

1997

A Response to Mark Weber

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Recommended Citation

Drobnicki, John A., "A Response to Mark Weber" (1997). *CUNY Academic Works*.
http://academicworks.cuny.edu/yc_pubs/29

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“A Response to Mark Weber,” by John A. Drobnicki

I had hesitated to respond to Mr. Weber’s letter, because pulling people into a debate is what the Holocaust revisionists desire. They crave legitimacy and seek to be thought of as “the other side” of a historical debate, when in reality there is *no* debate over the actuality of the Holocaust. Nevertheless, I have chosen to respond to Mr. Weber’s assertions not because I want to debate him, but in order to show the reader how Holocaust deniers manipulate the truth to serve their own ideological agenda.

Mr. Weber, who is editor of the *Journal of Historical Review* (hereafter *JHR*) and, since Mar. 1995, Director of the Institute for Historical Review (IHR), is partially correct in his first point, regarding the use of the lowercase *h*. My co-authors and I should not have made the sweeping generalization that revisionists “always” spell Holocaust with a small *h*. The point we were trying to make was that spelling Holocaust with a lowercase *h* is just one example of the many pejorative ways revisionists discuss that event. For example, both Michael Hoffman, II and Charles E. Weber consistently enclose the word Holocaust in quotation marks, showing their contempt for the term.¹ Each of these writers has also used the lowercase *h*, and Hoffman even described Canadian denier Ernst Zundel as “a true holocaust survivor.”² Revisionist Doug Collins has also used the lowercase *h* on more than one occasion.³ Readers with Internet access need only check the USENET newsgroup *alt.revisionism* to read some of the most vile, anti-Semitic messages concerning the Holocaust and Jews.

Mr. Weber’s own *JHR* has even published an article by British revisionist David Irving where he used the trademark symbol (™) next to the word Holocaust.⁴ Even more repulsive are the activities of Swedish denier Ditlieb Felderer, a one-time member of the *JHR* editorial advisory committee. According to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), “Felderer has been the source of

mailings to leaders to European Jewish communities containing locks of hair and pieces of fat with enclosed letters asking recipients if they could identify the contents as Hungarian Jews gassed in Auschwitz.”⁵ In June 1981, the French magazine *Hara Kiri* ran a fictitious advertisement for *Le pyjama Auschwitz*, showing thin women modeling striped, Auschwitz-type pajamas.⁶ Thus, the effect is the same: repeatedly being insensitive to, and making fun of, the Holocaust, whether by using quotation marks, or upper- or lowercase letters.

Mr. Weber’s assertion that the “IHR is not, and never has been, under the ‘institutional control of the ultra-right Liberty Lobby’” clearly bends the truth. The IHR was controlled and financed by Willis A. Carto, who also controlled the Liberty Lobby and the Legion for the Survival of Freedom (LSF). Carto and the IHR were together from 1978 until mid-1993, when they broke over alleged financial improprieties involving a bequest to the LSF from Jean Farrel, the granddaughter of Thomas Edison.⁷ In order to avoid charges of bias or misrepresentation concerning the relationship of Carto to the IHR, what follows are statements of then-IHR Director Thomas J. Marcellus during the court battle:

I was hired as assistant director, and, since 1981 have served as director of the Institute for Historical Review (hereafter IHR) and The Noontide Press (hereafter NOONTIDE), the two names under which the LEGION [for the Survival of Freedom] does business.... I will show how CARTO has used and abused the LEGION BOARD, officers and employees, using them as puppets to accomplish his own personal ambitions.... In July 1993 CARTO transferred \$100,000 from the LEGION’s account in Switzerland to Liberty Lobby.⁸

The *JHR* has even referred to “IHR founder Willis Carto.”⁹ Mr. Weber himself described the relationship between Carto and the IHR during the legal battle between the two parties:

For years Carto used deceit and fraud to maintain illicit control of the IHR (and Noontide Press), and its parent corporation, the “Legion for the Survival of Freedom, Inc.” Carto was neither an employee, an officer, nor a director of the IHR or the LSF.... No longer able to control it, Carto is now acting as a vengeful enemy of the IHR.¹⁰

It is clear that Willis Carto, who runs the Liberty Lobby, controlled the IHR's parent corporation (the LSF) and thus the IHR itself, until the break in mid-1993. By way of background, let me point out that the article that Weber objects to was based on an MLS project prepared in the Fall of 1992, and which was revised for publication in the Spring of 1993; *Public & Access Services Quarterly* finally published it in early 1995. Thus, when the article was written, Willis Carto was fully in control of the IHR, even though Mr. Weber now tries to downplay their joint history.

Although Mr. Weber claims that "Noontide Press is not a subsidiary of the IHR," and that the *JHR* "has never been published by 'IHR/Noontide,'" the two bodies are virtually indistinguishable from one another, aside from the fact that they have separate post office boxes in Newport Beach, California. Again, from Marcellus:

Since 1986 I have been the director of the Noontide Press and Institute for Historical Review, the company names under which the Legion does business.¹¹

In a letter, written on IHR letterhead, to the editor of Liberty Lobby's tabloid *The Spotlight* complaining about recent articles attacking the IHR, Marcellus and Weber wrote:

Nor is the *Noontide/IHR* inventory being "looted" by "conspirators who seized control of the IHR" as the item claims. The current Great Noontide Book Sale is *our* fourth such sale since 1988.¹²

So although the *JHR* is technically published by the IHR, even Weber has referred to the IHR and Noontide together.

Mr. Weber also claims that "Holocaust revisionists do not 'deny' the terrible persecution and suffering of Europe's Jews during the Second World War." This is typical of present-day revisionists. They say: some Jews died as a result of the War, but there was no systematic

attempt at genocide. Although not every revisionist holds the same exact views, here are just a few revisionist claims from the hundreds of books and articles available:

(1) There were no homicidal gas chambers: “What is clear from any careful technical analysis of the supposed gas chambers for mass extermination is that the ‘Holocaust’ story is absurd.”¹³

(2) Zyklon-B was only used to kill lice: “The purpose of the delousing chambers was to save lives--and that is not denied except by the most passionate Exterminationist. No doubt, many hundreds of thousands of people, possibly millions, including countless Jews, owe their lives to these chambers and the German technology based upon Zyklon-B.”¹⁴

(3) Jews and their sympathizers perpetuate the Holocaust hoax for sympathy and reparations: the title of a book by Austin App accurately sums up this view--*The Six Million Swindle: Blackmailing the German People for Hard Marks With Fabricated Corpses*.¹⁵

(4) The Nuremberg trials were a sham, where confessions were coerced: “The postwar Nuremberg trials were politically motivated proceedings meant more to discredit the leaders of a defeated regime than to establish truth.... The fact that the Holocaust story must rely so heavily on highly dubious testimony evidence and trials staged in a historically unparalleled atmosphere of hysteria, intimidation and propaganda demonstrates its inherent weakness.”¹⁶

(5) The Jews were mistreated by Nazi Germany, but only thousands died (due to wartime conditions), but nowhere near six million: “... the actual number of Jews who died in the German concentration camps might well have been as low as 300,000 or as high as 600,000.”¹⁷

(6) Admiration for Adolf Hitler: Ernst Zundel, using a pseudonym, co-authored *The Hitler We Loved and Why*.¹⁸ Greg Raven, the associate editor of the *JHR*, who became “chief executive officer and corporate President” of the LSF in March 1995,¹⁹ said on GENIE on Mar. 13, 1992:

I have no desire to get into any discussion about whether Jews are superior or inferior to Gentiles, Arabs, etc. My only concern is in going after the facts. As such, I am not interested in defending Adolf Hitler to my dying breath. I will say, however, that he was a great man ... certainly greater than Churchill and FDR put together, and possibly the greatest leader of our century, if not longer. This is not to say that he was perfect, but he [was] about the best thing that could have happened to Germany.²⁰

Mr. Weber writes that my co-authors and I misrepresented “the doctoral thesis of French scholar Henri Roques.” He then goes on to say that Hugh Trevor-Roper “lauded it as ‘an entirely legitimate, scholarly and responsible work of *Quellenkritik* [source critique] on a limited but important subject.’” There are several points to make regarding this. First of all, Trevor-Roper wrote this in a letter to Roques, not in a published review; the letter was subsequently printed in the Sept./Oct. 1993 *JHR*. Secondly, Weber attempts to give the impression that Trevor-Roper has endorsed both Roques and Holocaust revisionism. Weber does not quote from the rest of the letter, where Trevor-Roper said:

You argue that the elimination of Gerstein’s evidence eliminates the alleged gas chambers at Belzec; and your thesis suggests (though it does not explicitly state) that if the gas chambers at Belzec disappear, the others follow them into limbo. However, in your letter, you concede that this is not a necessary consequence: you *believe* that the other did not exist, but you do not claim to have demonstrated it.

I am not competent to argue the matter. It is a long time since I saw the evidence and I am now too preoccupied (and too old) to immerse myself in the controversy....

... On the technical aspects cited by you in your thesis, and by Fred Leuchter, I am incompetent to express a view.

So there I must leave the matter--in suspense--only saying that I regard your thesis as entirely legitimate and very interesting, and that I hope your appeal to the Conseil d’Etat is upheld!²¹

So Trevor-Roper feels that it is valid to investigate and question the validity of Kurt Gerstein’s statement, but he acknowledges that he is not competent to comment on specific revisionist arguments concerning the gas chambers.

Mr. Weber also fails to mention in his letter that Trevor-Roper’s standing in the historical

community has been diminished ever since he proclaimed the “Hitler diaries” to be genuine back in 1983.²² Try as he might, though, Weber cannot change the fact that the University of Nantes revoked the doctorate of Roques, a “retired agronomist and former leader (under the name of Henri Jalin) of the extreme-right *Phalange Francaise*, which was outlawed in 1958,”²³ after it became public that there were several irregularities regarding his dissertation, not the least of which was the fact that it was revisionist.²⁴ Roques’ thesis has been described thusly:

Deliberately ignoring the testimonies of the deportees, the confessions of other SS (such as the confession of Hoess, commandant of Auschwitz from May 1940 until November 1943), the business correspondence of the firms which constructed the great complex of Auschwitz II and furnished the Cyclon B [*sic*], Roques declared that Gerstein’s confessions are “a masterpiece of mental construction intending to prove the existence of homicidal gas chambers,” since the confessions were made spontaneously by an SS officer. The thesis being slanted to demonstrate that Gerstein was only a mythomaniac and his testimony a fable, Roques draws the conclusion that all construction crumbles and that “there are legitimate reasons to deny the existence of homicidal gas chambers!”²⁵

A declaration describing Roques’ thesis as “a pseudo-textual critique, [which] joins in a systematic campaign of misinformation led by the Nazi extreme right,” and which “reveals the absence of scientific investigation,” was signed by over two hundred staff members of the University of Nantes.²⁶

Although he claims that our article’s characterization of the Mel Mermelstein case was misleading, it is Mr. Weber who misleads through omission when he says that Mermelstein’s “campaign against the IHR came to a dramatic end on September 19, 1991, when his \$11 million lawsuit against the IHR was dismissed in Los Angeles Superior Court.” In actuality, there was more than one Mermelstein case. Here are the facts:

(1) In July 1985, the IHR was ordered to pay Mel Mermelstein \$90,000 by the L.A. Superior Court. The IHR was also forced to sign a letter of apology to Mermelstein, which contained

recognition of the fact that Jews were gassed to death at Auschwitz. The letter was signed on July 24, 1985, by G. G. Baumen (attorney for the LSF, IHR, Noontide Press, and Elisabeth Carto) and Mark F. Von Esch (attorney for Liberty Lobby and Willis Carto).²⁷

(2) In 1986, Carto and the IHR sued Mermelstein for defamation, after the latter gave a radio interview. The suit was dropped.²⁸

(3) Mermelstein then filed suit against Carto and the IHR for malicious prosecution. *This* was the lawsuit that was dismissed by the L.A. Superior Court on Sept. 19, 1991. Mermelstein appealed, and was rejected on Oct. 28, 1992.²⁹

Mr. Weber attempted to give the impression that the IHR triumphed over Mr. Mermelstein, when that is clearly only half of the story--although the IHR won the last case, Mermelstein won the first case, was paid \$90,000, and received an apology.

Even though Paul Rassinier, a one-time Communist and then Socialist, *was* a prisoner at both Buchenwald and Dora for being a member of the Resistance, he nevertheless became a Holocaust revisionist after the war. Although this seems like an apparent contradiction, Aimé Bonifas has explained, referring to page numbers in Rassinier's book *The Lie of Ulysses*, that of his 370 days in Dora, "341 of them were spent in a sheltered environment: 264 in the infirmary (*Revier*), thanks to his care packages--he does not hesitate to admit it--and 77 days to the SS Master-Sergeant (pp. 163, 172, 177, 178). 'It was the good life,' he confesses (p. 177). In fact, he became a confidant of the SS."³⁰ Rassinier blamed the excesses that he witnessed in the camps on the kapos, not the SS. Thus, Mr. Weber should not use Rassinier's time in the camps to try to legitimize his unfounded claims, because Rassinier apparently did not see, did not want to see, and/or did not want to admit seeing, anything that would damage the reputation of the SS.

Mr. Weber cites the “support of university professors” in his quest for legitimacy. He neglects to mention that although Arthur Butz has a doctorate, it is in electrical engineering, not history. Robert Faurisson, who is a protégé of Rassinier and has been fined several times for revisionist statements, taught French literature, not history. Even David Irving, who has been accused of distorting documents to serve his own purposes,³¹ does not have a graduate degree in history. Mr. Weber is one of the few Holocaust revisionists who has actually been trained in history--he earned his M.A. in history from Indiana University in 1977.³²

It is clear from the above that Mr. Weber has ever-so-deftly misrepresented the facts in his critique of my article, and has carefully omitted several key points which contradict his assertions. Readers with World Wide Web access who would like to find out more about how Holocaust deniers manipulate the truth, and read detailed rebuttals of their arguments, are directed to the Nizkor Project, at the following URL: <<http://www.almanac.bc.ca>>. The IHR’s Web page is: <<http://www.kaiwan.com/~ihrgreg>>.

NOTES

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1. Michael Hoffman, II, *The Great Holocaust Trial* (Torrance: IHR, 1985); Charles E. Weber, *The "Holocaust": 120 Questions and Answers* (Torrance: IHR, 1983).
 2. Hoffman, 75.
 3. Doug Collins, "The Story Keeps Changing," *JHR* 13 (Nov./Dec. 1993), 11; "Swindler's List," *JHR* 14 (May/June 1994), 11-12.
 4. David Irving, "My Confrontation With Deborah Lipstadt," *JHR* 15 (Jan./Feb. 1995), 29.
 5. Alison B. Carb and Alan M. Schwartz, *Holocaust "Revisionism": A Denial of History. An Update* (New York: ADL, 1986), 10. See the facsimile of a Felderer letter encouraging people to mail hair in Gill Seidel, *The Holocaust Denial: Antisemitism, Racism & The New Right* (Leeds: Beyond the Pale Collective, 1986), 73.
 6. See facsimile in Seidel, 132.
 7. See Alan M. Schwartz (ed.), *Embattled Bigots: A Split in the Ranks of the Holocaust Denial Movement* (New York: ADL, 1994).
 8. "Declaration of Thomas J. Marcellus, December 28, 1993," copy in possession of author; capitals in original. In order to raise money and keep their supporters during their battle with Carto, the IHR sent copies of legal documents to *JHR* subscribers and IHR supporters.
 9. *JHR* 13 (Mar./Apr. 1993), 13.
 10. Mark Weber, "Willis Carto's Campaign Against the Institute for Historical Review," *Christian News*, 25 Apr. 1994, p. 18.
 11. "Declaration of Thomas J. Marcellus, Oct. 17, 1993," copy in possession of author. Included in packet of legal documents sent by the IHR to supporters.
 12. Letter of Marcellus and Weber to *The Spotlight*, 17 Feb. 1994, emphasis added; copy in possession of author. Included in packet of legal documents sent by the IHR to supporters.
 13. Friedrich P. Berg, "The German Delousing Chambers," *JHR* 7 (Spring 1986), 87.
 14. Berg, 87.
 15. Austin J. App, *The Six Million Swindle: Blackmailing the German People for Hard Marks*

With Fabricated Corpses (Takoma Park, MD: Boniface Press, 1974).

16. Mark Weber, "The Nuremberg Trials and the Holocaust," *JHR* 12 (Summer 1992), 201.
17. Carl O. Nordling, "How Many Jews Died in the German Concentration Camps?" *JHR* 11 (Fall 1991), 342.
18. Christof Friedrich [pseud. of Ernst Zundel] and Eric Thomson, *The Hitler We Loved and Why* (Reedy, WV: White Power Publications, 1980).
19. *IHR Update*, no. 2 (July 1995), 2.
20. This electronic message is archived on the IHR's Web page <<http://www.kaiwan.com/~ihrgreg/misc/smear1.html>>, along with Greg Raven's attempt to explain that statement. The message is also available from the Nizkor Project: <<http://www.almanac.bc.ca/cgi-bin/ftp?pl/people/r/raven.greg/raven-on-hitler>>. Ellipsis in original.
21. "British Historian Hugh Trevor-Roper on the Gerstein 'Confessions,' the Roques Thesis, and the Gas Chambers Question," *JHR* 13 (Sept./Oct. 1993), 40-41; emphasis in original.
22. See Charles Hamilton, *The Hitler Diaries: Fakes That Fooled the World* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1991); and Robert Harris, *Selling Hitler: The Story of the Hitler Diaries* (New York: Pantheon, 1986).
23. Randolph L. Braham, "Historical Revisionism and the New Right," in Yehuda Bauer et al. (eds.), *Remembering For the Future: Working Papers and Addenda* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1989), 2:2100.
24. Aaron Breitbart, "Revisionists in Quest of Legitimacy: France Rejects Holocaust Denier's Thesis," *Response* (Aug. 1986), 7; Antony Lerman, "Holocaust Revisionism in France: The Roques Affair," *Patterns of Prejudice* 20 (1986), 34-36; Henry H. Weinberg, "'Revisionism': The Roques Affair," *Midstream* 33 (Apr. 1987), 11-13.
25. Aimé Bonifas, "The French Revisionists and the Myth of Holocauste [*sic*]," in Yehuda Bauer et al. (eds.), *Remembering For the Future: Working Papers and Addenda* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1989), 2:2191.
26. "Declaration of the Nantes University staff members," reprinted in Bonifas, 2192.
27. *New York Times*, 25 July 1985, p. A12; Deborah Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust* (New York: Free Press, 1993), 141; *Mel Mermelstein vs. Institute for Historical Review, et al.*, Superior Court of the State of California for the County of Los Angeles, No. C 356 542, Judgment, 5 Aug.

1985, copy in possession of author; *Statement of Record and Letter of Apology to Mel Mermelstein*, 24 July 1985, copy in possession of author.

28. Lipstadt, 141.

29. “Final Victory in the Mermelstein Case: IHR Prevails in Eleven-Year-Old Legal Battle.” *JHR* 13 (Mar./Apr. 1993), 13.

30. Bonifas, 2189.

31. See Martin Broszat, “Hitler and the Genesis of the ‘Final Solution’: An Assessment of David Irving’s Thesis,” *Yad Vashem Studies* 13 (1979), 73-125; and Eberhard Jäckel, *David Irving’s Hitler: A Faulty History Dissected*, trans. H. David Kirk (Port Angeles, WA: Ben-Simon Publications, 1993).

32. “Mark Weber,” *JHR* 15 (Sept./Oct. 1995), 22.