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Dealing With Internet Hate

BY JOHN A. DROBNICKI

As most people know by now, the Internet is transforming our lives, making information available quickly and more widely disseminating it. However, the Internet has also enabled hate groups to expand and peddle their garbage to a wider audience. Both the web and the USENET newsgroups (which are similar to electronic bulletin boards where people post public messages) offer degrees of anonymity where people can say things electronically that they often would not have the courage to say face-to-face. More than 1,400 of these "problematic" web sites may exist.

This includes many web sites that print (or re-print) anti-Semitic lies, making it readily available and easy to find. Some of this "literature" consists of "classic," of rather infamous, works like the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which is widely available on the web and quoted from no matter how many times it is shown to have been a forgery, as well as allegations of Jewish ritual murder. One such collection of lies and/or half-turns is "The Talmud: A Documented Exposé of Jewish Supremacist Hate Literature," available on the Stormfront web site (which is usually considered to have been the first hate site on the Internet). Another infamous series is "1000 Quotes By and About Jews," available on Radio Islam and (with variations) on many other sites. And, of course, Holocaust-denial flourishes on the net, with "experts" claiming that the Holocaust is either a hoax or greatly exaggerated.

IGNORING OR EXPOSING

There are different schools of thought regarding anti-Semitic and hate materials on the web. Some people say to just ignore it because the person(s) who post it crave attention and delight in irrational arguments, often sending hundreds of newsgroup messages (known as spamming). However, others believe that the hate needs to be exposed in the light, and there are several groups that monitor hate sites on the Internet, among them Hatewatch (www.hatewatch.org). Individuals also have taken it upon themselves to expose and refute the lies of the anti-Semites. One such person is Dr. David Maddison, a research scientist in Australia.

Beginning in July 1998, Dr. Maddison began to post well-researched replies to, and refutations of, these

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Crusade of Maddison

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liars. Specializing in the alleged Talmud "quotes" and the other "1000 Quotes," Maddison began to post messages on USENET (and later established a web site) showing how these "quotes" are often completely fabricated or, at the very least, taken grossly out of context. For example, some people frequently spread around anti-Semitic quotes alleged to have been made by Washington, Jefferson, and Ben Franklin, which have all been shown to be false. Another example of a false quote exposed by Dr. Maddison is alleged to have come from the *Shulchan Aruch*: "A Jew is permitted to rape, cheat and perjure himself; but he must take care that he is not found out, so that Israel may not suffer." As Maddison has pointed out: "Needless to say, it says no such thing." But not everyone has the ability or wherewithal to know that.

Why has Dr. Maddison taken on this crusade? After all, he performs this work in his spare time, and the work involved in preparing his answers is very time-consuming, involving researching the alleged quotation (visiting libraries, borrowing books via interlibrary loan, corresponding with relevant scholars and experts) and writing a cogent response. Maddison felt that the anti-Semite was too often left unchallenged, which could give the impression to non-experts that it must therefore hold some truth, especially when the lies are constantly re-posted and multiply, turning up on other

web sites. Dr. Maddison has written elsewhere that his purpose "is not so much to convince the publishers of this material that they are wrong — that is unlikely — but to publish this material for the benefit of those people, 'fence-sitters,' who may not be sure one way or the other about it.

FROM ANTI-SEMITIC WORKS

Of the 100 "quotes," he has so far refuted/answered over 125, and, in his opinion, about 100 more probably don't need to be formally analyzed since they come from the works of noted anti-Semites like Eustace Mullins, Henry Ford, and Léon de Poncins. He currently receives no outside funding, and is grateful whenever someone volunteers to help answer a few of the "quotes." Nevertheless, he is a very busy man — indeed, a search on *Deja.com*, which archives USENET postings, retrieved over 1,500 messages by Dr. Maddison from their archive. One of his current areas of interest is the claim by many anti-Semites that the modern Jews are not the Biblical Jews but rather are descendants of the Khazars.

Dr. Maddison's web site, which he calls "Talmud Exposure: Response to Anti-Semites' Posting of Talmud 'Quotes' and Other Anti-Semitic Fabrications and Distortions," is available at:

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Cyprus/8815>

Several of his writings are also now available at Hatewatch, one of the leading monitors of hate groups on the Internet. Truly, one man can make a difference.