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The Holocaust Did Happen

FORUM

JOHN A. DROBNICKI

Holocaust revisionism is a body of work which attempts to prove that the Holocaust did not happen, that it is a huge hoax perpetrated by the Jews in their quest for world power and to extort money from Germany. The largest purveyor of Holocaust revisionism in the United States is the Institute for Historical Review/Noontide Press, which is under the aegis of the ultra-right-wing Liberty Lobby, run by Willis A. Carto. The IHR holds annual conferences in California and publishes and distributes some of the most famous revisionist titles, including *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, written by Arthur R. Butz, a professor of electrical engineering at Northwestern University.

The Nazis themselves may be thought of as the first Holocaust revisionists, for they tried to camouflage their extermination program behind euphemisms such as "resettlement," "special treatment," and "final solution." During the past two decades, the Holocaust-denial books have become very sophisticated and attempt to appear scholarly, presenting large bibliographies and employing extensive foot-

notes. The reader who is not careful will not realize that the revisionists usually cite each other in their footnotes, as well as distorting the historical record and eliminating whatever does not agree with their pre-determined thesis. For example, all revisionists argue that the Nuremberg trials were a sham and all the testimony there was coerced—therefore, they ignore it. The testimony of the Jews is likewise discarded because they have an interest in maintaining the Big Lie. And on and on.

Many Poles and Roma (Gypsies) lobby to have the suffering of their peoples recognized and included in the term "Holocaust." Although Holocaust revisionists are primarily interested in, and try to disapprove the Jewish Holocaust, they also deny by extension the attempted genocide of the "others"—if the Nazis really weren't all that bad, if there were no gas chambers in the camps in occupied Poland, then not only weren't all those Jews killed, but also not all those Poles, Gypsies, homosexuals, physically handicapped et. al. were killed either.

With each year that passes, fewer and fewer survivors of the Holocaust remain. For the younger generation which has no first-hand knowledge of that event, the Holocaust appears to be

inconceivable—it is for this reason that the revisionists target young people, especially college students.

The best way to combat those who deny the Holocaust is with education, not censorship. The actuality of the genocide is testified to by the victims, survivors, perpetrators, collaborators, and witnesses. We must teach our children that yes, these terrible things did happen to our parents and grandparents in Nazi-occupied Polish territory, and that it is our duty to see that it never happens again to any people anywhere.