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Many condemn tv claims of local 'pogrom'

By EUGENE PHELAN

THE British television station, Channel 4, has confirmed that it got almost 60 calls from viewers "largely critical" to last week's television programme which included a segment about the Jewish "pogrom" in Limerick back in the early 1900s.

The programme, Witness: A Great Hatred, was a personal account by London-based journalist Simon Sebag Montefiore of the "persecution" of his

Jewish family living in Limerick at the turn of the century, and his assertion that Sinn Fein had co-operated with the Nazis during the Second World War.

Most of the programme followed on the link between Sinn Fein and the Nazis.

The start of the programme featured Limerick and the pogrom of 1904.

Channel 4 said that many of those who complained found that the programme was an unbalanced view of history; it was inaccurate, revisionist.

In the Channel 4 programme, Right to Reply, one of those who complained Patricia Leventon, debated the rights and the wrongs of the programme.

The Limerick Leader, city edition, had two stories on the programme last week. We received some complaints, including calls from Limerick people living in London.

Patricia Leventon, Jewish and Irish, said that she would not dispute that there was some anti-semitism in Ireland as there was across the whole of Europe.

She said that it was wrong to tar the whole nationalist movement, past and present.

She said that it was well known that the IRA made opportunistic links with the Nazis, during the war, but was surprised that the programme implied that a similar Nazi ideology was in the republican movement today.

"Showing this pro-

gramme in the middle of the peace talks seems to me to be irresponsible and likely to stir up further hatred," she stated.

Mr Montefiore said that the timing was important. "It is just because there are peace talks that we are saying, first of all that Sinn Fein must admit what has happened, look at the truth and atone for it. There can be no peace without atonement."

Ms Leventon said that she never found any anti-semitism in Ireland.

"All over Europe at the turn of the century there was plenty of anti-semitism. Obviously the Catholic Church spoke from the pulpit and caused these kind of riots in Limerick," she said.

Channel 4 said that another caller also pointed out that the last pogrom "in the British Isles" was not in Limerick in 1904, but in Wales in 1911.

Mr Montefiore said that while it was "inconvenient history" they could not erase what happened and the links between the IRA and the Nazis.

He stressed that the programme was not saying that the Irish were anti-Semitic people.

However, Ms Leventon felt that English Jews would get the wrong impression and feel Ireland was anti-Semitic.



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Staff pe firmed in t include Ei who has be chief news ex Limerick

Millions hear of Jewish 'pogrom'

By EUGENE PHELAN

MILLIONS of televi-

Pogrom: last week's city edition of the Limerick Leader. (LL)

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