempts at building a 'scholarly' framework.

It is clear that Verrall was not the only individual publishing Holocaust denial during the 1970s and Verrall would draw on the work of other deniers both in Britain and from abroad. As explained in the introduction to the thesis, global comparisons between Holocaust denial are useful to understand how they impacted on British far-right denials of the Holocaust. It is the reformulation of these arguments into a specifically British context which is of significance because they demonstrate how Verrall and his far-right companions used denial to support their own British ideological endeavours. It is clear that Verrall borrowed heavily from the arguments of international deniers but the primary aim of using other non-British denial was to give the impression that there was a large group of 'historians' who provided a counter-

⁷⁰ For information on the National Front's racial ideologies see: S. Taylor, *The National Front*, pp. 66-68.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

⁷² *This Week: The National Front* (1974), presented by Peter Williams, produced by Micheal Ruggens.

history to Holocaust historians. He was not alone in this enterprise and his own work was also used by other deniers to give the impression of wide scholarly discourse. Verrall's work was cited in the next major publication on Holocaust denial by the American engineering professor Arthur Butz. In 1977 Butz published *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century: The Case Against the Presumed Extermination of European Jewry*.⁷³ This collegial relationship allowed deniers to give the impression of a shared 'historiography' and provided them with a forum to exchange shared ideas about the past they wanted to construct. This symbiotic relationship between deniers was evidenced when Verrall published a further book in 1978. Although not specifically dedicated to the Holocaust, he attempted to show the 'hidden hand' behind the scenes of the Nuremberg Tribunal.⁷⁴ The book, *Nuremberg and other War Crimes Trials: A New Look*, made accusations that the trials constituted a Jewish conspiracy and the Holocaust was a Jewish propaganda campaign.

The work built on the arguments he made in *Did Six Million Really Die?* and it is clear Verrall had benefitted from reading Butz's work *Hoax of the Twentieth Century* which he described as a 'masterpiece' of research and was cited throughout the work.⁷⁵ *Nuremberg and Other War Crimes Trials: A New Look* demonstrates for the first time the beginnings of an international network of Holocaust deniers and their literature dedicated to the subject. In his bibliography, Verrall cited some of the major academic texts in Holocaust historiography, such as Raul Hilberg's *The Destruction of the European Jews* and *The Documents of Destruction* and Lucy Davidowicz *The War Against the Jews 1933-45* but claims they were 'torn to shreds by ... rather less subjective reviewers of history.'⁷⁶ The books he listed that had 'torn to shreds' these academic texts were David Hoggan's *The Myth of the Six Million* (1969), Butz's *Hoax of the Twentieth Century* and Paul Rassinier's *The Drama of The European Jews* (1975). Verrall also lists several 'peripheral works' which include Thies Christophersen's *The Auschwitz Lie* (1974) and David Irving's *Hitler's War* (1977).

This bibliographical account exposes a key tactic in Holocaust denial: the attempt to ape legitimate historical research conventions by having 'peers' in the same 'field'. It is also noteworthy that David Irving's *Hitler's War* is placed in the bibliography, it was labelled by

⁷³ A. R Butz, *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century: The Case Against the Presumed Extermination of European Jewry* (California, Institute For Historical Review: 1977), p. 12.

⁷⁴ R. Harwood, *Nuremberg and other War Crimes Trials: A New Look* (Uckfield, The Historical Review Press: 1978).

⁷⁵ Verrall cites Butz throughout the work see: R. Harwood, *Nuremberg and other War Crimes*, p, 6, 11, 30, 38, 48 and 69. The back cover also contains an advertisement for Butz's work along with Verrall's own *Did Six Million Really Die?* and *The Six Million Reconsidered* by the 'committee for truth in History'.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p, 69.

Verrall as a work which 'does not deny the Holocaust, but claims Hitler had no knowledge of it.'⁷⁷ Irving's presence is significant because it demonstrates how even Irving's early work, before he publically announced his belief in Holocaust denial, was absorbed by deniers. While the presentation of Holocaust denial in 'recidivist' movements like the NF may have adopted academic conventions, Holocaust denial was very much a closed dialogue; while Verrall and other deniers were happy to 'tear apart' legitimate academic discourses they did not include responses to the arguments against denial from genuine academics. The projection of academic apparatuses was an apparition because in reality, there was no debate, all the arguments led to the same conclusion the Holocaust had not taken place.

Yet, Verrall, armed with his 'sources' and network of deniers who present a 'scholarly' approach to Holocaust denial, represents the break with the old prototype denial and the overtly antisemitic denial of the radical far right. It moved away from blatant and visceral antisemitism and overt Nazism, yet it still contained the arguments which revolved around the issue of race in order to further the goals and quest for political legitimacy the NF sought. Such denials were not a shift away from the original arguments which underpinned Holocaust denial but elaborating on them and reframing them in a more 'populist' guise. This echoes the protocols established by Chesterton at the start of the chapter and is indicative of the NF trying to attract mass support by playing down overt racist language. It was also an attempt to 'educate' a wider audience about their views on the past. Holocaust denial literature in the British far right was not an academic exercise. Holocaust deniers were not peer-reviewing each other's work in order to construct a 'historiography'. It is true that they wanted the appearance of academic rigour but in reality they were aiming their arguments at a mass market in order to attract support for their wider ideological and political aims.

Verrall's publications were a key facet of the National Front's response to the Holocaust and were typical of the way in which such publications were produced. They contained a modicum of distance from the NF itself in order to allow a degree of deniability that they were directly involved in direct publication of such literature. This was shown by the fact that Verrall published the book under a different name in order to maintain a critical distance from it. He could therefore recommend the book as an 'independent' 'source' which had been produced outside the NF. He frequently did this and referenced the book in other works as if it was not his own work.⁷⁸ The reason for this, presumably, was to present a wider circle of individuals which shared his ideas without the NF being directly involved. This tactic was evidenced when

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Spearhead* No. 118 (June, 1978), *Spearhead* No. 119 (July, 1978), *Spearhead* No. 120 (August, 1978).

Tyndall explained 'there is a growing school of historians today that in fact challenges the accuracy of the allegation that the Germans Nazis ever had any intended extermination programme.'⁷⁹ This was a flagrant attempt to inflate the number of people who subscribed to Holocaust denial and imbue their arguments with a sense of legitimacy and credibility.

This method was also seen in another example of denial. *Holocaust News* was published in 1988 by Richard Edmonds. Edmonds was a long-time supporter of Tyndall and deputy chairman of the BNP from 1982 until Tyndall was ousted by Nick Griffin in 1999. *Holocaust News* was distributed to homes in London, Glasgow, Newcastle, Birmingham, Cardiff, Norwich and Leicester, and also to lawyers, schools and MPs. *Holocaust News* offered little in terms of new arguments other than to declare the murder of Europe's Jews a 'hoax'. It contained references to the texts of Butz and Richard E. Harwood (Verrall). There are two points which can be gleaned from this publication. First, *Holocaust News* was distributed widely, and to Jewish populations, and represented a key policy of the leadership of the BNP by Tyndall and Edmonds himself to get their message to a wide audience. The second is an extension of the first and links to the argument that the NF sought a distance from denial literature in order to be able to maintain a level of deniability about their own involvement in the creation of such material. Tyndall distanced himself from the publication even though it had been printed by the Centre for Historical Review, an arm of the BNP. As one newspaper reported on the distribution of *Holocaust News* 'John Tyndall, who was convicted of inciting racial hatred in 1986, admits that, although he is not involved in *Holocaust News*, it has his full support.'⁸⁰

This is indicative of the way Holocaust denial was used by the 'recidivist' far right movements. They supported the arguments made in Holocaust denial literature, but rejected that they were the creators of the material itself. This view is supported by Nigel Copsey who opines:

The party's show of Holocaust denial fluctuated, and in all probability it followed strategic concerns. Thus, in the late 1980s and mid-1990s, first in distributing *Holocaust News* and then by giving Nick Griffin free rein to propagate Holocaust denial, Tyndall used it insofar as it could appeal to hardliners. However, he had refused to commit himself to Holocaust denial in *The Eleventh Hour*, and when there was a prospect of success at the ballot box, Holocaust denial was also conveniently buried.⁸¹

While Copsey is correct about the way in which the BNP and the NF used Holocaust denial, it is however incorrect to claim that Tyndall refused to commit himself to Holocaust denial. Tyndall

⁷⁹ J. Tyndall, *The Eleventh Hour*, pp. 101-102.

⁸⁰ 'Holocaust Hate Sheet Alarms British Jews' *The Sunday Times* (March 6, 1988).

⁸¹ N. Copsey, *Contemporary British Fascism*, pp 92-93.

had made comments about the Holocaust in *The Eleventh Hour*, and while they were not overt references to Holocaust denial material, the arguments of deniers were distilled into one paragraph of the book. This strategy of being able to distance themselves from Holocaust denial when it was needed while simultaneously creating, publishing and distributing Holocaust denial material demonstrates the deceitful nature of far right politics and Holocaust denial. This deception meant that when citing Holocaust denial material in magazines like *Spearhead* and *The Eleventh Hour* it could be given the appearance of being an independent and authoritative source.⁸² The benefit for 'populist' and 'hybrid' movements was that they created a form of external authority for their arguments and could claim that denial material was not just the view of the particular party but was part of a much wider dialogue.

The BNP and NF after Tyndall

By 1999 John Tyndall had been removed as the Chairman of the BNP to be replaced by Nick Griffin.⁸³ Griffin's leadership would see the BNP becoming more of a populist party in the far right. Although the label is somewhat problematic because, while publically the party shifted to a more moderate tone than it had presented under Tyndall, secretly the party remained faithful to previous ideologies. As Nigel Copsey notes in relation to Griffin's beliefs:

It need hardly be added that all through his right-extremist career, there had been notable variations in Griffin's political style. ... [H]e had become a man committed to 'respectable politics and electioneering', in other words, an out-and-out 'moderniser', erstwhile comrades in the International Third Position remember Griffin in a variety of former guises, be that as a conservative, a revolutionary nationalist, a radical National Socialist, a Third Positionist or a friend of 'boot boys' and the skinhead scene.

In relation to Holocaust denial Griffin was more reserved. In the 1999 publication, *Spreading the Word: British National Party Handbook on Propaganda* candidates and supporters of candidates were advised how to present the 'party line'. The publication stated:

The BNP has no position on the 'Holocaust' at all because, true or untrue, it is a subject that belongs to Germany and German occupied Europe half a century ago rather than to Britain today, and the BNP is concerned only with matters that relate to Britain today. The 'Holocaust', in other words, is none of our business.⁸⁴

⁸² *Spearhead* No. 118 (June, 1978), *Spearhead* No. 119 *Spearhead* No. 119 (July, 1978), *Spearhead* No. 120 (August, 1978).

⁸³ For information on how and why Tyndall lost control of the Chairmanship, see: N. Copsey, *Contemporary British Fascism*, pp. 93-101.

⁸⁴ *Spreading the Word: British National Party Handbook on Propaganda* (n.p: 1999), p. 18.

This should not be read as meaning that Holocaust denial was extinguished from the BNP, denial remained among the party faithful but overt and public commitment to denial became muted. Unlike the NF and BNP under Tyndall in which references were made to the Holocaust and Holocaust denial material, the Holocaust was removed from official BNP publications. What this represented was a side-step away from the issue, in other words ambiguity and silence would become the official public line. Griffin would be questioned about his views time and time again which would always be met with non-committal answers, or a response which stated his views had changed. Griffin had published on the Holocaust while the BNP was under the leadership of Tyndall and he was his deputy. *Who are the Mind Benders?* and publications in *The Rune* demonstrate Griffin's support for Holocaust denial all of which were published before his election as BNP leader. Griffin also admitted to updating Richard Verrall's *Did Six Million Really Die?*⁸⁵

Griffin's position on the Holocaust and Holocaust denial should not be read as the end of Holocaust denial in the movement. It should be seen as a rebranding of the movement, a transitional development away from the Tyndallite brand of 'recidivism' and 'populism' in which Holocaust denial had a home, to a 'hybrid' form in which the Holocaust is excluded. However this was only true in relation to the 'public face' of the movement. Under Tyndall, Holocaust denial and references to Jewish conspiracy were used as a signifier to keep the party faithful and extreme elements in the party content. Under Griffin, these signifiers were removed and such discussions were moved behind closed doors. It could be argued that the removal of overt references to the Holocaust could be read as a form of denial itself; especially when we consider the language used in the BNP handbook which stated that the Holocaust could be 'untrue'. This comment appeared to be a way of still appealing to party hardliners and keeping them on his side while carrying out Griffin's reforms of the party. Essentially what Griffin was implying was that Holocaust denial still had a place in the party, but this place no longer included public forms or official BNP publicity. This was evidence in 1999 when during his campaign for the BNP leadership Griffin stated: 'Of course, we must teach the truth to the hardcore ... but when it comes to influencing the public, forget about racial differences, genetics, Zionism, historical revisionism and so on.'⁸⁶

⁸⁵ See: N. Ryan, *Into a World of Hate: A Journey Among the Extreme Right* (London, Routledge: 2004), pp. 62-63.

⁸⁶ N. Copsey, 'Changing course or changing clothes? Reflections on the ideological evolution of the British National Party 1999–2006' *Patterns of Prejudice* (Vol. 41. No. 1: 2007), p. 68.

Publicly Griffin continued to explain that his views on the Holocaust had changed but his new views cannot be discussed because he would be prosecuted under international law or that 'European law prevented him from answering such questions.'⁸⁷ The effect of this is to perform political back-flips in which Griffin could claim his views had changed but also still appeal to his hardliner supporters who will be aware what these views were. This dichotomy was the defining characteristic of Holocaust denial in the 'populist' and 'hybrid' forms of the far right. On the one hand, they want to appeal to the electorate *en masse* and hide the more radical and unpopular elements of their ideology but, on the other, they needed to maintain their hard-line and grass-roots support. If leaders of movements went too far one way, they would either alienate the electorate they need in order to gain power or isolate their main supporters who provide the parties with funds and publicity. This was why support for Holocaust denial was often expressed in coded ways as it offered a way in which parties could promote Holocaust denial without being explicitly linked to the antisemitic conspiracy arguments contained within the publications and still maintain the support of the party faithful.

There was a further reason why Holocaust denial was necessary for Griffin and the BNP party faithful. The party could not remove Holocaust denial because it represented a central plank of the 'history' which they had constructed for themselves. The British far-right subscribed to a 'world Jewish conspiracy' which was entrenched in their perception of world history: the world was controlled by Jews, and the events of the past had been controlled by Jews. Yet clearly something more was taking place than an obsessive commitment to the far-right vision of the past they had constructed. Recidivist and hybrid movements were committed to achieving power and courted public appeal, therefore (leaving aside the arguments that leaders of such movements still needed to appeal to their hard-line members) it would seem that it was possible, and theoretically desirable, to jettison Holocaust denial. The reason why this was not possible (and if fact, conversely, undesirable) was because of the place of Holocaust in British society. The historiography on British memory and the Holocaust stands testament to the way in which the Holocaust had permeated into the collective consciousness of the nation.⁸⁸ The Holocaust had been absorbed into wider narratives about the Second World War and grown to

⁸⁷ 'Boy, 17: How I Challenged leader Nick Griffin over the Holocaust' *The Telegraph* (24th October 2009). This article is in direct reference to Griffin's appetite on the BBC political show *Question Time*.

⁸⁸ A. Pearce, 'The Development of Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain, 1979-2001', *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History*, Vol. 14 No. 2 (2008), pp. 71-95; A. Pearce, *The Development of Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain, 1979-2001* (Ph.D. Thesis, Royal Holloway College, 2010); T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination*; T. Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice: Antisemitism in British Society During the Second World War* (Manchester, Manchester University Press: 1989).

signify Nazism, fascism and the far right as the quintessential 'evil' of our time.⁸⁹ Thus, for the far-right the Holocaust was a battle that needed to be fought because it was emblematic of exactly what they were and are fighting against. From the point of view of the far right the Holocaust was a hoax yet it had pervaded across British society and historical memory, it was therefore *the* fundamental expression of Jewish propaganda and control. For the far right the Holocaust had been the most successful Jewish propaganda 'campaign' and in fighting Holocaust denial they were also fighting 'Jewish world control'. This was not only true for recidivistic, hybrid populist movements but also the same for the radical and revolutionary right. The methods of each group in gaining power may have varied and affected the way each derivative presented Holocaust denial but their ideological aims and view of history as controlled by Jews remained the same.

Comparing Holocaust denials? The 'radical' and 'revolutionary' versus the 'recidivist' and 'hybrid'

The last section of this chapter is designed to draw the threads of chapters three and four together. As has been seen in the previous chapter the radical and revolutionary variation of Holocaust denial remained steadfast in their commitment to the explicit link between the Holocaust and worldwide Jewish conspiracy and was characterised by overt vulgar antisemitic rhetoric with little attempt at trying to reach a wider audience. The populist 'recidivist', 'hybrid' groupings, however, modified their policies in relation to Holocaust denial, most of which can be linked to the protocols established by A.K. Chesterton in 1967 during the formation of the National Front to attract mass support. Under Chesterton and Bean, antisemitism and Holocaust denial were very much hidden from the public face of the party in order to attract the support of a wider electorate. When Tyndall rose to the chairmanship of the National Front, the 'Jewish question' and Holocaust denial became more overt. These dialogues were, however, marked by a distance in which the NF would deny that they were creators or disseminators of such material so as to avoid the stigma of being labelled 'neo-Nazi'. Under Griffin at the turn of the new millennium, Holocaust denial was quietly dropped from the BNPs publications so as to present a renewed face free of the stigma left by Tyndall and his supporters, Richard Edmonds and Martin Webster. Yet, even then, Holocaust denial was not absent from 'hybrid' narratives. Holocaust denial and antisemitism did not disappear from the movements at any point, rather its public visibility shifted to a point at which it was invisible in official publications.

⁸⁹ S. Friedländer, 'History, Memory and the Historian: Dilemmas and Responsibilities', *New German Critique*, (No. 80: 2000), p. 7.

The shape and place of Holocaust denial in the movements indicated the tensions between the radical and revolutionary incarnations of the far right and those groups which wanted to gain power through the democratic process. In the previous chapter we saw how the British Peoples Party claimed Colin Jordan as their 'spiritual leader' took deep umbrage at the way in which the 'populist' movements sought power. This division was expressed in their approach to Holocaust denial; in one section of their web site the BPP compares their objectives to 'opportunistic-populism' parties:

They [populist movements and parties] say that we must avoid Revisionism and Holocaust Denial as we might look like Nazis and anti-Semites. They say it isn't relevant to the current struggle.

[The BPP] say that the right to speak up for Truth in History is fundamental to free thought and expression. We say that the New World Order will ALWAYS use the Holocaust as a whip to beat down White Nationalists whether we ignore it or not. We say that the myths and fallacies surrounding the Holocaust must be exposed to the light of truth and research.⁹⁰

This comparison was made with the stance which is currently taken and adopted by groups like the BNP and demonstrates the division between the ways in which the different variants approach Holocaust denial. For the radical variant, overt Holocaust denial in their movements remained a key and immovable plank of its identity. However for the 'recidivist' 'hybrid' populist movements its use is only invoked when it benefits the democratic path to power and is often hidden or distanced from the movement because of its negative association with 'radical' movements and the label of 'neo-Nazi'. The 'recidivist' movements like the NF used Holocaust denial to demonstrate how Jews and the history of the Holocaust prevented discussions over 'race'.

Despite the difference in opinion in the various movements over how to achieve power the overt place and nature of Holocaust denial in the far right were apparent. It was essential in the makeup of how they viewed the world and their view of the past. The different variants shared similar sentiments about why belief in the Holocaust endangered their movements and ideology. They believed that the Holocaust was used to dismantle their credibility in the eyes of the public; the growing presence of the Holocaust in society since the 1960s, to a far-right mind-set, was an example of Jewish control which wanted to quell any expression of racial pride and nationalism. It was also emblematic of the power of Jewish control that a 'hoax' could be so prevalent. The radical variant sought to show this through its presentation and

⁹⁰ See: White Nationalism Versus Opportunist-Populism' <http://www.bpp.org.uk/objectives.html> (accessed 23/04/12)

dissemination of Holocaust denial. The 'recidivist' 'hybrid' proponents of the far right have historically sought a two-pronged attack, where the Holocaust was denied by using the pseudo-academic journals and books; it encouraged their readers and followers to consult 'independent' sources like those of 'Richard E. Harwood.' If this did not work or did not chime with the current *zeitgeist* within the particular movement then the Holocaust was removed from the public face of the movement or was invoked as a blockade to 'genuine' debates about nationalism and race. This second attack was also the main argument of the 'hybrid' camp in which the Holocaust was not discussed because it was, publically at least, deemed 'irrelevant' to the debates over race the party or movement wanted to have. Normally in the 'hybrid' variant, the Holocaust and Holocaust denial was not discussed or mentioned to avoid having to have a *public* position on the matter. The radical and recidivist movements shared a commonality in regards to the material they used and quoted. As seen in the previous chapter both groups used Verrall's *Did Six Million Really Die?* as a key text in their arguments as well as the report of Fred Leuchter and Arthur Butz as a means to 'support' their arguments. The presentation of the arguments that each derivative of the far right delivered in relation to the Holocaust contrasted according to their place on the far right spectrum which slid from the 'hybrid' form to the 'radical' form and the importance each group placed on public perception.

Whatever the label applied to individual movements, it is clear that at the root of each movement were methods of explaining what they saw in the present- Jewish control. Holocaust denial was therefore a topic which was used and presented in differing ways, normally according a specific groups' tactics for gaining power. It remained as part of the fundamental and defining argument that the far right wanted to present - there was a worldwide Jewish conspiracy. This in turn validated, not only the 'power' and 'control' of Jews in society, but also the 'histories' that the far right had constructed. These 'histories' centred on the failure of Nazism as the result of Jewish power and control, and the notion that the Second World War had been a 'Jewish war of survival'. In this sense, the past they had constructed was not just about political expedience of capricious antisemitism but it really did help them make sense of the present in which they found themselves.

Part Three: Fighting the Present Using the Past

Chapter Five: Understanding David Irving: Holocaust Denial, Far-Right Ideology, History and Society

The previous four chapters of this thesis have explained how Holocaust denial became embedded in British far-right thought and how denial was incorporated into over-arching theories of Jewish conspiracy and world domination. They have shown the ultimate goal of denial was to destroy and to deconstruct the memory and history of the Holocaust in order to rehabilitate far-right ideologies; and how the 'history' constructed by the far-right acted as a prism which bound together the members and followers and their shared ideological and racist views. We have also seen how denial was 'packaged' differently in the different types of groups that made up the far right.

Irving's connections with British far right figures and far right politics is well documented. As a student of physics at Imperial College London Irving edited the student magazine *Phoenix*, his views in the publication were very clearly to the far right of British politics.¹ While at university, Irving met Oswald Mosley and seconded him in a debate over Commonwealth immigration. During the debate Irving claimed the 1958 Nottingham race riots were caused by 'Coloured wide boys armed with knives.'² In the early 1960s Irving met and consorted with H.W. Wicks a former friend and colleague of Arnold Leese, whose warnings about a Jewish conspiracy had a great impact on him. This respect for Wicks was evidenced when Irving described him as 'a martyr to the cause of free speech.'³ As Ray Hill explains in the 1980s Irving was deeply involved in trying to establish his own 'new right' party in the United Kingdom under the name of the Focus Policy Study Group. A product of this party was the Journal *Focal Point* which Irving hoped would raise money for his new party. Hill describes the Journal as a 'bulletin board' for the far right and carried advertisements for a range of racist and Nazi-controlled groups. The periodical also contained revisionist tracts a letters column that was 'dominated' by known members of Nazi groups.⁴ Irving's links to British and international far right groups were the subject of an expert witness report at the Lipstadt trial in 2000 and legally proved his association with radical far right groups.⁵ While Irving did not hold political positions in the parties and groups mentioned in the thesis his relationship with them was indicative of a

¹ R. Hill and A Bell, *The Other Face of Terror: Inside Europe's Neo-Nazi Networks* (London, Grafton Books: 1988), p. 237.

² 'Mosley Packs them in' *Pi Magazine*, (No. 170, 22 February 1961), p. 1.

³ R. Griffiths, 'Antisemitic Obsessions: The Case of H. W. Wicks' *Patterns of Prejudice* (Vol. 48, No. 1: 2014), p. 95.

⁴ R. Hill and A Bell, *The Other Face of Terror*, p. 240-241.

⁵ The defence documents from the Lipstadt trial demonstrate Irving's links with both British and international far right groups, see: <http://www.hdot.org/en/trial/defense/rwe.html> (accessed 7/4/14).

symbiotic relationship. The populist recidivistic and revolutionary groups of the far right used Irving and his publication as exemplifying a genuine historical revision of the Holocaust from a historian who had published for a mainstream audience. Irving's work thus supported the epistemological positions that underpinned a far right historical narrative of the Holocaust, Hitler and Third Reich. Irving sequentially also benefited from this relationship as it provided him with an audience for his political views, offered him a base of support for his political ambitions and financial incentives by selling books and being paid to give lectures at far right meetings.

While Irving's connection to the far right and his own far right view will be discussed in this chapter, the main aim is designed to examine how historians and British society have interacted with Holocaust denial. This will be explored through the prism of the 2000 libel trial David Irving brought against Deborah Lipstadt and Penguin Books. The chapter will also consider Irving's career as military historian; biographer of the Third Reich's leading protagonists and Holocaust denier. Furthermore, this chapter will look at how historians have interacted with denial and the different ways in which the past has been constructed to combat deniers. It will investigate how and why the narratives constructed by Lipstadt and her defence team were emblematic of traditional, objective readings of the past and comment on the implications of such narratives. It will address how historians have interacted with denial and how denial has been understood in contemporary western and British society.

The career of Irving and the subsequent trial in 2000 have been studied by a raft of historians and academics; therefore this chapter will not be simply a refashioning of these narratives but will examine them critically in order see how the views of the academic community have changed over time.⁶ It will also compare Irving's Holocaust denial with the denial narratives seen in previous chapters. It will posit the idea that Irving adopted the ideas of Holocaust deniers and used his credentials as a military historian to give them an authenticity which other Holocaust deniers lacked. It will demonstrate that Irving's arguments followed a standard pattern of arguments employed by deniers, especially in relation to Auschwitz. Finally, it will critique how society and historians have interacted with Holocaust denial, and will review how denial has been presented in the public sphere and in academic and

⁶ R. Eaglestone, *Postmodernism and Holocaust Denial* (Cambridge, Icon Books: 2001); R. Evans, *Telling Lies About Hitler: The Holocaust, History and The David Irving Trial* (London, Verso: 2002); D. D. Guttenplan, *The Holocaust on Trial: History, Justice and the David Irving Libel Case* (London, Granta Books: 2002); D. E. Lipstadt, *History on Trial: My Day in Court with David Irving* (New York, Harper Collins: 2005); M. Shermer and A. Gorbman, *Denying History: Who Says the Holocaust Never Happened And Why Do They Say It?* (Berkeley, University of California: 2009), pp. 48-58, 271-282.

historiographical debates. It will suggest that study of denial has been designed to stress its discordance with society and history, and is reflective of the way in which Nazism has historically and historiographically been treated seen as separate from western liberal traditions; as representative of a break with societal norms and the traditions to which it was connected. It will suggest, that in this area of study, there is much scope for further research, both in relation to Holocaust denial and history and in relation to far-right thought, individuals, groups and their continued presence in British and western society.

Structurally this chapter is split into three sections. The first looks at the way in which Irving has been studied, his thesis and its relationship with Holocaust historiography. The second looks at the 2000 libel trial and will critique the arguments that Irving used to discredit the Holocaust and how these arguments were refuted by Lipstadt's defence team. It will examine what the traditional methodologies and readings of the past, presented as a counter weight to Irving's thesis at the trial, reveal about what type of narratives about the past are constructed when responding to Holocaust deniers. The third section will analyse the interaction between 'public' and academic discourses over the Holocaust. It will suggest that new ways of thinking about Holocaust denial and the far right are needed in order to better understand why Holocaust denial has attracted so much debate.

The Irving thesis: The Third Reich, Holocaust and Historiography

Irving has published thirty books, numerous articles and internet blogs and given a vast number of lectures on book tours across the globe on topics which relate to the Second World War over a period of nearly fifty years. Irving's perfidious nature, as well as the lengthy period over which he has published, render an overarching synthesis of his views problematic.⁷ This is because Irving, like other deniers, has been prone to changing his view on the past and the Holocaust in accordance with the different company he has found himself in at a given point.⁸

Yet there are trends which can be observed. Irving's career has been divided into two halves which have been embedded in the historiography relating to his role in Holocaust denial. Chronologically the historiography has pointed to 1988, as the point which has been described as Irving's 'conversion' to 'full' Holocaust denial. This 'conversion' has been attributed to Irving's reading of the Leuchter Report.⁹ Irving was introduced to the report during a trial in

⁷ For historical synthesis of Irving's career see: R. Evans, *Telling Lies*, p. 113-156; M. Shermer and A. Gorbman, *Denying History*, pp. 48-58; D.D. Guttenplan, *The Holocaust on Trial*, pp. 36-57.

⁸ R. Eaglestone, *Postmodernism*, pp. 8-9.

⁹ Evans, *Telling Lies*, p. 122, 153; M. Shermer and A. Gorbman, *Denying History*, p. 50.

Canada in 1988 of German Holocaust denier Ernst Zündel. Irving appeared in Zündel's defence; Irving himself points to this moment as his conversion into a 'hardcore disbeliever'.¹⁰

The label 'conversion' is problematic because it suggests that Irving somehow held conventional beliefs on the Holocaust prior to 1988. This was not the case, and, in fact, indicates an implicit teleological way of thinking about Irving's career and thesis. While it is clear that after 1988 Irving became more vocal about his views on the Holocaust, prior to 1988 Irving's views were already seen as on the fringes of research into the Third Reich and the study of Hitler. Yet, despite Irving denying the role of Hitler in the Final Solution, he was reviewed and his works were consulted by historians. In the 1970s Martin Broszat replied critically to Irving's thesis *Hitler's War* in which Irving argued that Hitler had not known of the Holocaust until 1943. In 1981 Lucy Dawidowicz included Irving in her work *Holocaust and the Historians*. Irving had also received favourable reviews as a military historian throughout his career, and even at his trial John Keegan praised *Hitler's War* and Irving for his skill as a military historian.¹¹ Ian Kershaw's monumental two-part biography of Hitler, *Hubris and Nemesis*, published in 1998 and 2000 contains several references to Irving's work which are cited as legitimate sources.¹² Kershaw's reference to Irving's work was commented on by Irving himself, who claimed that Kershaw had relied 'heavily' on *Hitler's War* but put his own 'spin' on the dictator.¹³

A conversation between Deborah Lipstadt and Richard Evans summed up the question of Irving as a historian at an initial meeting prior to the trial in 2000:

I [Lipstadt] suggested that, instead of arguing that David Irving is a sloppy historian or bad historian, he [Evans] posit that he was not a historian at all. Evans dismissed this out of hand. 'It is an absurd semantic dispute to declare someone who has written two dozen books about history is not a historian.' He said this with a finality that seemed to brook no debate. I thought Evans was wrong but I did not challenge him.¹⁴

Evans's view was supported in the judgement of Judge Grey who stated, 'My assessment is that, as a *military* historian, Irving has much to commend him ... He has discovered and

¹⁰ Guttenplan, *The Holocaust on Trial*, p. 113.

¹¹ Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 16 Monday 7th February 2000.

¹² I. Kershaw, *Hitler: Hubris* (London, Penguin: 1998), p. 780 and I. Kershaw, *Hitler: Nemesis* (London, Penguin: 2000), p. 1056.

¹³ <http://www.fpp.co.uk/Hitler/Kershaw/Observer.html> (accessed: 26/15/12).

¹⁴ D. E. Lipstadt, *History on Trial*, p. 45.

disclosed to historians and others many documents which, but for his efforts, might have remained unnoticed for years [...] His knowledge of World War Two is unparalleled.’¹⁵

It is clear that Irving is a military historian who has a great knowledge and has published widely on of the Second World War. His status as a historian does not however include his study of the Third Reich and its leading protagonists. Irving falsified evidence in these books in order to support his ideological worldview (for example that Hitler had not known of the final solution before 1943, or the misuse of the Goebbels diary in his biography of the propagandist minister in 1996).¹⁶ Thus while he may have a great deal of knowledge on these subjects his world view prevents him from reaching sound historical conclusions. Irving’s overt ideological agenda has been proved time and time again, not just at the trial but also in previous literature, most notably Lipstadt’s *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory*.

This imbalance in which areas we can apply the label of ‘historian’ to in relation to Irving’s work explains why he has been given more attention by academics in the field of Holocaust studies and the historiography of the Third Reich than other Holocaust deniers. Lucy Dawidowicz included Irving in her book *The Holocaust and The Historians*, while her critique of Irving was very negative and presented him as a Hitler apologist; it would have been inconceivable for her to include the work of individuals like, Arthur Butz or Richard Verrall in such a work. Dawidowicz even described Irving and *Hitler’s War* in 1980 as not part of the ‘antisemitic canon,’ thus demonstrating the fine line on which Irving walked during the 1970s and early to mid-1980s between credible historian and an ideologically-driven Hitler and German apologia.¹⁷ Historians’ interaction with Irving’s thesis can be understood when viewed in the context of the contemporary historiographical debates. Irving’s work in the 1970s and early 1980s teetered on the extreme echelons of historical debate relating to the role of Hitler in the Final Solution. Before the synthesis of the intentionalist functionalist debates in the 1990s, the historiography of the late 1970s and 1980s set opposing explanation models of the Holocaust against each other.¹⁸ In this environment, Irving’s controversial thesis that Hitler had not only not ordered the Holocaust, but not known of it until 1943 was not met with the total condemnation afforded to Holocaust deniers; was engaged with on an academic level.

¹⁵ *Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt*, Trial Judgement, p. 284. (emphasis added). All transcripts taken from: <http://www.hdot.org/en/trial/transcripts> (accessed: 29/04/12).

¹⁶ For detail of Irving falsifications and misquotations see: R. Evans, *Telling Lies*, pp. 54-55, 58-60, 63-64, 67-69 and 73-74.

¹⁷ L. Dawidowicz, ‘Lies About the Holocaust’ *Commentary* (Vol. 70, No. 6,) p. 35.

¹⁸ R. Bessel, ‘Functionalists vs. Intentionalists: The Debate Twenty Years on or Whatever Happened to Functionalism and Intentionalism?’ *German Studies Review*(Vol. 26, No. 1: 2003), pp. 15-20.

The academic communities engagement with Irving was evidenced in examples from Holocaust historians before and after the trial in 2000. In the trial, for instance, Irving sought to prove that his reputation as a historian had been damaged, Irving cross-examined expert witness Christopher Browning. In answer to a question from Irving about Hitler's role in the Final Solution and Irving's impact on historical scholarship in relation to this question Browning replied: 'what had not been studied before you [Irving] published was a particular focus on decision-making process and Hitler's role ... your publication of *Hitler's War* was the impetus for the research in that area.'¹⁹ Martin Broszat, author of *The Hitler State*, wrote a reply to Irving's *Hitler's War* in 1979 in the *Yad Vashem Studies*. In the reply, he dismissed the conclusions Irving had drawn from his sources, but as a functionalist historian accepted that the role of Hitler in the Final Solution had not been committed to paper in the form of a written order.²⁰ In 1978, Hans Mommsen, again a proponent of the functionalist school, stated 'it's our good fortune to have an Irving. At least he provides fresh stimuli for historians.' Irving displayed the comment on his website until 1998 when Mommsen wrote to him requesting its removal because he felt the comment was no longer comprehensible to the public given Irving's new judgements in relation to the Holocaust.²¹

The publications of Irving in the late 1970s and early 1980s were clearly mendacious and were proved to be so in the courtroom in 2000, yet they were not outright denials of the Holocaust.²² In the 1977 *Hitler's War*, Irving made reference to the extermination centres at Chelmno, Treblinka and Belzec, yet he claimed that Hitler was unaware of what was taking place at these sites of mass murder.²³ Essentially Irving attempted to push functionalist theories about the Holocaust to an untenable position. This position relied heavily on the idea of cumulative radicalisation, yet without the fanaticism of Hitler's antisemitism and the ardour of his subordinates to interpret and execute his political will, the Irving thesis could not explain how the Holocaust did take place. Irving's notion of a Hitler that was so weak that he did not know what was happening in an area of policy in which he had a fanatical interest proved untenable.

It is vital to acknowledge that Holocaust historians engaged with Irving and used his work because of the archival research Irving has conducted, for two reasons. The first is located in

¹⁹ Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 16 Monday 7th February 2000, p. 40.

²⁰ M. Broszat, 'Hitler and the Genesis of the "Final Solution": An Assessment of David Irving's Thesis', *Yad Vashem Studies*, (Vol. 13: 1979), pp. 390-429.

²¹ M. Shermer and A. Gorbman, *Denying History*, p. 48.

²² T. Lawson, *Debates on the Holocaust* (Manchester, Manchester University Press: 2011), p. 131.

²³ For examples see: D. Irving, *Hitler's War* (London, Hodder & Stoughton: 1977), pp. 391- 393, 718.

the need to understand that as Holocaust historiography developed through last decades of the twentieth century historical understanding about Hitler's role in the Final Solution evolved and matured. The presence of an order (written or otherwise) from Hitler is described in the historiography prior to the 1980s. After the 1980s there was a shift in how historians understood how the orders for murder were disseminated in the Third Reich. An example of this change in historiography is evidenced in Raul Hilberg's work *The Destruction of the Jews*. In the first edition (1961) Hilberg spoke of direct orders from Hitler to murder European Jewry in his revised edition (1985), after wider debate had taken place over Hitler's role in the Final Solution Hilberg removed phrases which spoke of 'direct orders' from Hitler.²⁴ Irving's ideas about Hitler's role in Final Solution, although fundamentally flawed, emerged at a point at which questions and debates were emerging about the specific process which led to the murder of European Jewry. As such Irving's positions were attacked in relation to a new field of research and this goes some way in explaining why his views were considered and interacted with in a way that would be inconceivable today in a scholastic discourse over Hitler and the Final Solution. That Irving's ideas were discussed or noted by academics did in no way mean that they were paradigm shifting. Holocaust historians did not take seriously the idea Hitler had not known of Final Solution, rather it was understood that new debates and research were needed which would recognise and attempt to incorporate the more complex actions and process which led to the Final Solution.

The second factor which requires exploration relates to Irving's understanding writing of history. Irving has dedicated many years of his life to archival research and has brought to light many documents which may have remained undiscovered. Irving therefore has imbued himself with an authority that he holds an objective view of the past because his work is based on documents and archival material. In consulting documents alone and his reluctance to consult the work of other historians, Irving attempted to present his views as an objective reading and window on the past. This self-publicity of his reliance only on primary documents may be, as Richard Evans has described, something akin to a 'fetish' and, as Evans points out, Irving's documentary expertise was by no means as 'flawless or unbiased as he liked people to think it was. He seemed troublingly inclined to apply it in a way that all too obviously suited his own particular interests.' Yet Irving mastery of documents has provided him with a camouflage of authority on his subject which could give the impression of a historian who, to those unfamiliar

²⁴ Christopher Browning notes the changes of Hilberg's work in relation to the decision making process in his review of the 1985 revised edition of *The Destruction of the Jews* in the 1986 edition of the *Simon Wiesenthal Annual*. See: C. R. Browning, 'The Revised Hilberg' in *Simon Wiesenthal Annual* (No. 3: 1986), chp. 13.

with his political agenda and beliefs or the subjects he discusses, has a valid perspective. This is why Deborah Lipstadt labelled Irving, 'one of the most dangerous spokesmen for Holocaust denial' in her 1993 publication.²⁵

Irving's list of published material, walk-on parts in Holocaust historiography and publicity coups have imbued him with a notoriety which has not been afforded to other Holocaust deniers. One example of an Irving publicity coup was his identification that the Hitler diaries were a forgery. Irving identified that the diaries were a forgery and proclaimed his findings at on 25 April 1983 at the *Stern* newspapers press launch of the diaries. However once he realised that the diaries supported his own ideas about Hitler not knowing about the holocaust Irving suggested that the diaries were genuine. Irving later retracted these views once forensic tests proved them to be a forgery.²⁶

Irving has not published extensively on the Holocaust himself. Irving's statements on the Holocaust do not display the archival research which he committed himself to in his books on the leading protagonist of the Third Reich and the Second World War. Rather Irving adopts the literature on Holocaust denial, seen in pervious chapters, and supports this work in his lecturing tours. This trend has not gone unnoticed in the historiography of denial connected to Irving; Shermer and Gorbman explain that while Irving 'aspires to the respect and recognition of the scholarly community [...] his repeated appearances before Holocaust deniers rule out such an opportunity.' Shermer and Gorbman present Irving as 'stuck in a Faustian bargaining and now paying the price,' because he 'earns his living by lecturing and selling books [and] [s]eemingly, the more he revises the Holocaust the more books he sells.'²⁷ This appraisal of Irving's career, seems in many ways to be an exoneration of Irving and while Shermer and Gorbman demonstrate Irving's denial in their work, Irving seems to be painted as a victim of circumstance: rejected by the scholarly community, he had no choice but to turn to denial. This notion of rejection can hardly explain Irving's turn to Holocaust denial. While it may be true that Irving, as described by Shermer and Gorbman, has 'little respect for the people who constitute his audience' and finds it 'odious to be in their company', he has proved time and time again to share the views of those he finds to be 'odious company' and particularly their antisemitism.

²⁵ E. Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (New York, The Free Press: 1993), p. 181.

²⁶ For more detailed reviews of this episode, see: R. Evans, *Telling Lies*, pp. 25-26; D.D. Guttenplan, *The Holocaust on Trial*, pp. 47-48; D. E. Lipstadt, *History on Trial*, pp. 19-20.

²⁷ M. Shermer and A. Gorbman, *Denying History*, p. 53.

Irving's antisemitism had been overt for many years since 1988. In a speech given in 1995 in Cincinnati Irving recalled, when he was asked at a previous lecture by a Jewish member of the audience, if the Jews were responsible for Auschwitz by a member of the audience. After explaining he understood why he was hated and vilified because of his beliefs and his 'dedication' to 'truth' he explained that the answer to the question posed was 'yes':

It's a dazzling question, and when you think about it the short answer is 'yes'. But that is a cruel answer because to do the question justice you have to have a lot of intervening stages. But the short answer, if you want to hop from A to Z, is yes. If you [The Jews] hadn't behaved the way you have as a race for the last three thousand years, first the Russians, then the Poles, then the Galicians, then the Austrians and the rest would not have harried you from pillar to post so you end up finding yourself in Auschwitz. And you have never asked yourselves why? And they still don't want to accept that. To him [The Jewish member of the audience] my answer were unacceptable.²⁸

It is easy to see the connections and comparisons with the arguments made by individuals and organisation like the National Front and the British Movement, when sentiments like this are exposed. Irving clearly believed that he, and the world, was the victim of a Jewish conspiracy.

This 'victimhood' was used by Irving throughout the 2000 libel trial. Irving attempted to prove that he was a victim of a Jewish conspiracy on several occasions. Irving had subpoenaed the military historian John Keegan to give evidence in his defence. Keegan had written positively about Irving's book *Hitler's War* in relation to the military matters of the Third Reich but utterly rejected his claim that Hitler had not known of the Final Solution stating it defied common sense.²⁹ Irving intended to claim that Keegan had to be subpoenaed because he refused to testify because of the danger to Keegan's reputation which would occur from the conspiracy which had befallen Irving himself.³⁰ Irving also frequently indicated and alluded to the money which he claimed had been made by the survivors and academics.³¹ In one exchange with Robert Van Pelt, Irving argued that he was a danger to individuals like Debórah Dwork who according to Irving:

have made it quite a lucrative business, if one can regard being in education as being a business. Certainly she makes \$5 million a year for her Holocaust centre out

²⁸ D. Irving 'The Holocaust Lie' *Truth in History* Lecture (Cincinnati: 1995) A video of this lecture can be viewed at: <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-1154851922811076341#> (accessed: 28/04/12).

²⁹ Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 16, 7th February 2000, pp. 4-12.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Irving attack the survivors of Auschwitz and the Holocaust on many occasions: for select examples see: Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 19, 14th February 2000, pp. 180-183; Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 14, 2nd February 2000, pp. 130-133; Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 19, 25th January 2000, pp. 186-187.

of the Holocaust and the history of the Holocaust and teaching the Holocaust. There are all sorts of profitable side lines in publication of books and so on.³²

This was fabrication and the Clark Center did not make five million dollars. What Irving was trying to do was highlight how the 'conspiracy' as he saw it was an extremely profitable one, and would benefit from his silence. Irving used many tools at his disposal to highlight this fact. Even the staging of the trial suited his claims: Irving alone (he had turned down legal representation) on one side of the court room defending himself against a large legal team consisting of many lawyers and expert witnesses' eager to attack and bring Irving down while he had to subpoenaed his reluctant witnesses and conduct his cross-examination alone.

Lipstadt had also accused Irving of racism and the defence proved that her claims were true.³³ While his racism has been reported in many of the publications of the trial it is necessary to contextualise this racism in relation to the individual examined this thesis.³⁴ Irving's racism bore a remarkable similarity to Individuals like John Tyndall and Colin Jordan. In one article, Irving explains that 'we are all racist I think there is something built into our microchip which makes us dislike people from different cultures. It's a glitch.'³⁵ Irving used the same arguments in the trial and explained, 'nobody knows what it is that makes people dislike foreigners, the xenophobia that is inside every human being.' Irving then later went on to say in response to the judge's questioning, 'I also suggest very strongly it may be built into our microchip, as I put it. It may be part of the endemic human xenophobia which exists in all of us and which civilized people like your Lordship and myself manage to suppress, and other people like the gentleman on the Eastern Front with the submachine guns cannot suppress.'³⁶ These arguments bore remarkable similarity to those put forward by Tyndall in *The Eleventh Hour: A call for British Rebirth*, in which Tyndall argued that race was a defining facet of the characteristics of mankind and was 'a natural defence mechanism' in which hatred of others can either be justified or not justified and this decision is made in the human mind.³⁷ In essence what Irving was arguing was similar to that of Tyndall that racism was not the fault of the individual but a

³² Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 10, 26th January 2000, pp. 198-193.

³³ See: R. Evans, *David Irving, Hitler and Holocaust Denial* (Expert witness report for Irving V Lipstadt), pp. 41-65, H. Funke, *David Irving, Holocaust Denial and his Connections to Right-Wing Extremists and Neo-National Socialism (Neo-Nazism) in Germany* (Expert witness report for Irving V Lipstadt).

³⁴ R. Evans, *Telling Lies*, pp. 144-8, 228-230; D.D. Guttenplan, *The Holocaust on Trial*, pp. 204-9, 280-281; D. E. Lipstadt, *History on Trial*, pp. 173-183, 247-275; M. Shermer and A. Gorbman, *Denying History*, pp. 48-58, 271-282.

³⁵ 'Judgment has been passed. So how do you feel about being labelled as a racist now, Mr Irving?' *The Independent* (April 15:2000), p. 23.

³⁶ Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 14, 2nd February: 2000, pp. 88-96.

³⁷ J. Tyndall, *The Eleventh Hour: A Call for British Rebirth* (London, Albion Press, 2nd edition: 1988), pp. 414-451.

generic predisposition which had been suppressed by a politically-correct society. To the mind of such individuals, this therefore exonerated Irving and Tyndall of the crime of racism. This therefore meant that their entrenched views on race were indeed the views of everyone and that they were the only individuals who had the 'courage' to say such things.

Irving went further in the trial and during his opening statement he stated:

I cannot say that I have applauded the uncontrolled tide of commonwealth immigration into this country. Like most fellow countrymen of my background and vintage, I regret the passing of the Old England. I sometimes think, my Lord, that if the soldiers and sailors who stormed the beaches of Normandy in 1944 could see what England would be like at the end of this century, they would not have got 50 yards up the beach. I think they would have given up in disgust.³⁸

The rhetoric employed by Irving bore a strong resemblance to the views of Colin Jordan in the speech he made by in 1971, in Wolverhampton.³⁹ In the speech, Jordan talked about the men who had fought in the Second World War and how they would not have fought if they had known the 'coloured invasion', as Jordan put it, was to take place, "We are not fighting to let that happen: to keep the Germans out and then let the whole lot in" would have been their reply.⁴⁰ These sentiments demonstrate Irving's far-right and racist mentality and demonstrate his link to the tradition of British racism in the far right.

Shermer and Grobman's assessment of Irving being stuck in a Faustian bargain seems to look rather generous given such antisemitic and racist views. Irving clearly sees himself as a victim of a Jewish conspiracy and Jewish history as a history of concealed dominance and control. His views that racism is endemic to all people and only he and likeminded individuals have the 'courage' to espouse such views publically are all intrinsically linked to far-right thought. Irving's Holocaust denial therefore seems to be a product of these factors. His credentials as a military historian and interest in the German leaders of the Third Reich are located within a framework of archival research but the conclusion that he draws from such research is predisposed to far-right conclusions. His views on the Holocaust were not based on archival research and were informed by the Holocaust denial literature found in the far right.

³⁸ Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 2, 11th January 2000, p. 30.

³⁹ For Jordan's comments and discussion of them, see above, p. 150.

⁴⁰ A. Leese *Gothic Ripples*, No. 13 (21st March 1946); C. Jordan, *White Power for Britain* (Speech at Wolverhampton: 15th May 1971), p. 2.

David Irving claimed that he is not a historian of the Holocaust and that the subject 'bores' him, yet the trial was essentially dedicated to the Holocaust.⁴¹ This announcement by Irving is peculiar because it would seem that few people would want to defend themselves on a charge that 'bore' them. Irving claimed that he took on the fight against Lipstadt to defend his reputation. However, in court, he put a mountain of questions on Holocaust experts on the subject. Irving used the arguments of other 'revisionists' and Holocaust deniers to substantiate his claims and defend his reputation. Irving was an extremely desirable representative for deniers: his personal qualities as an orator and his mastery of the English language as well as his charm and sophistication all combined to provide a valuable mouthpiece for Holocaust denial and deniers.

As has already been noted, Irving should not be seen as a puppet of Holocaust deniers: he was and is very much an individual with extreme and staunch opinions. However, because Irving had not researched the Holocaust with the detail which he claimed to have researched Hitler and the other members of the Nazi elite, he had to employ the arguments of Fred Leuchter and other deniers like Verrall, Butz and Edmunds. Irving used the work and arguments of these men in order to substantiate his claims that the Holocaust had not taken place in the way in which Holocaust historians had described; that his view of the Holocaust could be considered reasonable historical revisionism.

Irving v Penguin Books Limited and Deborah E. Lipstadt

In this section of the chapter, a portion of the trial will be analysed to show how Irving drew on the material of other Holocaust deniers to maintain his credibility. The section reviewed is Irving's cross-examination of Robert Van Pelt on Auschwitz extermination camp. Irving had previously dubbed Auschwitz the 'battleship Auschwitz' and urged Holocaust deniers to attack it and sink it: 'Since 1945 there has been the great battleship Auschwitz! And we have now, at last, the historical profession -- above all, the Revisionist historical profession -- have found as our own task, the major task: "Sink the Auschwitz!"'⁴² Irving's conflation of the historical profession and the 'revisionist historical profession' is striking and demonstrates how Irving sought to imbue Holocaust denial with the same authority that was ascribed to legitimate academic history.

Irving questioned Van Pelt on the subject of Auschwitz for almost four days. Irving's cross examination of Van Pelt reveals a lot about the modus operandi of Holocaust deniers. The first

⁴¹ 'History and bunk - A deservedly severe verdict on David Irving' *The Times* (April, 12: 2000), p. 23.

⁴²D. Irving, 'Battleship Auschwitz', *The Journal of Historical Review*, (Vol. 10, No. 4: 1990).

questions Irving put to Van Pelt related to the thesis Irving had put forward in *Hitler's War*. Irving asked if there existed any document in the Auschwitz construction office which paid reference to special priority being attached by Adolf Hitler to the actions which took place in Auschwitz, or to any communication between Hitler and Heinrich Himmler. In answer to these questions Van Pelt said 'No'. Irving pounced on this to reply and proposed a question: 'it is an important element of the Holocaust story whether this was a series of arbitrary actions committed by individual gangsters and Nazi criminals, or whether there was an overall scheme or system directed by Adolf Hitler himself?'⁴³

While it seemed that Irving was accepting the existence of the Holocaust and asking about the perpetrators and those responsible, he was not; instead he was attempting to justify his claim, made in *Hitler's War*, that Hitler had been unaware of what took place in camps like Auschwitz. From the point of view of Irving, and the deniers seen in the previous chapters, if there was no signed order from Hitler then there was no real evidence for the Holocaust. This illustrates deniers are aware that historians do not have all documents which tell them exactly what they want to know in relation to the decisions which brought about the Final Solution or the form in which such orders came from Hitler.⁴⁴ For deniers the absence of specific documents means that there is no hard evidence for the Holocaust. Yet while historians may feel frustrated in the absence of specific documents in relation to the decision-making process, the documents they do have provide a full enough picture to demonstrate, and debate, how decisions were likely to have been made. Irving attacked the history of the Holocaust throughout Van Pelt's testimony.

Irving was attempting to 'spring a trap' which he hoped would catch-out Van Pelt and prove that his own version of the past was a legitimate revision of the past.⁴⁵ This 'trap' is highlighted in Van Pelt's reply to Irving's question. Below is part of the reply from the transcript:

Q. [Mr Irving]: Do you not agree that it is quite an important element of the Holocaust story whether this was a series of arbitrary actions committed by individual gangsters and Nazi criminals, or whether there was an overall scheme or system directed by Adolf Hitler himself?

A. [Professor Robert Jan van Pelt]: I think that it is an important question in so far as you think this is an open question. I think that, if as an historian you

⁴³ Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 9 Tuesday 25th January 2000, pp. 99-101, 110-111.

⁴⁴ For debates on Hitler's role in the Final Solution, see I. Kershaw, *Hitler, the Germans, and the Final Solution* (New Haven, Yale University Press: 2008), pp. 89-118.

⁴⁵ During the trial Irving lay traps for the witnesses, in which he tried to prove his points regarding a 'smoking gun' document which links a signature or statement by Hitler to the gas chambers and Final Solution. For an example when Irving admits this, see: Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 9 Tuesday 25th January 2000, p. 81 and for when the 'trap shuts' see pp. 110-111, 187.

have come to the conclusion, on the convergence of evidence and the work of many eminent historians, that it is not any more a great historical question, or a historical question at all, then I do not think that you are going to waste your energy researching that issue.

Q. [Mr Irving]: Is 'convergence of evidence' another way of saying 'reading between the lines'?

A. [Professor Robert Jan van Pelt]: No. 'Convergence of evidence' is exactly what it says. That is, at a certain moment, for example, I will give just the example of the morgue number 1 in crematorium 2, that is a convergence between what sonderkommandos say about it, what Germans say about it and what the blue prints tell us, and what the ruins tell us.⁴⁶

This exchange demonstrates the questionable logic with which Irving drew his conclusions.

Irving was clearly versed in historiography of the Holocaust as it had been used extensively in the expert witness reports he had read. As such he had a substantial body of evidence before him which documents the crimes committed by the Nazis and used by academic historians.⁴⁷

Yet Irving shunned this evidence and chose not to accept its validity and the conclusions to which it inevitably pointed. This was a key tactic which had been employed by Irving previously when he had offered one thousand dollars to anyone who had written evidence of Hitler's knowledge of the Final Solution.⁴⁸ Essentially Irving chose, in line with his view on history, to see the documentary evidence for the Holocaust as insufficient to point to the systematic murder of millions of Jews. Documents and testimony which detailed the Final Solution were discredited by Irving. This was most overt in the evidence submitted by Van Pelt in the form of eyewitness testimony.⁴⁹

In another section of Irving's cross examination, Irving attempted to discredit the eyewitnesses that Van Pelt used in his report whilst on the stand. The discrediting of eyewitness testimony has been a key component in the attacks which deniers have included in their assaults on Holocaust narratives. Irving attacked Van Pelt's use of evidence from Pery Broad, who had worked in the political department at Auschwitz. Broad's testimony, combined with the memoirs and confession of Rudolf Höss demonstrate how records concerning the transport of persons were destroyed. Höss reveals in his memoirs how he - even he as camp commandant -

⁴⁶ Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 9 Tuesday 25th January 2000, pp. 99-101

⁴⁷ Irving even congratulates Van Pelt on his book claiming it is a book he has read cover to cover. See Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 9 Tuesday 25th January 2000, p. 38.

⁴⁸ Irving still advertises this offer on his website, the rules demand: 'the reference must be explicit, and not depend upon clever translations, or fancy interpretations, or reading-between-the-lines.' see: <http://www.fpp.co.uk/Auschwitz/index.html> (accessed 12/11/12).

⁴⁹ For examples of Irving casting doubt on eyewitness testimony, see Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 9 Tuesday 25th January 2000, pp. 87, 101-107 and especially Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 8 Monday 24th January 2000, pp. 162- 71.

was not allowed to keep records, and that Adolf Eichmann was the only person authorised to have documentation concerning the liquidation operations on the orders of Himmler.⁵⁰ In his cross examination, Irving sought to cast doubt on reliability of such witnesses in order to discredit the history of Auschwitz and narratives which testified to the destruction of the Jews of Europe by homicidal gas chambers.

Irving tried to claim that the testimony of SS officers like Broad and Höss was false and that such men had been in the employment of the allied powers after the war. He claimed that their testimony was gained under torture or given falsely in exchange for not being prosecuted.⁵¹ Irving also attempted to cast doubt on the weight which such evidence was given by historians and perversely suggested the 'evil' nature of the SS men like Broad and Höss should not be trusted. To try to 'illustrate' or 'prove' his point, Irving resorted to asking Van Pelt if he would trust these men if he was 'alone with them in the jungle'.⁵² The implication being that if Van Pelt did not trust Broad and Höss with his life, why should he trust their testimony? This was an odd way to cast doubt on the validity of eyewitness testimony, but, from the perspective of Irving, it made sense; it reflected both an appeal to a *Reductio ad absurdum* logic in which an argument is taken to an absurd conclusion. Irving was implying that because Van Pelt and history had judged these men to be quintessentially evil then he should not trust anything they had said. This was part of the tactics used by the 'populist', 'hybrid' or 'recidivist' denial in far-right moments to place the arguments of deniers in a way which would and could be understood by the widest possible audience. It is also indicative of the way Irving and other deniers see the world along Manichean lines, in which a person is evil or good and there can be no shades of grey.

Irving followed the arguments typical to Holocaust deniers in relation to Auschwitz evidenced by him spending much of the ninth day of the trial trying to suggest that the holes used to insert Zyklon B into the gas chambers did not exist. Irving attempted to 'prove' this by showing that at the time of the trial no holes had been found in the destroyed remains of the crematoria and gas chambers.⁵³ Van Pelt had to agree to this as it is a fact. It is at this point that Irving claimed 'victory' and stated, 'there are no holes in that roof. There were never any

⁵⁰ See: *The Van Pelt Report*, p. 53.

⁵¹ Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 9 Tuesday 25th January 2000, p. 183.

⁵² *Ibid*, p. 102.

⁵³ Holes in the roof of the crematoriums were found in the summer of 1998 and 2000 by a team led by the Holocaust History Project. See D. Keren, J. McCarthy and H. W. Mazal 'The Ruins of the Gas Chambers: A Forensic Investigation of Crematoriums at Auschwitz I and Auschwitz-Birkenau', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, (Vol. 18, No. 1: 2004), pp. 68-103. The report by the Holocaust History Project was used against Irving in his appeal.

holes in that roof. All the eyewitnesses on whom he relies are therefore exposed as liars.⁵⁴ This was sarcastically met by a comment by Van Pelt, who stated that if he has been caught in an Irving 'trap' he would like to 'remain in the trap and eat the cheese while it lasts!'⁵⁵ This argument 'no-holes no Holocaust' has been used repeatedly by Holocaust deniers.⁵⁶ The use of 'no-holes no Holocaust' is also evidence of deniers aping adages used in legitimate Holocaust historiography. The phrase 'no Hitler, no Holocaust' is used in Holocaust historiography to demonstrate the centrality of Hitler in bringing the genocide of Europe's Jews to fruition.⁵⁷

Van Pelt countered Irving's claims the following day in the trial producing aerial photographic documents which show the holes in the gas chamber, one of the aerial photographs he produced was from February 1942, and showed on the picture four 'box like, chimney like structures' on the top of the gas chamber.⁵⁸ Irving at this point began to play language games and objected to Van Pelt's description of the holes for the Zyklon B as 'box like and chimney like'. Irving tried to claim that these images on the picture are barrels used to waterproof the roof while it was under construction.

Irving was constantly fighting against the tide of evidence that pointed to the rational conclusion: that gassings took place at Auschwitz. His small 'victories' were located in the logic that without 'hard documents'-which do not exist because of the destruction of the documents by the Nazis during the time of the crimes and after the war - there is room for revision over the history of Auschwitz and that he provides a valuable alternative history of the camp. The aim was to exonerate him as a Holocaust denier through this type of 'evidence'. However, historians understand the need for context and thus piece together the history of Auschwitz through a convergence of evidence. As D.D. Guttenplan explains, when concrete answers could not be delivered by expert witnesses, 'every inconclusive exchange favour[ed] Irving'.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 9 Tuesday 25th January 2000, p. 187.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ For example of similar arguments regarding the holes and Zyklon B see: F. Ditlieb, 'Auschwitz Notebook Part 2: Lids and Openings', *The Journal for Historical Review*, (Vol. 1, No. 3: 1980), p. 255; R. Faurisson 'No Light, No Smoke, No Stench, No Holes', *The Journal for Historical Review*, (Vol. 18, No. 3: 1999) p. 29; B. Renk, 'Convergence or Divergence?: On Recent Evidence for Zyklon Induction Holes at Auschwitz-Birkenau Crematory II', *The Journal for Historical Review*, (Vol. 20, No. 5: 2001), p. 33.; G. Rudolf, 'A Brief History of Forensic Examinations of Auschwitz', *The Journal for Historical Review*, (Vol. 20, No. 2)p. 3.

⁵⁷ D. Stone, *Histories*, p. 15.

⁵⁸ Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 10 Wednesday 26th January 2000, pp. 7-8.

⁵⁹ D.D. Guttenplan, *The Holocaust on Trial*, p. 179.

Van Pelt was at one point posed the following question by Irving: 'Professor Van Pelt, you are probably the world's leading authority on Auschwitz [...] is this correct?' Van Pelt answered tentatively:

'It is difficult to say that. I think that the history of Auschwitz is a very big history, a very complex history. There are many parts of the history of Auschwitz about which we know very little, the history of medical services in Auschwitz, the history of children in Auschwitz. There are many historians who have worked on different parts, but I would say that, on the more limited issue of the story of construction in Auschwitz, or the history ... that I am probably one of the two people ... who is most comfortable with all the material.'⁶⁰

Irving was using the judicial process of the trial and the expert witness in order to reach finite conclusions about the past. Irving was suggesting that, as one of the two leading world experts Van Pelt should be able to provide rigid and all encompassing conclusions about the Auschwitz complex. This was evidence of Irving belief that an 'objective' and singular view of the past was possible. It was also indicative of how Irving, like other deniers, tended to focus on linear explanations of the past and play on assumed public knowledge. The Irving trial was extremely complex; this is attested to by the fact that both parties agreed that a jury should not be used due to the dense and complex evidence under scrutiny. In fact, at some points in the trial, the judge has to ask for clarification on the more complex terminology and areas of historiography. D.D. Guttenplan also notes in his book that, 'for those of us who had not [read Van Pelt's expert witness report], his cross examination by Irving ... is almost impossible to follow.'⁶¹ Irving therefore used specific historical sites that would be familiar to the public. Therefore he forced on small details such as the location of the holes for Zyklon B in the crumbled remains of the crematoria. As a result he could ignore the more complex histories of Auschwitz in a vain attempt to try to gain a quick public propaganda victory.

Essentially Irving's arguments rested on arguments of the deniers seen in the previous chapters of this thesis. When Irving cross-examined the defence expert witnesses, he was repeatedly shown to be false in his assumptions and the arguments he made. It was clear that Irving was a Holocaust denier and that he had deliberately manipulated and dismissed documents and testimony in order to fit an agenda. When Irving questioned expert witness Richard Evans about his evidence that Irving had deliberately distorted and manipulated documents Evans explained:

⁶⁰ Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Day 9 Tuesday 25th January 2000, pp. 108-109.

⁶¹ D.D. Guttenplan, *The Holocaust on Trial*, p. 164.

There is a difference between, as it were, negligence, which is random in its effects, i.e. if you are simply a sloppy or bad historian, the mistakes you will make are all over the place. They will not actually support any particular point of view ... on the other hand, if all the mistakes are in the same direction in the support of a particular thesis, then I do not think that is mere negligence. I think that this is a deliberate manipulation and deception.⁶²

Irving was therefore trying to prove that he was not a bad or biased historian and instead suggested that he had simply made a few mistakes. The effect of this was to give the trial the appearance that it was Irving on trial not Lipstadt, a point noted in the press.⁶³

This turn of the tables was indicative of a wider debate about how the past was constructed in history and how history differed from denial. Holocaust historians were worried about Irving and his views gaining credibility, or providing a precedent in which Holocaust deniers could suggest that their views were valid and were part of an ongoing dialogue over revising the history of the Holocaust. As the trial proved the arguments put forward by Irving were easily defeated because they were infected with antisemitism and a neo-Nazi worldview which were based on anti-rational conspiratorial theories about Jewish power. The evidence from the defence demonstrated Irving's views were based on these illogical readings of the past and present. In their quest to prove Irving narratives of the Holocaust were mendacious Lipstadt's defence team also sought to defend a objective interpretation of history that they believed to be accurate.

In essence, the defence employed a traditional or conservative historiography of the Holocaust to prove their case. This history rested on establishing an overarching narrative of the Holocaust. Documents and testimony were argued over and presented to establish a narrative of the Holocaust that resembled that of a textbook account. Historical debate or wider narratives of the Holocaust were ignored in favour of establishing the facts around the method and processes which led to murder. This was necessary as it was these fundamental facts which deniers have historically sought to attack, yet, in attempting to provide a forensic and enumerated account of the Holocaust, some of its complexities, for example the decision making process, were lost. While the account presented inevitably defeated Irving, there is some problem with the way in which the victory of the defence was cast as a victory for history's mastery over the past.

Richard Evans concluded in his 2002 work on the trial by stating:

⁶² R. Evans, *Telling Lies*, p. 212.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

The trial demonstrated triumphantly the ability of historical scholarship to reach reasoned conclusions about the Nazi extermination of the Jews on the basis of a careful examination of the written evidence. It vindicated our capability to know what happened long after the survivors are no longer around to tell the tale. It showed that we *can* know, beyond reasonable doubt, even if explaining and understanding will be a matter for debate.⁶⁴

Evans also stated that the trial had taught the difference between 'real history and politically motivated propaganda.'⁶⁵ While Evans is correct that the trial established a conclusive case for the Holocaust, there is a problem contained within his statements. The idea that we have the capability to *know what happened* is in itself problematic because the narrative that was presented at the trial was to all intents and purposes a narrative that was constructed to defeat the claims of Irving and other Holocaust deniers. Lipstadt and her defence had to relay the history of the Holocaust in accordance with the parameters of the charges against her and Penguin Books. The trial may have provided a historical narrative which will serve to demonstrate why deniers are wrong and the politically motivated nature of their propaganda, but, as such it does not serve as a history of the Holocaust for it is written with only the denier in mind. It shows how we can know the Holocaust took place but it does not explain it. It was not *real* history, as Evans put it, but a history constructed by Lipstadt and her defence team to prove the Holocaust and disprove Irving: it too like Irving, had an agenda. While this motive is a justifiable one and one which was thrust upon Lipstadt when David Irving pressed for legal proceedings against her, the scope for historical enquiry was limited. It was a history not about exploring the past, but retelling the past in line with a legal brief. That the brief was established by a Holocaust denier directly impacted on the narratives that the defence team could present.

The problem with Evans casting the accounts given by historians at the trial as *real* history is that it presents the past as a tangible object for study. This is not the case, the narratives given at the trial were not an actual retelling of the past, such a proposition is impossible. As postmodernists have shown, the idea of a universal history or an ideal chronicle is flawed because such narratives depend on a concept of totality of 'what really happened'.⁶⁶ Evans and Lipstadt have expressed their disagreement with the postmodernist trend in history as both see it as having prepared the ground for Holocaust denial and both also defend the notion that

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

⁶⁶ D. Stone, *Constructing the Holocaust: A Study in Historiography* (London, Valentine Mitchell: 2003), p. 17.

objectivity and accurate knowledge about the past can be obtained.⁶⁷ The paradox was that Irving also claimed that the narratives he constructed were also *real* history (a notion that he still proclaims on his website); thus the battle became over the notion of objectivity and traditional readings of the past.⁶⁸ As Eaglestone notes, 'Lipstadt did not need the flawed idea of "objective" history to make her point. Holocaust denial is not history.'⁶⁹ In suggesting that the trial created an 'objective' or real history, the defence, as Stanley Fish argues, set the 'bar of validation too high' and suggested, whether intentionally or not, that all the answers to the past could be found and that an objective narrative was possible.⁷⁰

Such a yearning for an objective history can be attributed to an aversion to the linguistic turn that is symptomatic of postmodernism.⁷¹ As Beverley Southgate has argued, at the turn of the new millennium, postmodernism was feared and indicative of a society in 'terminal decline', with 'respect for authority, support of the family and allegiance to large institutions ... and sense of national identity' crumbling in favour of an 'anarchic individualism' in which 'individuals would not be able to cope with their new-found freedom.'⁷² This fear as, Southgate explains, was also matched and found in history, which too was prone to 'severe bouts of pomophobia'.⁷³ He explains a 'severe bouts of pomophobia' were present before, during and after the Irving trial. He also opines that,

Clio, the muse of history may have a well-deserved record for promiscuity, but not for being self-effacing. That is, it has long been recognised that history (as the past) will, in the words of Keith Jenkins, 'go with anyone': She can be used or abused by virtually anyone for virtually any purpose at all ... but that does not imply that the past or aspects of the past can simply be eliminated.⁷⁴

It is necessary to understand that while it was Irving that brought Lipstadt and Penguin Books to the courts, their defence was not only based on showing Irving to be a liar and Holocaust denier, but also the conviction that an objective retelling of the Holocaust was possible.

⁶⁷ R. Evans, *Telling Lies*, p. 17; D. E. Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust*, pp. 17-20.

⁶⁸ <http://www.fpp.co.uk/> (accessed 1/12/12).

⁶⁹ R. Eaglestone, *Postmodernism*, p. 60.

⁷⁰ S. Fish, 'Holocaust Denial and Academic Freedom' *Valparaiso University Law Review* (Vol. 35, No. 3, 2001), p. 504.

⁷¹ For an interesting review of the debates around the crisis which postmodernism has had on history see: J. Appleby, *Knowledge and Postmodernism in Historical Perspective* (London, Routledge: 1995); E. Breisach, *On the Future of History: The Postmodernist Challenge and Its Aftermath* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press: 2003); K. Jenkins, *The Postmodern History Reader* (London, Routledge: 1997) and B. Southgate, *Postmodernism in History: Fear or Freedom?* (London, Routledge: 2003).

⁷² B. Southgate, *Postmodernism in History: Fear or Freedom?*, p. 3.

⁷³ *Ibid*, p.27.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p.52.

Lipstadt and her defence team proved that their version of history was correct because it was based on an objective reading of the past. They failed, however, to recognise their own narratives were the product of the context in which they disseminated them. Evans may have noted how alien the courtroom was from the historian's familiar academic surroundings but he did not accept that such an environment shaped the narratives he wished to present.⁷⁵ The destruction of the Irving thesis was based on the same arguments which had been presented in previous historiographical and academic retorts to Holocaust deniers. Proving these retorts in the eyes of the law was *the* challenge. The defence's position of providing a *real* and *objective* history of the Holocaust actually reduced the complexities of studying, and providing multiple explanations of, the Holocaust to a singular defensible narrative.

The Irving trial, public and historical reaction to Holocaust denial

In 2000 proving Irving was a denier was complicated by the regulations and structure of a legal framework. Outside the courtroom Lipstadt and other historian of Holocaust denial had proven that Irving was a denier with ease in normal academic forums. The team of researchers for the defence and expert witnesses had to painstakingly pore over the publications, speeches and appointments of Irving to create a legal case that Lipstadt was correct in her conclusion that Irving was a Holocaust denier. The trial confirmed her conclusions and justice was served. What remains to be studied is what effect deniers and their arguments have had on society. What needs to be explored further is how denial and far-right ideology have been understood and digested in the public sphere; and what this can reveal about the way in which denial has been used as an expression of a quintessential 'evil' in society. Further consideration is also need on the way in which historians have interacted with deniers. What the presence of debates or comments about Holocaust denial in Holocaust literature indicates about the way denial has been used, described and presented by historians of the Holocaust. In this section, I will employ two examples from recent historiography which illustrate how denial has been discussed. I will then investigate what these can tell us about the way denial has been understood and interpreted in British society and by historians of the Holocaust.

The first of the two examples comes from Joanne Reilly's *Belsen: The Liberation of a Concentration Camp*. In the introduction to the book, Reilly illustrates the way in which the history and memory of Belsen has been distorted in the media and even reference books. Reilly demonstrates her concerns by highlighting errors in the 1990 *Encyclopaedia of the*

⁷⁵ R.J. Evans, 'History, Memory and the Law: The Historian as an Expert Witness', *History and Theory*, (Vol. 41, No. 3: 2002), pp. 326-345.

Second World War. In the encyclopaedia, Belsen was falsely reported to be an extermination camp, alongside, Auschwitz, Sobibor, Treblinka and Chelmno rather than a concentration camp. From this Reilly concludes, 'it is important we get details correct not only from the point of view of the history of the Belsen camp but also for a *more* consequential reason: to protect against the dangers of Holocaust denial.'⁷⁶ While Reilly is correct that Holocaust deniers have historically seized on such mistakes, it would seem prudent to argue that it is in fact *more* important to get the details right from the point of history than to protect against Holocaust deniers. Deniers will always find arguments and perspectives from which to attack the Holocaust. In stressing that Holocaust denial is *more* important deniers interpret Reilly's words as a suggestion that the Holocaust is doubtful. Thus, in giving Holocaust denial and Holocaust deniers more validity than they warrant, Reilly appears to be suggesting that Holocaust history is written to disprove Holocaust denial which is clearly not the case. This turns history into a battle between deniers and historians. It gives deniers more power than they deserve, especially when the focus centres on Holocaust deniers as the main reason to get information about the past correct rather than for the benefit of the historical record itself.

The second example is from Dan Stone's *Histories of the Holocaust*. In the introduction to the book Stone writes, that he will not talk of 'the vile phenomenon of Holocaust denial ... since its basic statements about the past are false and cannot be considered historical narrative; rather it is a tool of Neo-Nazism.'⁷⁷ While Stone is correct that Holocaust denial is not a history of the Holocaust and could never be included in a book entitled *Histories of the Holocaust*, he still felt the need to point this out to his readers. Stone's statement is significant because he represents a figure who is expressing a view that denial should not be interacted with; yet the mention of denial in his introduction demonstrates that, even in dismissing denial out of hand, denial still needed to be addressed in a work relating to the history of the Holocaust. Stone is inadvertently suggesting Holocaust denial needs to be removed as a possible history before he goes on to talk about the actual histories of the Holocaust.

While Stone and Reilly are just two examples of historians who have mentioned Holocaust denial in relation to Holocaust history and historiography, histories of the Holocaust are marked with a surprising number of references to Holocaust denial and once we look for examples of such references to Holocaust denial, we see they are very common in such

⁷⁶ J. Reilly, *Belsen: Liberation of a Concentration Camp* (London, Routledge: 1998), p. 3. (Italics my own).

⁷⁷ D. Stone, *Histories of the Holocaust* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 2010), p. 9.

works.⁷⁸ Reference to denial in such works is often framed in the same way: Holocaust denial is illustrated as a danger to history or pointed to as an example of what history is not. The reason for this is hard to ascertain because from a purely logical point of view it would seem best not to engage or mention denial at all: it is not a history of the Holocaust nor will it ever be. Yet denial *is* mentioned even if, as Stone's words intimate, it is just to belittle it.

This reference to denial can be explained in two ways. The first is located in the interaction between the construction of Holocaust narratives and debates on Holocaust denial in the public sphere at the time of the Irving trial and the end of the twentieth century. The second explanation is located in the interplay between postmodernist theory and the discipline of history. I will now look at these two explanations to assess how Holocaust denial has been employed in these two different contexts and suggest that Holocaust denial is used as a quintessential definition of what is the 'other' in society and used as an example of what history is not.

Holocaust memory in British society is about remembering the victims of Nazi atrocity and murder. The primary aim is often stated to be to remember but also to ensure that such atrocities never happen again. However, the Holocaust has also been part of shaping a collective memory. The Holocaust is used as a pedagogical totem to define what society finds morally and politically repugnant. By using the Holocaust in this way, society defines itself against what it is not. This was seen during the 2000 libel trial and in wider developments around British Holocaust consciousness. As Andy Pearce has shown, the place of the Holocaust in British society was no accident: 'the Irving trial and the opening of the IWM Holocaust exhibition did not "create" Holocaust consciousness so much as interact with other trends to further catalyse a collective memory shaped by internal and external forces.'⁷⁹ The reporting of the Irving trial often coincided with comments on the place of the Holocaust in British society; especially in relation to the announcement of Holocaust Memorial Day.⁸⁰

The early months of the new millennium and last months of 1999 marked a reflective period, in which the crimes and triumphs of the twentieth century were remembered, ignored and incorporated into new narratives. The turn of the new century was marked by a debate over what past identities were to be taken into the new millennium and which were to be

⁷⁸ For examples see: T. Kushner and D. Bloxham, *The Holocaust: Critical Historical Approaches* (Manchester, Manchester University Press: 2005), p. 7; T. Lawson, *Debates*, p. 5; D. Dwork and R. J. Van Pelt, *Holocaust: A History* (London, John Murray: 2003), pp. 384-86.

⁷⁹ A. Pearce 'The Development of Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain 1979-2001' (Ph.D. Thesis, Royal Holloway College, 2010), p. 166.

⁸⁰ 'We All Need a Day to Mark our Painful Pasts' *The Independent* (24th January 2000), p. 5.

jettisoned. The Irving trial and Holocaust Memorial Day thus forced attention on the Holocaust at a time when reflection was in the collective and cultural episteme. Irving's attempts to rewrite the past in Britain's court rooms corresponded with a time when historians and, at a wider level, society itself had been taking stock of the past century.

Andy Pearce provides examples to show how such identities and consciousnesses were being forged. Pearce shows how 'New Labour' in the late 1990s had found that the Holocaust had the 'presumed potential to contribute to other policy objectives'. This 'potential' related to 'New Labour's' review of legislative provisions against racist violence.⁸¹ Pearce shows how the use of the Holocaust was chosen as a random example of violence and brutality from the past; rather the Holocaust was present in wider international debates. In describing the outcome of a London conference in 1997 on the amount of Nazi Gold in European banks and what should be done with it, Pearce explains why the Holocaust had become so dominant in British collective memory:

The conference had two particularly salient outcomes. In the first instance, the convening in the capital city of a major international conference attended by over 200 delegates from 40 countries implied that the Holocaust had assumed a prominent place in British collective memory - an impression that by all accounts was largely true, given that Holocaust education had been a legal requirement for six years, the 'Schindler effect' had been felt across British society, and evidence that the Nazi genocide was beginning to be musealized. Furthermore, the disclosure of British culpability in the expropriation of Holocaust victims functioned in a similar manner to the War Crimes affair of the late 1980s in 'bringing the Holocaust home' and placing some of its issues on the public agenda.⁸²

Pearce's comments demonstrate how, by the time of the Irving trial, the Holocaust had become a quintessential expression of evil in the past.⁸³ This explains why the Irving trial had such an impact on British society, in having had more exposure to narratives about the Holocaust Irving and his Holocaust denial became an expression of such evils in the present. Grappling with the British and Allies' historical role in the Holocaust had also become a matter of wide historical debate in the last twenty years. This is evidenced by the publications of Martin Gilbert's *Auschwitz and the Allies* (1981), Tony Kushner's *The Holocaust and the Liberal*

⁸¹ A. Pearce, 'The Development of Holocaust Consciousness', p. 162.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ This expression is still part of the way in which the Holocaust is framed in society today. A current example of this is the 2013 National Curriculum for History, in which Key Stage Three students are to be taught about 'Nazi atrocities in occupied Europe and the unique evil of the Holocaust'. No other historical period in the document contains an adjective describing a period of history which is to be studied. See: Department of Education, *History: Programmes of Study for Key Stages 1-3* (London, Crown Copyright: 2013), p. 9.

Imagination (1994), William Rubinstein's *The Myth of Rescue* (1997) and David S. Wyman's, *The Abandonment of the Jews* (1998). While academic debate was rife over what bystander nations and liberal democracies could and should have done in relation to the Holocaust, the British government under 'New Labour' and lobby groups sought to use the Holocaust to promote lessons about racial tolerance in contemporary society in order 'learn lessons' from the past. The Holocaust was seen as fitting expression of racial hatred in the past and a lesson to prevent it in the present and future. In this context, Irving was represented as figure, which defined not what the British people were, but what they were not, and what they were against.

The way in which the 'Irving trial' has entered the lacuna in the British consciousness and history is indicative of the desire to cast Irving as a social pariah (and thus a quintessential evil of our time). Irving, himself, was not on trial, Deborah Lipstadt was and yet there are very few dialogues which talk of the 'Lipstadt trial'. This is indicative of placing the trial in comforting context in which Irving was indeed 'on trial' ultimately lost. Yet simply putting Irving on a pedestal as an 'evil' does not explain why the trial attracted so much attention.

During the trial historian David Cesarani claimed that it was about who could be trusted with the past. The media representation of the trial brought this question into sharp focus, as did Lipstadt and her defence team. Lipstadt's memoir of the trial would be entitled 'History on Trial'. This 'battle' for the past and control over the past, is best summed up in the build-up to the trial by Cesarani:

Irving rejects the accusation that he denies the Holocaust took place, but he defines it to mean the slaughter of millions of civilians and not just Jews. [...] He insists that all his findings can be sustained by the legitimate interpretation of original sources. It will be crucial for him to prove this in court, because the outcome will determine his credibility as a historian. Win or lose he will be a hero or a martyr for the far-right, but if he loses his stock will fall ... If, as Lipstadt believes, the record of Nazi atrocities is indeed a barrier which constrains the far right, a heavy burden rests on her defence. Yet the historians will know that its ramifications for them are no less profound. Implicit in the issue of individual reputations will be the larger question: who can be trusted with the past?⁸⁴

Cesarani's depiction of the upcoming trial was not unfounded and Lipstadt herself had grave reservations about a favourable outcome.⁸⁵ It was not just the danger to history but also the impact such a trial would have on the future publications that related to Holocaust denial and the Holocaust which had drawn individuals like Robert Van Pelt to defend Lipstadt. Van Pelt

⁸⁴ D. Cesarani 'Judgment Day for the Holocaust Historians', *The Sunday Times* (9th January, 2000), News Review, p. 10.

⁸⁵ D. E. Lipstadt, *History on Trial*, pp. 48-49.

felt that if Irving were not defeated academics and historians would become reluctant to challenge Holocaust deniers in print for fear of them being summoned to the court rooms, or that publishers would be reluctant to print such works for fear of the huge legal fees.⁸⁶ In essence, the fact that history was considered to be 'on trial' was one which appealed to the proprietors of Fleet Street, and one which filled the newspapers during the trial.

This battle for historical 'truth' and the framing of Irving, Holocaust denial and the British far-right as distinctly 'other' were connected to wider historical debates about how narratives about the Nazi's were constructed. As Dan Stone has illustrated, there has been a tendency in historiography of the Holocaust to see the Nazi destruction of the Jews as a 'break with history' - something outside understanding yet still discussed within a framework history. The result of which is that historiography and histories of the Holocaust have denied 'the possibility of seeing Nazism as in any way part of the western tradition.'⁸⁷ Much academic research has been done in recent years to rectify this and is evidenced in the increasing turn to study of Nazism in relation to modernity and especially colonialism.⁸⁸ Nazism and neo-Nazi or far-right groups are still presented in public discourses as the 'other' or as a break with history and wider society. The result is that such groups and individuals are seen as distinct from modern society and only seen in relation to the connected to a Nazi history that is considered an aberration.⁸⁹ Thus, any connection between Nazi society and to modern society is ignored. As this thesis has shown, this is not the case. While the arguments of deniers did not change, the packaging and presentation of denial altered in line with societal transformations.

In categorising Holocaust denial and the British far right as the 'other' the trends in far-right thought are dismissed and are either unworthy of study, categorised as a distinct phenomenon to be studied in isolation, or balanced against histories which are legitimate in order to disprove them by highlighting their politically-motivated nature. While there is merit to this approach, it reflects the same trends that have been detected by Stone. In ignoring the wider social contexts which shaped and forged Nazism and the Holocaust we ignore that these social contexts are still present in contemporary society and have the potential to create genocide.

⁸⁶ Author conversations with Debórah Dwork.

⁸⁷ D. Stone, *Constructing*, pp. 262-263.

⁸⁸ For a current review of debates and the historiography of colonialism and modernity in relation to the Holocaust and Nazism see: T. Lawson, *Debates*, p. 222-225, D. Moses, 'The Holocaust and Genocide' in D. Stone (ed.), *The Historiography of the Holocaust* (London, Palgrave: 2004), pp. 533-555; D. Stone, *Histories*, Ch. 3.

⁸⁹ Dan Stone makes similar statements over the discussions of the creation of the Holocaust exhibition in the Imperial War Museum. See: D. Stone, 'Memory, Memorials and Museums', in D. Stone (ed.), *Historiography*, pp. 520-522.

Holocaust deniers and British far-right groups provide society with a strong reminder of the existence of intolerance, racism, violence and antisemitism. Yet by presenting them as 'other' or as an aberration only serves to domesticate them in narratives which seemingly have nothing do with modern society. As a result individuals (and society at large) do not identify new strains of intolerance or recognise their own prejudices, and consider themselves immune to broader (either minor or major) trends of intolerance found in western society. As Stone reminds us,

The rise of xenophobia and ultranationalism is a sign that this metaphysical dimension has [...] not been lost, and that postwar European civilisation ... still maintains itself on the basis of what it excludes; the contingent circumstances in which the definition of what is to be excluded become radicalised are what are today cause for concern.⁹⁰

In suggesting this I am not seeking to relativise Holocaust deniers, the British far right or any extremist group or individual that propagates intolerance or violence, for clearly they are distinct in their composition. What I am suggesting is that such groups need to be examined in relation to past movements; in relation to the evolving changes in far-right thought as well as the different political, economic and social contexts in which they reside in the present. This would lead to a more comprehensive understanding of why such intolerances continue to exist and how they relate to contemporary society. This would mean that Holocaust denial or far-right thought and ideology is not isolated to a safe compound which is identified as a distinct 'other' but rather is connected to other and wider traditions of intolerance in society.

As the examples from Stone and Reilly show at start of this section, the desire to remove Holocaust denial from academic discussions about the Holocaust is paradoxically marked by a propensity to include them in order to identify why they must removed as representations of the past. This paradox can be explained in relation to the way denial has been framed in society as a distinct 'other' and, as all historians are a product of their society and surroundings, there is merit in this explanation as to why historians include denial in academic dialogues over the Holocaust simply in order to discredit them. To fully understand how historians have approached denial it is necessary to penetrate deeper into the philosophical debates over history and the impact of postmodernism.

Historians have identified the danger of denial in relation to Holocaust narratives and recognised the need to remove suggestion they are legitimate historical discourses. Such identifications are necessary, but as the previous chapters of this thesis have shown, it is well

⁹⁰ Stone, *Constructing*, pp. 76-77.

known that denial is an integral part of a far right, fascist or neo-Nazi constructions of the past. This fact is self-evident. Attempts to educate the wider public about Holocaust denial are necessary however we must question why denial has been given the attention it has in actual Holocaust historiography.

Could this suggest not a 'crisis' in Holocaust history, but a residual tremor left over from the 'crisis' which postmodernism had on the discipline of history? We may have accepted that 'we are, to certain extent, all postmodernist now', but in being aware of postmodernism and its role in history we may remain uncertain exactly what that means in relation to what can and cannot be said about the past.⁹¹ In evoking discussions about Holocaust denial in legitimate historiography (even if as Stone has done in order discredit it as a narrative) historians are using it as a methodological short cut to providing a clear definitive and delineated line between what is history and what is ideological and mendacious fabrication. While Christopher Browning, suggested the boundary between legitimate histories and 'historical revisionism' remains 'uncomfortably unresolved', outright denials of the Holocaust serve to delineate historical accounts written by historians from those of deniers. Denial seems to be serving as a straw man that can be invoked to circumnavigate deeper questions about the impact of post modernity on history and the process by which historians construct the past.⁹²

Browning may feel that the boundary lies uncomfortably resolved but the 2000 libel trial and the examples shown in this thesis demonstrate that Holocaust denial is easily identifiable and defeated. What Browning is alluding to are more politically motivated or controversial readings of the past. Evidence of these reading is evident throughout the development of Holocaust historiography. The *Historikerstreit* in West Germany during the 1980s created great controversy in German newspaper and among academics. Debates over the comparing the Holocaust to other genocides are another example that demonstrate Browning's point. A Recent twenty-first century cultural and political urge in Germany re-open the question of German suffering during the last years of the Second World War is also a contentious issue which dominates debates over German identity and memory.⁹³

In using Holocaust denial in historiography as an example of what history is not, Holocaust denial has become something of a self-imposed spectre over history. In constantly including

⁹¹ T. Lawson, *Debates*, p. 3.

⁹² C. Browning, 'German Memory, Judicial Interrogation, Historical Reconstruction: Writing Perpetrator History from Postwar Testimony', in S. Freidländer (ed.), *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the Final Solution* (Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press: 1992), pp. 33-35.

⁹³ For details of this debate see: T. Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (London, Vintage: 2010), pp. 820-821.

denial (however marginally) in narratives related to the Holocaust, denial is elevated to a position it does not deserve. It imbues it with urgency for discussion in historiography which is counterproductive and even destructive. Rather than using Holocaust denial as an emblematic example of what history is not, debates should rather be had over what history *is* and what the impact postmodernism has had on history or the different approaches to how history is constructed.

In arguing that Holocaust denial has become a self-imposed spectre I am not suggesting that denial is not worthy of academic study or that efforts to combat denial are not necessary. Clearly education to expose deniers for what they are is an essential component of ensuring that denial remains a product of radical fringe groups and does not enter into mainstream discourses. What is being suggested is that Holocaust denial needs to be explored in wider contexts which connect it to wider trends in society and not simply remove it as alien. The same is true for historical research on the Holocaust, denial cannot simply be quickly employed as an example of irrational and politically motivated propaganda. Denial has to be understood in relation to how it been used by historians as a 'way in' to (or in some cases a way around) wider philosophical debates about history.

As this thesis has shown denial is simply mendacious and without any basis in fact: our knowledge of the Holocaust and the historiographical basis on which our knowledge of it is built are robust. Therefore we must question why denial still holds such a draw and demand for study: is our preoccupation located in a fear that people can be drawn to denial and believe it? If this is the case, we must understand why such individuals are susceptible to denial. This is particularly pertinent given the rise of Holocaust denial in the Islamic world.⁹⁴ Is our concern with denial a by-product of the postmodern impact on history? If this is the case, we need to look further about why denial is perceived as such a threat when, as this thesis has shown, denial does not contain historical fact but is rather a mendacious reconstruction of the past to bind far-right identity and ideology. Is the current methodology of studying denial designed to identify difference, thus casting denial and deniers as the 'other' and suggesting it is outside historical understanding? If so the methodology of studying denial needs to be expanded so that such ideologies are set in the contexts to which they belong so that their connection to modern society can be understood further. Denial is studied because it is an assault on the memory of the millions of Jews systematically murdered and this is why denial is attacked

⁹⁴ For discussion, see: D. E. Lipstadt, *History on Trial*, pp. 299-301; S. E. Atkins, *Holocaust Denial as an International Movement* (Westport, Praeger Publishers: 2009), pp. 211-224; M. Litvak and E. Webman, *From Epiphany to Denial* (New York, Columbia University Press: 2009).

most vehemently. It contains within it the same redemptive antisemitism which contributed to the Holocaust. In understanding this, we must also recognise what debates about denial and the context in which they are discussed reveal about how historians seek to protect the past. What historians narratives about Holocaust denial reveal about the society in which those histories are constructed also need to be explored. I believe these areas will prove fruitful topics of research in the future study of Holocaust denial.

In this chapter I have posited the idea that further research is needed into how Holocaust denial has been used by historians as an uncomplicated emblem to describe what history is not and as a way to circumnavigate postmodernist debates in history or affirm traditional or conservative readings of the past. This is not to argue that Holocaust denial is not a suitable pennant to describe what history is not. Rather it is to suggest that in invoking Holocaust denial in such a way, debate and awareness is required about what such an approach means in relation to how we understand history constructed. As argued in the last section of the chapter, there has been an uncomfortable and unresolved relationship between Holocaust denial and Holocaust historiography which has gone unnoticed. This has meant that some historians, both implicitly and explicitly, have suggested a commitment to establishing accurate historical narratives of the Holocaust to present denial is *more* important than constructing historical narratives in their own right. This is indicative of a way in which Holocaust denial has been built into historical narratives and has consequentially elevated Holocaust denial to a status which it would otherwise not have enjoyed.

Debates need to take place around the role Holocaust denial has played in society as a defining what facet of civilisations are to be deem as 'other' or alien. The Holocaust has become the defining 'genocidal atrocity of our time' and the Nazis have been characterised as the antecedents of Holocaust deniers and the deniers as Nazis.⁹⁵ This is true, but in only studying deniers as an expression of how neo-Nazis and antisemites operate in the present and only seeing them as connected to past traditions of intolerance and military defeated ideologies there connection with contemporary intolerance and racism is overlooked.

The development of a global Holocaust consciousness and a prominent presence of Holocaust memory in society has meant that awareness of Holocaust denial in society, history and memory had also grown and developed. The presence and status of denial has become the negative repercussion of an expanding and omnipresence of the Holocaust in society and

⁹⁵ S. Friedländer, *Trends in the History of the Holocaust*, University of Oxford Humanitas lectures at Oxford and Cambridge University, (Published: June 19, 2012). These lectures are available at: <http://m.ox.ac.uk/podcasts/humdiv/humanitas-audio/> (accessed: 02/08/2012)

History. As chapters one and two of this thesis have shown, denial of Nazi atrocities began in Britain before the death camps in occupied Europe had claimed their last victims. As the publication of Leese and Ratcliffe illustrate it was the far right, not the British government and British media, that was more prominent discussing the Jewish dimensions of Nazi atrocities. Therefore deniers did not begin to attack the Holocaust once it had been established in historical narratives. They remained constant in denying the Nazi genocide of the Jews. British far right deniers responded to the development of Holocaust consciousness in society by using the growing awareness of the Holocaust in society as evidence of the growing success of Jewish propaganda and control. For deniers a growth in Holocaust 'awareness' in British society confirmed to them that their belief the Holocaust was Jewish propaganda was correct.

Likewise, the 2000 libel trial was indicative of the status the Holocaust occupied in collective British memories. Against the historical backdrop of the horrors of the Holocaust Irving, his fellow deniers and Holocaust denial was defined as modern incarnation of 'evil'. This may be seen is a simple, and desirable, evident notion. Yet it is one that illustrates the diametrically opposed moral frame works in which the history of the Holocaust was framed. In making the Holocaust the 'defining genocide of our time'. It removed it the Holocaust from its specific historical context. In stressing the Holocaust should be to be considered a quintessential evil of our time, a Manichean paradigm was employed in which for the Holocaust to be 'evil' it could be balanced against the quintessential 'good' in our time. Denial was presented as 'evil' and ironically balanced against the 'good' which were to be found in narratives which are made by historians, the stories of survivors and the work of groups which promote the lessons which must be learnt from the Holocaust. The Holocaust was rendered to a simple pedagogical about good and evil with the specific histories of the Holocaust relegated to secondary status.

This Manichean paradigm does not fit into a postmodernist view of society as is an over simplification and lacks accurate contextualisation of the issues involved. Yet it does speak of a lurch away from the complexities which postmodernism creates and a retreat to simpler and comforting narratives. It also and alludes to why denial is singled out as what history is not, and how it becomes a fixed totem in mercurial debates about what is 'evil' in society or indeed what evil as a quantifiable unit constitutes .

This paradigm explains why such a traditional reading of the Holocaust was employed during the 2000 Lipstadt libel trial. While I have alluded to the problems of using denial, and to the dangers of making it seem like it is the task of the Holocaust historian to write histories of the Holocaust to defeat denial, it is clear that denial does need to be countered and rebuffed. As

Saul Friedländer has explained, denial does need to be rejected and opposed because the vast majority of society does not have the detailed understanding, which historians of the Holocaust have. Not to attack denial or counter its arguments might even lead to people believing 'revisionist' narratives.⁹⁶ Lipstadt's defence and expert witnesses may therefore stand as a pedagogical lesson about how to approach Holocaust deniers, and symbolise a way in which Holocaust deniers can be proved to be mendacious manipulators of the past. Yet in using the 'lesson' that Lipstadt provided, we must remember that the history which Lipstadt and her defence team constructed was based on creating a traditional, 'objective' reading of the past. It was a history which may have defeated Irving and exposed his distortions but it was a history constructed with defeating a Holocaust denier in mind.

We should also not forget that it was a Holocaust denier who managed to bring the Holocaust to the law courts and asked for the law to decide on historical practices and narratives. Irving was hoping for the attention he achieved for his warped views of the past. He may also have been hoping he could prove his vision of the past in a non-historical environment because he knew he had been, and would be continue to be, bested in a historical academic setting. The courtroom and law may have appealed to Irving because of its unequivocal judgements and as such he hoped to capitalise on the lack of 'smoking gun' documents which related to the decision-making process in relation to the Final Solution.

Irving failed, and whatever his motivations for bringing Lipstadt to the High Court, Lipstadt and her team triumphed. They showed that Irving had for his

own ideological reasons persistently and deliberately misrepresented and manipulated historical evidence; that for the same reasons he has portrayed Hitler in an unwarrantedly favourable light, principally in relation to his attitude towards and responsibility for the treatment of the Jews; that he is an active Holocaust denier; that he is antisemitic and racist, and that he associates with right-wing extremists who promote neo-Nazism.⁹⁷

The notion that history or the Holocaust was 'on trial' was indicative of wider debates which were taking place at the time. It was these notions which created the furore around the trial and *not* whether Lipstadt had libelled Irving. Thousands of libel trials take place each year across the world yet few attract the same attention which the 'Irving trial', as it has been subsequently dubbed, captured. In actuality of what took place, was that Irving was proved as liar as such legally established to be Holocaust denier. This proved more pertinent in defeating

⁹⁶ S. Friedländer, *Trends in the History of the Holocaust*. Available at: <http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/saul-friedl-nder-trends-historiography-holocaust>.

⁹⁷ Trial Transcript: Irving v. Lipstadt, Judgement, Section 13. 143-44.

denial than 'proving' the Holocaust as attempts to 'prove' the Holocaust allow the deniers to suggest their narratives are being taken seriously.

Holocaust denial may be a 'history' for the far right, yet it should not be treated as such by the wider world. It is simply a collection of mendacious notions, ordered according to a particular ideology and used to validate racist notions and an antisemitic conspiracy. It should and must be treated with contempt, exposed as lies and an expression of antisemitism and neo-Nazism. Historians must, however, be careful about the narratives in which they evoke denial and the debates for which it is used. For denial, it is completely ripped from its far-right or extremist contexts, or simply labelled as 'other' without acknowledgement of its relation to wider western society and traditions, then there is a real risk of normalising it as insignificant. Worst still without reference to the relevant contexts, it could be seen as suggesting that Holocaust history is being written as a counter-measure to denial, which is exactly what Holocaust deniers would have the world believe.

Conclusion: Clio in Chains: the British Far Right and the (Ab)use of History

Holocaust denial in the British far right has evolved and changed in its style and presentation since its early incarnations in the early and mid-1940s. The presentational fluidity must also be understood in conjunction with the ideological obstinacy which drove the different groups and individuals in the British far right. Societal and historiographical changes to the way the Holocaust was viewed meant that far-right Holocaust deniers had to amend the way their ideologies were communicated to a world *external* and opposed to their ideological beliefs and vision of the past. Yet while the presentation may have changed over the period under study, the dialogues taking place in the far right over the Holocaust did not change. They remained implacably fixated on challenging the Holocaust as an expression of Jewish control.

The far right's response to the genocide of Europe's Jews, as we saw in chapters one and two of this thesis, was at first an automatic antisemitic response to the information which was emerging from occupied Europe. Alexander Ratcliffe, who had very little 'evidence' for the claims he made, demonstrated the explicit link to pre-Holocaust antisemitic stereotypes. Ratcliffe who was more intent on playing up the Jewish dimensions of the genocide than the British government and other institutions such as the Church of England which sought to emphasise universal suffering under the Nazi regime. This early incarnation of denial was followed by a confused response over how to respond to the information and documentation which emerged from the Nuremberg tribunals and post-war trials. This initial reaction was marked by the denial of the actual Holocaust and approval of a theoretical Holocaust by Arnold Leese. These responses saw the emergence of lines of debate which would later be formulated into the more 'cohesive' narratives of later disseminators of British far-right Holocaust denial. These lines of argument would centre on the validity of the post war trials and the argument that they were under the control of the 'world Jewish conspiracy'.

The ideological world views which had driven Hitler and the Nazi regime were also prominent narratives in the pasts constructed by the far right: that the western allies had been driven into fighting the 'wrong war' against Germany by Jews and that the real enemy of Europe and the world was (and continued to be until the collapse of the USSR) 'Jewish-bolshevism' and 'Jewish capitalism'. These early incarnations of denial would also give way to the continued premise that it had been allied bombing which had created the conditions found in the liberated allied camps. They would also posit the argument that the figure of six million killed was an exaggeration; and that only Jews who had been 'criminals' had been imprisoned while the rest had disappeared into the USSR or emigrated to the United States and Palestine.

The 'prototype' denial or early incarnations of denial of the 1940s and 1950s gave way to a more recognisable 'academic' denial in the late 1960s and early 1970s which is more familiar and corresponds to the current historiography on Holocaust denial. This was due to changes which were taking place in the shape of the British far right: the split between more 'radical' groups who sought power by revolution and those who wanted to appear legitimate to the electorate. The denial of the more 'populist' and 'recidivistic' movements of the far right, most notably the National Front, still drew on the protocols established in the early stages of denial. The 'arguments' in this denial were given more 'weight' by adopting academic conventions such as footnotes; the creation of pseudo-academic journals and by incorporating early Holocaust historiography. The historiography was either edited to serve the purposes of the deniers' or used to demonstrate the lack of a written order for the Final Solution. These publications also toned down overt, rabid and racist language, favouring instead more 'scientific' or 'reasoned' justifications for their ideological beliefs. The more 'radical' movements also adopted and modified the protocols and arguments established in the 1940s and 1950s, yet were more unashamed in their language and more radical in disseminating their message. These groups could do so because they did not seek popular support and it suited them to use such language as an expression of their radical and militarised plan to gain power. Therefore the dialogues in which they engaged were very much of an insular nature and were confined to the members and followers on the radical spectrum of the far right.

The far right responded to the growing memorialisation and collective representations of the Holocaust which developed and deepened throughout the period under study. These responses were indicative of the ideological assumptions on which the far right was built. They were located within the episteme of world Jewish conspiracy, while deniers sought to assault history with attacks on the historiography of the Holocaust and pseudo-historical arguments about 'facts'. Collective memories or representations of the Holocaust were attacked on the basis that the proliferation of Holocaust scholarship and memorialisation in Britain were confirmation of their belief that a Jewish conspiracy was at work. For the far right, collective representations of the Holocaust were not only linked to a 'Jewish conspiracy' but were also seen as part of a wider focused attack by Jews on the British far right itself. The British far right perceived the Holocaust as a barrier to 'genuine' discussions over race. They felt their arguments and ideologies would be accepted by the British public at large but were suffocated by the overt presence of the Holocaust in society. British far-right Holocaust deniers presented the dominance of the Holocaust in British collective memories and memorialisation as part of a conspiracy which allowed the 'white racial stock' of Britain to be diluted. This was indicative of

a movement and ideology which thought along racial lines. Contained within this thinking was a paradox: the far right presented the Holocaust as a barrier to 'genuine' discussions about race, yet they could not make the connection that the discussions they wanted to have were precisely the kind of debates that led to genocidal outcomes. As Ray Hill demonstrates, because of its predilection for narratives of Jewish domination and power the far right was caught in an 'eternal dilemma' and were 'never really sure whether to deny the Holocaust or defend it.'¹

The Holocaust became an obstacle in re-establishing far-right ideology and identity. This frustration in being denied a mainstream political voice manifested itself in a visceral rejection of Jewish victimhood under Nazism. The pre-war notions of a Jewish conspiracy proved to be resilient enough to encompass new world events and consequently, the Jews became seen as the victors of the Second World War. To cement this victory and prevent an future resurgence of Nazism, the conspiracy theory also invented a fictional genocide: The Holocaust. Within these paranoid fantasies the far right had presented the Jews as an all-powerful force, which controlled the economy, politics and society. The irony was that, the 'power' that was contained in the conspiracy, was exactly the role the far right coveted for themselves.

These paradoxes demonstrate why denial was a useful and galvanising tool for far-right groups and movements. Not only did it help them understand the world and society in which they lived it also accounted for their own political failures. Seen through this prism, the far right had not failed because their ideologies were repugnant to large sections of the British population, rather the Jewish conspiracy with its infinite control prevented the population from seeing the 'truth'. The only way to get the population to see these truths was to remove Jews from power, which inevitably would lead to a genocidal outcome. There was no way for the far right to present theories of Jewish world control or Holocaust denial without the public seeing its true political and ultimately genocidal intent. The far-right could not however abandon denial, because it was the only way in which the world made sense, to jettison denial would mean admitting defeat or allowed for suggestion that there was not a Jewish conspiracy.

Outwardly the movement responded to the growing awareness of the Holocaust in two ways: either a quiet shelving of public and explicit Holocaust denial, or with a continued radical attack on the Holocaust but with the added integration of arguments around the prominence of the Holocaust in society as an indicator of Jewish domination (or 'ZOG', a phrase coined by

¹ R. Hill and A Bell, *The Other Face of Terror: Inside Europe's Neo-Nazi Networks* (London, Grafton Books: 1988), p. 237.

the more radical parties and elements on the British far right). The conflicting approaches found in the far-right in relation to Holocaust denial were indicative of the changing contexts in which they found themselves and the varied approaches of the different movements over how best to achieve power. Yet the arguments which sustained their belief in Holocaust denial did not change, rather it was how such groups would *present* their Holocaust denial that provided variance from movement to movement. As chapters three and four of this thesis showed, the movements contained in the far right were far from homogeneous, and were indicative of the failure of the different movements to create a united front.

It is clear that the spectre of Holocaust denial never disappeared from the British far right. Even when individuals like Nick Griffin claimed to publically rescind their earlier comments and writings on the Holocaust, a door was always left open for denial. His comments indicated that people could read into them what they wanted: as seen in chapter four, Griffin refused to give his current views and opinions on the Holocaust because 'European law' prevented him. Holocaust denial took on different guises, either overt forms like those of Colin Jordan, the British People's Party or more modified expressions of Holocaust denial or support for the endeavours of Holocaust denier found in the National Front. Holocaust denial never left the far right, nor would its previous history of denial. Members of the groups would be constantly asked about their opinions and current positions on Holocaust denial. Denial was not only a signifier within the movement which helped create a collective 'consciousness' about the past, but it also served as an external indicator for the media, politicians and the public at large of the type of movement that was before them.

Denial itself has always been part of the British far right since the Second World War and its prominence in such groups was often noted by journalists and antifascists groups. Yet it was not until 2000, with the trial of Deborah Lipstadt for libel against David Irving, that debates about Holocaust denial would capture continued mainstream British newspaper headlines. It is not surprising that the trial captured the popular imagination given the increasing awareness and prominence of the Holocaust in political, historical and social debates. The trial captured the headlines because it was a point at which Holocaust consciousness was reaching an apex. The trial was significant in that it was a Holocaust denier trying to 'prove' his narrative of the past was correct in a British court of law. The the trial has been appropriated by historians, politicians and journalists for wider debates about the Holocaust, the effect of postmodernism on society and in history itself. Thus demonstrating how the trial was emblematic of the way

Holocaust and Holocaust denial had by 2000 had become a set pedagogical tool used to measure and define contemporary notions of evil in society.

The impact of the Irving trial should also be viewed within the context of the changing historical relationship the United Kingdom had with the Holocaust. Tony Kushner's study *Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination* and Andy Pearce's PhD thesis on Holocaust consciousness in Britain demonstrate the complex factors which were at play over discussions of Holocaust memorialisation and Holocaust memory in the United Kingdom since the liberation of Nazi-occupied Europe. The development of a Holocaust 'consciousness' in Britain was a complex process and did not remain static throughout the period under study. Just as the historiographical debates which have surrounded the Holocaust have changed and become more sophisticated, British responses to the Holocaust evolved and developed with changes in contemporary society. Kushner has showed how very little was done in Britain from the late 1940s to late 1970s in regard to Holocaust memorialisation. Fitting the Holocaust into existing British liberal memory frameworks was an intermittent process intrinsically linked to the changing political and social imperatives of post-war Britain. This is not to suggest that the British were 'silence' in relation to the Holocaust until the early 1980s. The Holocaust was ignored or covered up in British debates, but that the parameters in which debates could take place were limited by a commitment to pluralism, a predilection for narratives about British suffering during the Second World War and an ignorance or reluctance to engage with Jewish particularism.²

The presence of the Holocaust in western consciousness, as Saul Friedländer has pointed out 'resembles that of some sought of lava rising ever closer to the surface and announced by ever stronger eruptions.' For Friedländer, this can be explained by three factors, generational factors (as new generations come forth there is a desire to understand the Holocaust), the continued search for justice or the framing of Nazism as '*the* metaphor for evil in our time'.³ Friedländer argues that a collective amnesia was lifted and that the Holocaust became part of a mainstream dialogue at different times and in different contexts for different reasons. For Friedländer, during the first two decades after the war, the Shoah was characterised by a 'virtual silence', which was gradually overturned by the 'eruptions' of proceeding generations. While Friedländer is correct to identify the transmogrifying processes which lead to an upsurge

² T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination: A Social and Cultural History* (Oxford, Blackwell: 1994), pp. 205-270.

³ S. Friedländer, 'History, Memory and the Historian: Dilemmas and Responsibilities', *New German Critique*, (No. 80: 2000), p. 7.

in the prominence of the Holocaust in collective memories, his suggestion of a 'virtual silence' has been questioned by recent research.⁴ Britain may have lagged behind in its incorporation and adoption of the Holocaust into official thinking, memories, memorials and education in its own right, but the Nazi genocide of the Jews had always been prevalent in British social, and cultural, epistemes. The Holocaust was employed in the dialogues which framed Nazism as a quintessential evil and was used to vindicate and validate a collective British identity in which Britain was a heroic liberator of Nazi occupied Europe and saviour of democracy. As Kushner shows, Britain did fall behind other nations in terms of constructing Holocaust memorials and promoting Holocaust education and it was not until the early 1980s that any real movement was made in memorialisation of the Holocaust.⁵

The British far right's response to the Holocaust runs at a contradictory pace to those alluded to by Kushner or Friedländer. The Holocaust was always part of the narratives of the far right. Two ongoing processes explain this. The first would rest on the current work, and challenge to, the myth of silence of the Holocaust after the war. That the Holocaust was intrinsically linked to discussions over Nazism (even if the Holocaust was not fundamentally recognised in a memorial, educational or collective sense) the far right was drawn to attack the Holocaust because it undermined the ideology which it wanted to emulate. The Holocaust, or Holocaust denial, was therefore very much an omnipresent factor in the far right because of a desire to defend its policies. As evidenced in early incarnations of denial found in the writings of Ratcliffe, Mosley and Leese. A second ongoing process that facilitated continued dialogues in the far right over the Holocaust was antisemitism. The far right was predisposed to antisemitism and maintained its worldview by constantly attacking the Jew as enemies and as threat to society and the Aryan 'race'. The far right, because of their predisposition for seeing the world as governed by a Jewish conspiracy, looked to the past to 'explain' how and why Jews had dominated society. Denying the murder of Europe's Jews was part of a continuous process of viewing Jews through the conspiratorial, antisemitic and ideological prisms established in the late nineteenth century. The Holocaust was seen, not as just a barrier to political power or as a stain on the Nazi ideologies they wanted to emulate, but as further proof of Jewish 'myths' and conspiracy. The far right believed that the Jews had brought about the Second World War, and had cemented their 'victory' over Hitler and Nazism by creating the 'myth' of the Holocaust.

⁴ D. Cesarani and E. J. Sundquist, *After the Holocaust: Challenging the Myth of Silence* (London, Routledge: 2012) and T. Lawson, *Debates on the Holocaust* (Manchester, Manchester University Press: 2011), ch, 1.

⁵ T. Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination*, pp. 250-268.

In viewing and understanding that Holocaust denial, and discussion of the Holocaust, was a continuous part of the British far right's thinking, we can better understand that Holocaust denial was not just about responding to external influences and rehabilitating its ideology. Denial in the far right continued even without an explicit or fully developed Holocaust 'consciousnesses'. Holocaust denial was part of building internal 'histories'. 'Histories' which had always been predisposed to validating how the various groups contained within the far right viewed the role of the Jews in the past, and what that revealed about its own role in the present. Holocaust denial has to be understood as a phenomenon which was not only an attack on Holocaust narratives outside the various movements of the far right, but also as the continuing narrative inside the movement which validated the ideologies of members and leaders themselves.

As we have seen, Holocaust denial on the far right was nothing new; it had been present even before the death camps had claimed their last victims. Holocaust denial was an immediate far-right counter narrative to the information emerging from occupied Europe. Public responses to events like the Irving trial were therefore indicative of a nation with a newly formed or evolving Holocaust consciousness. That is not to say that the far right had not captured column inches in national and local newspapers prior to 2000 with their writings on the Holocaust and denial, but the magnitude with which an individual like Irving captured the headlines was something which had not happened before.

This is not to argue that because British responses to the far right's Holocaust denial were not on the magnitude seen during the Irving trial, that earlier responses were inherently weaker. Rather it must be understood that until a collective Holocaust 'consciousness' was developed a collective condemnation, on the scale seen during the Irving trial, was not possible. Academic interest, focused solely on Holocaust denial, did not begin until the 1980s, it appears that Holocaust denial was not imbued with real significance until the Holocaust became a major part of collective consciousness, or major academic study. This is an expression of the concerns raised by academics today who reject the idea of studying or combating Holocaust deniers for fear of giving them undue prominence. This argument is, however, far too simplistic because deniers have always existed even when the Holocaust was as not omnipresent as it is today or has been since the early 1970s. Denial did not emerge out of increased dialogues or academic activity on the Holocaust. Holocaust deniers did respond to the increasing contexts in which the Holocaust was placed, understood and presented, yet awareness and academic attention on denial can be linked to the increasing prominence of the Holocaust in society. The growing

'awareness' of the Holocaust in society has also brought about a wider scope for recognition of dialogues about the Holocaust, even when those dialogues are the repugnant dialogues of denial.

The British context then, tells us not only about how the relationship, histories and memories of the Holocaust have changed, but also about how Holocaust denial has been viewed in these changing histories and memories. In a sense, a reciprocal relationship has taken place in which denial has transmogrified itself in accordance with wider discussions, debates and histories of the Holocaust, while, at the same time, Holocaust denial has been studied, examined and imbued with particular significance (or insignificance) in accordance with our own understandings and awareness of the Holocaust. Denial needs to be understood, not as emerging from an increasing Holocaust awareness, but as a pseudo-history which emerged out of the ideological concerns of a given group, in this case the British far right. These ideological concerns were specific to the British far right, and while the far right was active in trying to reach a wider audience to disseminate their views and achieve power, they were also creating and nurturing its own 'histories' in accordance with how they viewed the world.

Holocaust denial is not only located in the British far right, it is international movement and has grown with the advent of faster globalised communications. As this thesis reaches its conclusion, I would like to suggest how further research into the subject of Holocaust denial could proceed. Holocaust denial has been studied as a global movement: this is a valid and productive perspective and context in which to view denial. However, as this thesis has demonstrated, denial is presented in various ways and in accordance with local, national or political goals. Denial should be understood and examined as a global phenomenon but also within its own national or political contexts. This would provide a more nuanced understanding of the way in which Holocaust denial is (and has always been) a movement which seeks to reconstruct the past along ideological lines but also show how it is interconnected with the different goals of the groups and individuals which produce it. This would allow for further and deeper understandings of the role which Holocaust denial plays within specific contexts and movements. Denial was and is a movement for antisemitic or racist ideologies, yet the use of Holocaust denial in these ideologies is not always homogeneous. It is produced in a variety of contexts with differing, and sometimes conflicting, overarching ideological agendas. Understanding the different historical origins of these movements and the changes in the presentation of Holocaust denial would allow for a greater insight into the ideological uses of Holocaust denial. Holocaust denial may be a construction of

the past wholly in the service of the present, but we must not just treat denial as a current phenomenon. We can also look at past Holocaust denials in order to understand and study what Holocaust deniers and the specific groups who propagated denial made of past present(s).

Britain is a country in which denial can be expressed because there are no specific laws against Holocaust or genocide denial. A comparison of the kind undertaken in this thesis with a country where denial is legislated against, and the effects this had on denial in the far right movements of that country, would allow for a wider understanding of the way Holocaust denial can and has been presented and disseminated. Comparisons between 'victim' 'bystander' and 'perpetrator' nations, and the way denial is presented in accordance with the existing contextual, historical and legal frameworks would allow for greater understandings of how Holocaust deniers operate in different contexts. This would allow for a more complete and nuanced view of Holocaust denial, the history of denial and the changing responses to the Holocaust in different societies.

Holocaust denial also needs to be critically studied in relation to those who seek to actively combat it. Many valuable studies and histories of the history of anti-fascist movements exist, yet a more focused study of how such movements combated Holocaust denial and the impact this had on the way deniers presented their arguments is needed.⁶ The way deniers used the efforts of anti-fascist groups to present themselves as 'victims' would allow for a greater understanding of how they created and foster a shared sense of 'victimhood'.

Finally much could be gained from comparing Holocaust and genocide denials. While such comparisons have been made (and are in the process of being made) understanding how the past is used and remoulded by extreme ideologies, and the similarities and differences which they share, would create an effective and combined history of genocide denials. This research would help to explain and show the structural differences and similarities in genocide and Holocaust denials. Such comparative studies would also show how different denials of the past have been responded to and what that tells us about the ways in which different genocide denials are viewed in different cultural, national and international contexts.⁷

⁶ N. Copsey, *Anti-Fascism in Britain* (Basingstoke, Macmillan: 2000); T. Kushner and N. Valman, *Remembering Cable Street: Fascism and Anti-Fascism in British Society* (Edgware, Vallentine Mitchell: 2000) and D. Renton, *When We Touched the Sky: The Anti-Nazi League 1977-1981* (Cheltenham, New Clarion Press: 2006).

⁷ See: I. W. Charney, 'A Classification of Holocaust and other Genocide Denials', *Journal of Genocide Research*, (Vol. 5, No. 1: 2003), pp. 11-34. In September 2010, an international conference was held at

This thesis has shown that the ways we think about and study Holocaust denial is as important (and more significant) than what deniers are actually saying. It is clear that Holocaust denial is a deeply antisemitic act. It is impossible to claim that someone who is denying the Holocaust is not antisemitic. This claim is substantiated on two basic premises, first, the basic proposition that to deny the Holocaust or fundamental aspects of its history, contains within it a fundamental disregard for the victims murdered under a regime with prejudice, ignorance and hatred woven into its very seams. Second, the arguments of denial rest on the fundamental principle that a 'worldwide Jewish conspiracy' has orchestrated the 'story' of the Holocaust. Denial can only exist in a world where a conspiratorial alternative is perceived as possible, the history of the Holocaust was not written as an accident, or as just one history out of numerous other possibilities: it was what took place. Yet for those who follow a conspiratorial view of the world, another explanation is available but only within the perspective that the world is not as it appears; that factions are at work which cover up the real 'truth'. Holocaust denial can only make sense if the deniers see the world or the past through an ideological prism, and this prism inevitably leads to seeing Jews as controlling the levers of societal or governmental power. Furthermore denials of the Holocaust are expressed almost exclusively in relation to the Jewish victims. It is the Jewish dimensions of the Holocaust which are targeted for attack for the preserved 'benefit' the Holocaust has for Jews in the present. It is Jewish victimhood which deniers want to strip from the history of the Second World War. It is this fact which must leave Holocaust denial as an undeniably antisemitic act.

The place of antisemitism in the far right as we have seen in this thesis was undeniable; the antisemitism of the far right was overt and blatant. Dispute the claims of some of the deniers in the far right that they were not antisemitic, their arguments still used antisemitic tropes, even if they did not resort to overt, vulgar and blatant antisemitic rhetoric that some of the other travellers on the far right had done. There can be no doubt that in Holocaust denial and other antisemitic tracts found in the far-right a redemptive antisemitism was present. This is a complex phenomenon to explain, and was best demonstrated when Arnold Leese claimed that the murder of European Jewry had not taken place but suggested that a theoretical Holocaust would have been beneficial.

Holocaust deniers were claiming that the Holocaust had not taken place and that the Jews were cementing the 'victory' they had won over Hitler and Nazism in the Second World War by inventing a false genocide in which six million Jews were murdered. Therefore, in order

the University of Leicester into Genocide and Holocaust denial, with a subsequent edited volume of the conference papers expected to be published in 2015.

'correct' the imbalance they saw in society, politics and history, Jews would have to be removed from positions of power and society at large. This may not have always been presented as an overt or written policy or agenda in the writing on Holocaust denial, yet the inherent conclusion of such work can only be read as seeing the removal of Jews as the ultimate goal. While the radical elements of the far right did not shy away from expressing such views, more populist movements did not make such blatant statements for fear of alienating the electorate. Groups which sought power through elections were not willing to make such statements because it would have made the parallels between their policies and ideologies and those of the Nazi party and government far too explicit. Groups which were revolutionary did not hold this view; because they were proud of their links to National Socialism, these were clearly identifiable as redemptive. Redemptive antisemitism and redemptive racism in the British far right, whether overt or covert, was the ideological driving factor of Holocaust denial. There are two reasons for this. The first is found in the political expedience of Holocaust denial: if the far-right could have convinced the British people the Holocaust had not occurred then their policies, in the minds of the far right, would have become more palatable: the Nazi ideology they wished to emulate had not and would not lead to genocide. The second is located in an internalising ideology of the far right. In dismantling the history of Holocaust they were actively participating in trying to deconstruct 'Jewish power'. The British far right was demonstrating (either knowingly or unknowingly) how, if they achieved power, they would carry through the principles contained within their redemptive antisemitism. It is clear, therefore, that Holocaust denial in the British far right should not only be viewed as a politically expedient measure. For the far right Holocaust denial was the past they wanted to construct and what they believed had happened; it was 'history' rebalanced, their 'history' which presented 'Jewish control' as omnipresent: It was a 'history' which mirrored how they saw the present.

Identifying the changes that have taken place in Holocaust denial literature and how they corresponded to developments in the British far right was only one task this thesis set out to achieve. It is necessary to link the ideological concerns of the far right to Holocaust denial, rather than just taking them as read. As seen throughout this thesis, denial provided *both* an *external* purpose and an *internalising* purpose. The external purpose was located within the political expedience which denial provided.⁸ Denial also, as Michael Billing has explained, had an internalising purpose and provided a conspiracy theory which attracted people on a

⁸ M. Shermer and A. Gorbman, *Denying History: Who Says The Holocaust Never Happened and Why Do they Say It?* (Los Angeles, University of California: 2009), pp. 88-89.

'cognitive and motivational' level. Those on the 'cognitive' level used denial as a simple way to explain away complex political and historical events. Whereas those on the 'motivational' level used denial or the Jewish conspiracy theory to achieve a level of superiority over others because they believed or 'knew' they knew the 'truth'.⁹

To historians Holocaust denial is an abomination against truth and the study of the past, yet it still attracts a great deal of attention, comment and debate in academic circles. Denial clearly has a pull, which forces historians to comment on it, even if those comments are a simple snub to say it should not be studied or rebuffed for fear of giving deniers too much attention. Holocaust denial therefore is a manifestation of an anti-history which reflects back to academics a past which is unrecognisable. In this nightmarish vision, we see the fragility of the past which reminds us of the dangers of the past in the wrong hands or a constant and residual reminder of the impact postmodernism has had on history. Holocaust denial is the expansion of the genocidal policies of the Nazi and by extension the very practices which made the Holocaust possible. We remain confident in our own history, where Clio is safe in a peer-reviewed and regulated profession which detests prejudice, genocide, injustice and murder, yet we are also aware of the ways the past can be, and is, constructed in the service of political ideological agendas. In demonstrating Holocaust denial is an anti-history, a product of far-right propaganda, a tool of racial, prejudiced, antisemitic ideologies, we are also reassuring ourselves that our history, whatever the historiographical, methodological and philosophical problems and debates contained within it, is still the right history.

While it is quite right to highlight that denial is an assault on the memory of the victims and survivors of the Holocaust,¹⁰ it is also vital to demonstrate that deniers seek the esteem of history to validate their views to a wider audience.¹¹ It is right to prove why deniers are wrong.¹² It is right to show how they manipulate the past and create propaganda.¹³ Yet, in

⁹ M. Billing, 'The Extreme Right: Continuities in Antisemitic Conspiracy Theory in Post-War Europe', in R. Eatwell and N. Sullivan (eds), *The Nature of the Right* (London, Pinter: 1989), p. 159.

¹⁰ D. E. Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (New York, The Free Press: 1993).

¹¹ R. Eaglestone, *Postmodernism and Holocaust Denial* (Cambridge, Icon Books: 2001).

¹² J. C. Zimmerman, *Holocaust Denial: Demographics, Testimonies and Ideologies* (New York, University Press of America: 2000); Emory University: Holocaust Denial on Trial: Using History to Confront Distortions: <http://www.hdot.org/> (Last Accessed 07/07/12); The Nizkor Project: Deceit & Misrepresentation.

The Techniques of Holocaust Denial: <http://www.nizkor.org> (last accessed 07/07/12).

¹³ R. Eatwell 'The Holocaust Denial: a Study in Propaganda Technique', in L. Cheles, R. Ferguson and M. Vaughan (eds), *Neo-Fascism in Europe* (London, Longman: 1991), pp. 120-146; M. Shermer and A. Gorbman, *Denying History: Who Says The Holocaust Never Happened and Why Do They Say It?* (Los Angeles, University of California: 2009).

simply pointing out why denial is not compatible with real histories of the Holocaust, we ignore the place denial has within the milieu from which it has come and the purpose it serves within that *internal* context. It is not enough just to wrench denial from its context, point out its flaws, lies, falsifications and antisemitic vulgarity and cast it aside. This only tells us about how we construct the past, what makes history, history to *us*. Denial also needs to be understood in relation to its own context and the service it provides to the British far right and other far right ideologies.

The ideological concerns of the far-right centred on using the past to make sense of the present. In recasting a usable history and historiography into a usable 'history', the far right could make sense of its place and its ideology in a hostile present. Holocaust denial was not only politically expedient but it also created a shared identity and consciousness around which the British far right could rally. It is irrelevant, and to a large extent unknowable, if some, or all, actually truly *believed* the Holocaust did not take place or whether they simply chose to accept it as a means to explain away an unwanted stain on their past. The unifying goal was still the same: to make a 'history' which served the ideological needs of the present. The place of Holocaust denial in individual movements varied. The past which they constructed through Holocaust denial served them like a drinking well. Some far-right groups and individuals drank more than others; some were more concealed about how much they were drinking and the remainder were greedily and guzzling in full view. Yet they were all drinking from the same blood-stained well of intolerance, racism and antisemitism and it provided them the nourishment they needed to explain their ideological view of the world in both the past and present.

The question then becomes can we call denial, from this point of view, a history? It would appear that because deniers used the past (albeit a mythical past) to tell them about their present that, to them at least, it will always be a history. Yet, denial should in no way be considered a legitimate history of the Holocaust.¹⁴ As this thesis has shown it is made up of lies, falsifications, distortions, and is a tool of neo-Nazism used to validate morally repugnant ideological goals. It may attempt to look like history, it may fulfil the same purposes as history in explaining the past to the present yet, it is not a history. No amount of retelling, reiterating or revision of lies will ever make them truths; as Michael Marrus reminds us the Holocaust is about murder. History is only safe when historians are allowed to work free from autocratic rule. The historiography of the Third Reich's universities and history departments can show

¹⁴ D. Stone, *Histories of the Holocaust* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 2010), p. 9.

how history and the past can be made into lies and distortions which become official, ideological, or governmental truths.¹⁵ Denial is not our history, but it is viewed as a 'history' by the ideological-driven British far right. The years they have spend cultivating and adapting their arguments in line with contemporary changes in society or legitimate historiography mean that for far-right denial is very real part of their history.

Viewing denial as mendacious lies for us and a 'history' for deniers' lies at the root of discussions about the inherent problems of studying Holocaust denial. It is a world which, as Micheal Shermer and Alex Gorbman rightly point out, 'black is white and up is down'. It is the diametrically opposed ontological and epistemological positions which are so problematic. The scholars who accept the historical reality of the Holocaust are trying to understand a position which does not. It is necessary to recognise these positions when examining denial in order to understand that Holocaust deniers will never abandon denial because it serves an ideological and cognitive purpose. For the British far right Holocaust denial creates a collective consciousness which allows them to make sense of their ideologies in the present. The fact that that this ideology is so alien to non-deniers can only be truly understood by a similar understanding that historians would never surrender the history of the Holocaust to deniers, or know how to make sense of a past which did not include the Holocaust.

¹⁵ D. Rupnow, 'Radicalising Historiography: Anti-Jewish Scholarship in The Third Reich', *Patterns of Prejudice*, (Vol. 4, No. 1: 2008), pp. 27-29; A. E. Steinweis, *Studying the Jew: Scholarly Antisemitism in the Third Reich* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press: 2006), pp. 92-122; M. Weinreich, *Hitler's Professors: The Part of Scholarship in Germany's Crime against the Jewish People* (New York, Yiddish Scientific Institute: 1946); J. Noakes, 'The Ivory Tower Under Siege: German Universities under the Third Reich', *Journal of European Studies*, (Vol. 23, No. 4: 1993), pp. 371-407.

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Appendix Two: An Example of Arnold Leese's *Gothic Ripples*.

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No 95. 12th. DECEMBER 1952

JEW AND THE NIGGER MENACE

The Black Menace is developing so rapidly that we think it advisable to bring together some of the evidence that it is being fomented by Jews whose ultimate national political motive is to bring down Aryan civilisation so that it may be replaced by Jewish Money-Power control. The Nigger himself has no instinctive urge for a freedom which he has never known, never having had any conception of such a thing. The Babu class of "educated" Nigger has been absorbing all sorts of humbug about equality and democracy without being able to digest it, and wants to see the doctrines put into practice. The Jew is working overtime on these Babu niggers, who hope to profit from the violence of the masses whom they mislead.

Unesco in 1950 issued a report announcing that "racial discrimination has no scientific foundation in biological fact; mental and temperamental characters of all races are essentially similar". Unesco is simply packed with Jews and should be closed down; the "British" representative on the panel that produced this rubbish was the Jew M. Ginsberg. The Royal Anthropological Society at once expressed its disagreement with the finding. Of the four Chairs of Anthropology in Britain, three are occupied by Jews (Schapiro, Fortes and Gluckman).

All this ensures that no information on a high level about the facts of race are likely to be available for "democracy". So the average white succumbs to the Jewish teaching that he is no better than his "black brother".

In Abyssinia, Jews have always maintained a strong official hold, both before and during the Italian occupation; after the cessation of hostilities, there was a further influx of Jews to occupy important posts under Haile Selassie. These matters were dealt with in *Gothic Ripples* No. 52.

Wherever possible the Jews have made themselves a sort of go-between in countries with large populations of niggers in contact with whites. Here are some examples which should not be tolerated on racial grounds of prudence:—

Roy Welensky, Labour Leader in Northern Rhodesia.
A. B. Cohen, Governor of Uganda from 1951 after being Head of the African Department of our Colonial Office.
Laurence Weston, Crown Counsel in Nigeria, 1952.
M. R. Konvitz, preparing a code of laws for Nigeria, 1952.
A. A. Jose, Radio Malaya's chief news editor to 1952.
S. J. Spingarn, special assistant to Truman from 1950, working for Nigger equality.
J. E. Stokvis, pro-Indonesian M.P. in Holland, who died recently.

Sir Jeremy Raisman, busy on the financial aspects of the Draft Federal Scheme for British Central Africa.
We must not forget to mention the Jew journalists like Sidney Jacobson of the *Sunday Pictorial*, who do all they can to decry racial discrimination, even in marriage.
Are the above appointments wise? We think *not*, judging from results in certain other cases like the following:—
The Supreme Court of South Africa's judgment against Malan's measures to deal with coloured voters was given by five Judges, at least two of which, and prob-

Appendix Three: An example of how Colin Jordan's National Socialist Movement presented 'the Hitler was right' message to the public.

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a vote for the
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vote for alien
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Norman Tebbit MP (second from right), chairman of the Conservative Party, was guest of honour at Waltham Forest Hebrew Congregation's dinner and ball at Chingford Assembly Hall. Also pictured (from left) Rabbi E. Salasnik, the synagogue's minister, Mr N. Compton, chairman of its jubilee committee, and Raymond Berkley, the committee's president