The Conference of the Persecuted

A Bulwark of Truth and Sanity Against the Enemies of Free Speech

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It was in September 1979, and also here in southern California, that the newly-organized Institute for Historical Review held its first "International Revisionist Conference." That we are meeting here this weekend, nearly 21 years later, and at the dawn of a new century, at this 13th IHR Conference, is not only an achievement, it is a tribute to the dedicated support of so many loyal men and women over the years. Several of those who are here this weekend were also at that first-ever IHR meeting, including Harvey Taylor, a good friend who has attended every single Conference -- as well as four of our speakers: Robert Faurisson, Arthur Butz, Ernst Zündel and John Bennett.

Our meeting this weekend is especially important because it's been nearly six years since the last full-scale IHR Conference, the 12th, in September 1994. Those years have often been very difficult ones, above all because of the great cost, in money, time and manpower, fighting a terrible legal battle caused by the embezzlement of millions of dollars from the IHR and its parent corporation -- a legal fight that, if we had lost, would have meant the end of the Institute.

This is not the time or place to name all those who have made possible, through their generosity and dedication, the Institute's survival. But this evening I do want to publicly express my appreciation for one particular person: Greg Raven, our MC. For some five years, often under very trying conditions, it was largely he and I alone who held the fort, keeping the IHR alive.

Now, I am glad to say, the Institute has weathered the terrible storm, and, thanks to the commitment of good friends and supporters -- including many of those here this weekend -- we are once again on solid ground, at last repairing and rebuilding. One expression of that endurance is the return to the staff of Ted O'Keefe, who is playing a major role in forging a revitalized IHR.
This get-together could well be called "the Conference of the Persecuted." Six of our speakers this weekend have been punished as "thought criminals" -- with imprisonment, court-ordered fines, or travel bans -- for publicly expressing dissident views on history. Several of the other speakers this weekend have suffered in their careers for likewise expressing views that run contrary to prevailing dogmas. Books written by six or seven of our speakers, and at least one or two attendees, have been banned, burned, or otherwise suppressed.

I, for one, feel privileged to stand together with men and women of such courage and idealism. These individuals have been victims of an awesome international power that, during the past 20th century, has greatly increased its impact and influence in the world.

We revisionists are often accused of "rewriting" history, and for this reason the term "revisionism" is frequently used in the media, often by writers who should know better, as a synonym for "historical distortion," or for deliberately misleading historical writing. In keeping with the definition of the term revisionism, and its Latin root, re-videre, that is, to "look again," we are dedicated, not to "rewriting" the past, but simply to promoting history that is written and presented in accord with facts and sound perspective.

To anyone who gives any real independent thought to the matter, it is obvious that the prevailing or official history has itself undergone a tremendous rewriting over the past 50-60 years. There is, of course, no more obvious expression of this than the social-cultural role that has come to be played by what is called "the Holocaust" -- a term that did not even come into popular usage until the 1970s.

In this drastic re-writing of history, the fate and role of Jews is a paramount consideration. Michael Berenbaum, one-time Research Director of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, and a Georgetown University theology professor, put it this way several years ago: "The Holocaust was [once] regarded as a side story of the much larger story of World War II. Now one thinks of World War II as a background story and the Holocaust as a foreground story." (note 1)

We are often asked why we seem obsessed with "the Holocaust." The answer is very simple. As any child can easily observe, it is not revisionists or the IHR who are fixated on the fate -- 55 or 60 years ago -- of a small minority of the population of a foreign continent. It is, rather, our own political, social and intellectual leaders who have made the fate of Europe's Jews during World War II a central icon of our age. We deal with the Holocaust as we do because it has come to play a major, even crucial role in our society.

If anyone in 1950 or even 1960 had predicted that by the end of this century political leaders of the United States and other major countries, even Germany, would routinely be honoring something called "the Holocaust" or "the Shoah," he would have been dismissed as delusional. But so swiftly and drastically have things changed that by 1992
Israeli Holocaust historian Yehuda Bauer, a professor at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, was moved to declare: (note 2)

Whether presented authentically or inauthentically, in accordance with the historical facts or in contradiction to them, with empathy and understanding or as monumental kitsch, the Holocaust has become a ruling symbol of our culture... Hardly a month goes by without a new TV production, a new film, a new drama, new books, prose or poetry, dealing with the subject, and the flood is increasing rather than abating.

Since 1993 we have even had, in Washington, DC, an official, taxpayer-funded United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, run by a federal government agency, the United States Holocaust Memorial Council -- a mighty expression of, and a monument to, Jewish power. (note 3) There is no comparable US museum dedicated, for example, to the vastly greater numbers of victims of Soviet tyranny, or to the victims of slavery.

Jewish scholar and rabbi Michael Goldberg, in his book Why Should Jews Survive?, wrote with insight about what he calls "the Holocaust cult," a cult with "its own tenets of faith, rites and shrines." (note 4) No less a figure than Abraham Foxman, national director of the Zionist Anti-Defamation League, has affirmed the iconic, even religious character of this cult. In a 1994 issue of the ADL newsletter, Foxman wrote: "The Holocaust is a singular event. It is not simply one example of genocide but a near successful attempt on the life of God's chosen children and thus, on God himself." (note 5) When one starts talking like this, one is no longer dealing with history, but rather has crossed over into dogmatic mysticism.

No comparable attention is given to the tens of millions of other World War II victims, including, for example, the many millions of Chinese who perished in the war. Largely forgotten in this cult of the Holocaust have been the tens of millions of victims of America's great wartime ally, Stalinist Russia, along with the tens of millions of victims of China's Maoist regime, as well as the 12 to 14 million Germans, victims of the flight and expulsion of 1944-1949, of whom some two million lost their lives.

We are expected to look at US and world history from what, in truth, is a Jewish perspective.

One can tell the real values and priorities of a society by what it prohibits. As several of those here in this room this evening can attest from personal experience, what our society -- and by this I mean the United States and most of Europe, as well as Japan -- forbids is anything deemed to be anti-Semitic. What is particularly prohibited in our "new world order" is any questioning or playing down of what has become the most sacred icon of our age -- the Jewish "Holocaust" or "Shoah."

From the late 1940s until the 1970s, the official, or at least prevailing view was that the dreadful Nazi regime was more or less foisted on the basically decent people of Germany, Austria, and other European countries by Hitler and his evil henchmen.
However, since the late 1970s, and especially during the past decade, this has changed drastically. Now the prevailing, socially-sanctioned view is that Nazism (or even less accurately, "fascism") -- by which we are supposed to understand, above all, the harsh suppression of Europe's Jews in the 1930s and 1940s -- was supported, or at least passively tolerated, by nearly the entire Western world.

The supposed "guilt" for what is often characterized as the most evil deed in history is now routinely ascribed to, not only the great majority of Germans (a view most outspokenly presented by Jewish academic Daniel Goldhagen in his hateful book *Hitler's Willing Executioners*) but to virtually all of non-Jewish humanity. Entire nations, we are now told, must acknowledge a collective responsibility, even a collective guilt or complicity, for this allegedly greatest of all human crimes. Excepting only a small number of such "righteous gentiles" as Oskar Schindler, the Germans, the Poles, the Hungarians, the Ukrainians, the French, and so forth, are held to be historically responsible for the "Shoah." In one of the most amazing re-writings of history, even Pope Pius XII and the leadership of the Roman Catholic Church are held to share in this common guilt.

History or historiography is, of course, an academic pursuit, a specialized field of scholarship. But it is also much more than that. How a society views history both reflects and greatly helps to determine its essential values and priorities. How we view the past is crucially important in determining how we view ourselves, our place in the world, and, more important, our future as a people or society. As Oswald Spengler put it "history lessons and the political education of the people are one and the same."

In this sense, "history" is not and cannot be "neutral." Different groups understandably look at the past from very different perspectives. In a valuable book published some years ago, *America Revised*, historian Frances Fitzgerald explained not only how our common perspective on American history has changed radically over the past half century, but how it is impossible to portray American history in a way that is "positive" and coherent for all of America's diverse population groups. (note 6)

The history books now being produced for use in American colleges and universities both reflect and help to shape the "politically correct" spirit of our age. Typical is a new book by Cornell University history professor Richard Polenberg, *The Era Of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, 1933-1945. (note 7) Polenberg praises Roosevelt for his supposed commitment to moral principles and his "pragmatism." But he also criticizes FDR for his failure to do more "to advance the cause of racial justice," and for his wartime internment of West Coast Japanese. And, of course, Polenberg subjects Roosevelt to special criticism for his not doing more on behalf of Europe's Jews. While the book devotes five pages to what the index calls "Jews, government response to Holocaust," it contains just a single, neutral mention, and only in passing, to Stalin -- Roosevelt's important wartime ally. Readers of this all-too-typical book can easily be forgiven for failing to appreciate the crucially important historical role played at the time by Stalin and Soviet Russia. Polenberg similarly ignores Roosevelt's well-documented record of lying on a massive and routine scale to the American public, his covert, unconstitutional
war-mongering, his friendship with the Soviet dictator, or the massive US material and military support for the Soviet war machine.

During the past 20th century, we have witnessed an unbelievably enormous increase in Jewish power and influence everywhere in the world. It was in 1896 that Theodor Herzl, the founder of the modern Zionist movement, published his seminal book *Der Judenstaat* ("The Jewish State"), in which he argued that Jews around the world constitute a Volk, that is, a people or nationality, with interests different than those of the non-Jews among whom they live. (Consistent with that, Israeli political figures and Jewish community leaders in the United States routinely speak of "the Jewish people." ) And a year later, in 1897, Herzl convened the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland. Five decades later -- in May 1948 -- the Zionist state of Israel was proclaimed in Palestine. Today, armed even with nuclear weapons, Israel is one of the world's most important military powers. What an amazing expression of resolve, determination and power that achievement represents!

Just how important is this Jewish power and influence today? Well, as early as 1968 the renowned drama critic Walter Kerr could declare in *The New York Times*: (note 8)

What has happened since World War II is that the American sensibility has become part Jewish, perhaps as much Jewish as anything else ... The literate American mind has come in some measure to think Jewishly. It has been taught to, and it was ready to. After the entertainers and novelists came the Jewish critics, politicians and theologians. Critics and politicians and theologians are by profession molders; they form ways of seeing.

As accurate as those words were when they were written more than 30 years ago, they are vastly more true today. In a book published in 1995, *Jews and the New American Scene*, two well-known Jewish writers, Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab, noted: (note 9)

During the last three decades Jews [in the United States] have made up 50 percent of the top two hundred intellectuals ... 20 percent of professors at the leading universities ... 40 percent of partners in the leading law firms in New York and Washington ... 59 percent of the directors, writers, and producers of the 50 top-grossing motion pictures from 1965 to 1982, and 58 percent of directors, writers, and producers in two or more primetime television series.

And even more recently, the prominent French Jewish writer Alain Finkielkraut, writing in late 1998 in the prestigious Paris daily *Le Monde*, had this to say: (note 10)

Ah, how sweet it is to be Jewish at the end of this 20th century! We are no longer History's accused, but its darlings. The spirit of the times loves, honors, and defends us, watches over our interests; it even needs our imprimatur. Journalists draw up ruthless
indictments against all that Europe still has in the way of Nazi collaborators or those
nostalgic for the Nazi era. Churches repent, states do penance ...

Consistent with this, Jewish power enforces a pervasive double standard in our political
and cultural life. While Jews are encouraged to cultivate and promote their peoplehood
and particular group interests, Westerners are expected to accept, even embrace, their
own collective racial-cultural dispossession. Thus, while Jewish leaders routinely
express alarm that so many Jews are marrying non-Jews, a comparable attitude if
expressed by non-Jews is swiftly denounced as "racist." (Just recently, for example, a
professor at Bar-Ilan University in Israel bluntly declared that intermarriage "violates the
most basic norms of Judaism [and] threatens Jewish survival.") (note 11)

Benjamin Netanyahu, until recently Israel's prime minister, just last February addressed
a gathering of nearly a thousand Jews here in southern California, in which he said: "If
Israel had not come into existence after World War II then I am certain the Jewish race
wouldn't have survived." (note 12) The Israeli leader went on to exhort his audience: "I
stand before you and say you must strengthen your commitment to Israel. You must
become leaders and stand up as Jews. We must be proud of our past to be confident of
our future." Similarly forthright appeals by non-Jews to racial-ethnic pride are, of course,
routinely condemned as "racist" or "neo-Nazi." As a matter of basic state policy, Israel
actively encourages immigration of Jews -- defined by ancestry -- from around the
world, while at the same time discouraging settlement by non-Jews, even forbidding
immigration of non-Jews who were born in what is now Israel.

Can this awesome Jewish power become any greater than it already is? Unfortunately,
there are signs that the situation can get even worse.

During the recent libel trial in London, David Irving performed a great public service by
presenting to the world details of just how international Jewish organizations work
together to silence and ruin those who, like Irving, are perceived, because of their
writings, to threaten Jewish interests. One of the most ominous consequences of Judge
Gray's April 11 ruling in the Irving-Lipstadt trial, I think, is that it has greatly emboldened
these powerful enemies of free speech, strengthening their resolve to destroy their
intellectual adversaries. For example, one high-level Zionist official, in the aftermath of
the ruling, called for what amounts to a worldwide ban on travel by those who dispute
Holocaust extermination claims. Israel's ambassador to Britain, Dror Zeigerman, called
on Australia and other countries to bar Irving and "other members of the Holocaust
denial movement." (note 13)

The recent Irving-Lipstadt trial also showed, once again and with clarity, that behind this
ruthless international Jewish campaign is a deep-seated, implacable hatred. At a recent
meeting in Los Angeles, Deborah Lipstadt herself called David Irving "a contemporary
Amalek," referring to the traditional biblical foe of the Jews. (note 14) Similarly, in an
essay about the trial distributed worldwide by a major Jewish news agency, a Jewish
academic who teaches at Gratz College near Philadelphia wrote: "Deborah Lipstadt's
work reminds us, as the Torah does in its passage about Amalek, of the importance of memory. In my opinion, it is David Irving and his ilk who should beware."

For devout Jews, such words are very serious. According to the Torah, the Jewish god called on the ancient Hebrews to "smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and women, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." Accordingly, we are told, the early Jews "utterly destroy all the people with the edge of the sword." Even today, Jews are admonished never to forget their emblematic enemy, and to wage "war with Amalek from generation to generation" -- that is, forever. The obvious inference here is that Irving and "his ilk" deserve to be killed.

In this same spirit, a high-ranking Israeli government official publicly suggested, in the wake of Judge Gray's April 11 ruling, that those whom he calls "Holocaust deniers" deserve to be put to death. Rabbi Michael Melchior, Israel's Minister "for Israeli Society and World Jewish Communities," said that Judge Gray's ruling "delivered the message that Holocaust deniers should be regarded alongside the worst of the Nazis." As the world knows, of course, "the worst of the Nazis" were shot or hanged.

The Institute for Historical Review and our supporters openly declare our defiance of the ADL, the Simon Wiesenthal Center, the World Jewish Congress, and so forth -- and all their non-Jewish helpers. Against their power the IHR stands, and will continue to stand, as a beacon and a bulwark, not only for truth and reason in understanding the past, but for sanity in tackling the challenges of the future.

While we are confident that the march of revisionist scholarship is ultimately unstoppable, we are also encouraged by the knowledge that our adversaries' power is artificial and unrooted. It is built on an inherently unstable foundation of deceit and hypocrisy -- something that is acknowledged, if only indirectly, by their constant expressions of anxiety that their power can and may be suddenly swept away.

To stand against this power is often thankless and disheartening work, but it is absolutely necessary. Our adversaries are enemies not only of freedom of speech and free historical inquiry, they also strive relentlessly to belittle and break down the cultural, religious, racial and ethnic integrity and cohesion of all groups other than their own. And because it attacks traits of our being that make us human, this insidious power harms all of non-Jewish humanity.

Exposing this insidious power -- in its many manifestations -- will continue to be a major task of the IHR. In this new century as well, we pledge to carry on -- with greater clarity and sense of purpose than ever -- our educational work of truth in history, for the sake not only of our own nation and heritage, but for all humanity.

Notes


found that Jews are effectively the single most influential ethnic or religious group in American political life. According to the study, which was sponsored by the American Jewish Congress, Jews contribute to political parties disproportionately to their numbers in the US population: Jews give more than half the money collected by the Democratic Party and up to a quarter of Republican funds. K. Sawyer, "Jews Cautioned on Narrow Issues," The Washington Post, March 6, 1985, p. A5.


"...Policy recently handed down by the Conservative [Jewish] movement's rabbinical authorities" holds that "Judaism has, from its earliest roots, been concerned about the issue of intermarriage. Statements found in early sources are unequivocal in their prohibition of intermarriage." Fears that sharing food and drink with non-Jews could lead to intermarriage prompted prohibitions against drinking the wine of non-Jews or eating their bread. Source: E. Gootman, "Conservative Jewry...," Forward (New York), Oct. 16, 1998, pp. 1, 13.


15. Rela Mintz Geffen, "First Person FOD (Friend of Deborah) exits trial believing Irving is one to 'beware',' Jewish Telegraphic Agency, March 21, 2000.


About the Author

Mark Weber, Director of the Institute for Historical Review and editor of the IHR’s Journal of Historical Review, was born in 1951 in Portland, Oregon, where he was also raised. He studied at the University of Illinois (Chicago), the University of Munich (Germany), and Portland State University, from where he received a Bachelor’s degree in history (with high honors). He did graduate work in history at Indiana University (Bloomington), where he served as a history instructor and received a Master’s degree in European history in 1977. In March 1988 he testified for five days in Toronto District Court as an expert witness on the “Final Solution” and the Holocaust issue. He has worked full time for the IHR since January 1991.

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