


*Rafael Medoff & Bat-Ami Zucker*



# **BREAKING THE RULES**

**Violations of Academic  
Standards in the Debate  
over FDR's Response to  
the Holocaust**



## About the Authors

Dr. Rafael Medoff is founding director of The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies. His most recent book is *FDR and the Holocaust: A Breach of Faith*.

Dr. Bat-Ami Zucker is Professor of History at Bar-Ilan University. Her books include *In Search of Refuge: Jews and U.S. Consuls in Nazi Germany 1933-1941*.

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Sal Amendola; layout and  
typography by Richard Sheinaus.*

## **The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies**

1200 G St. NW - Suite 800  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
202-434-8994

[www.WymanInstitute.org](http://www.WymanInstitute.org)

## Breaking the Rules

Scholarly research, publishing, and discourse proceed according to generally-accepted rules of professional behavior. Adherence to these standards ensures the integrity of scholarship as well as the credibility of scholars in the eyes of the general public.

What do these standards entail? For authors, they mean—at a minimum—that documents should be quoted accurately; evidence should not be suppressed, regardless of whether it accords with the author’s perspective; and statements derived from the work of others should include proper attribution. For editors, it means publishing only those essays that pass peer review; assigning books for review to qualified scholars; and disqualifying potential reviewers who are known to be biased. For history museums, it means making corrections when they are presented with evidence of errors in their exhibits, and resisting pressure to make changes for reasons other than historical accuracy.

These and related obligations have been codified by the American Historical Association in two lengthy statements defining the professional and ethical responsibilities of historians and museums, the *Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct* and the *Statement on Standards for Museum Exhibits Dealing with Historical Subjects*. These are the guidelines to which the scholarly community expects its members to adhere.

These standards have been violated in a number of books and articles written since the mid-1990s in defense of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s response to the Holocaust. The first author in this group was Richard H. Levy, a retired nuclear engineer, who wrote articles claiming it was

impossible for Allied planes to reach Auschwitz. He was soon joined by William J. vanden Heuvel, an attorney who was a founder and longtime president of the Franklin & Eleanor Roosevelt Institute; he argued in various articles and lectures that the only way to help the Jews was to win the war. The first-book length defense of America’s response to the Holocaust was authored in 1997 by William Rubinstein, a scholar of British economic elites. His book, *The Myth of Rescue*, asserted that “no Jew who perished in the Holocaust could have been saved by any action which the Allies could have taken...” Robert Rosen, a divorce attorney, authored a book with a similar thesis, in 2006, called *Saving the Jews*.

Several well known historians whose area of expertise lies elsewhere, such as Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. (an expert on the New Deal) and Gerhard Weinberg (a World War II expert), also occasionally authored strongly-worded defenses of Roosevelt’s Holocaust record.

Most recently, a mainstream Holocaust historian, Richard Breitman, coauthored a book, *FDR and the Jews*, which argued that President Roosevelt tried his best to help the Jews and succeeded in rescuing many. Prof. Breitman’s book garnered significant attention from the news media and reviewers in 2013-2014.

Serious scholars can, and do, disagree regarding aspects of the Roosevelt administration’s response to the Holocaust. That is not the focus of this essay. Our concern is the integrity of the rules that the academic community has established to govern the writing and teaching of history.

## I. ALTERING QUOTATIONS

### 1. *The Award That Never Was*

The opening scene of *FDR and the Jews*, by Professors Richard Breitman and Allan Lichtman, dramatically presented FDR's elderly mother, Sara Roosevelt, just "four months before her death," addressing a Jewish women's group. Breitman and Lichtman informed their readers that a Jewish organization once gave Mrs. Roosevelt an award for "service to the Jewish people." They characterized this information as evidence that "Franklin's parents instilled in him religious tolerance..." Such an award demonstrated that FDR's parents imparted to him "the wise counsel needed to escape the anti-Semitism that was so common among upper-class Protestants."

Breitman and Lichtman called the award that Mrs. Roosevelt received "the Einstein Medal for lifetime humanitarian service to the Jewish people." Evidently their point was that an award from Jews for a "lifetime" of "service to the Jewish people" is proof of Sara Roosevelt's philosemitism--and, by extension, evidence that the future president was inculcated with affection for the Jewish people.

But the sources cited by Breitman and Lichtman actually said otherwise.

One source, a book of correspondence between Sara Roosevelt and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, stated that the award was called "the Einstein Medal for Humanitarianism," and was given in honor of her "broad sympathy and activities in elevating the conditions of all people throughout the world who suffer from poverty, oppression, and hatred." Breitman and Lichtman's other source, a news article in the *New York Times* in 1938, reported that the award was given to Mrs. Roosevelt "in recognition of 'a lifetime of devoted service to every communal cause in the country.'" Neither the book nor the *Times* mentioned anything about Mrs. Roosevelt's supposed service "to the Jewish people."

Remarkably, Prof. Breitman himself wrote in his 1987 book: "The president's mother was anti-Semitic..." What caused him to so drastically change his position from his 1987 assessment? Why did Breitman and Lichtman misrepresent the name and nature of the award that Mrs. Roosevelt received? That remains a mystery; they have declined to respond to questions about it.<sup>1</sup>

One might legitimately argue that the views of a president's mother are not relevant, and therefore it does not matter if Sara Roosevelt was antisemitic or philosemitic or somewhere in between. Professors Breitman and Lichtman evidently feel

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Breitman and Alan M. Kraut, *American Refugee Policy and European Jewry, 1933-1945* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987), p.245; Richard Breitman and Allan J. Lichtman, *FDR and the Jews* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), pp.8, 245; Rafael Medoff email to Richard Breitman and Allan Lichtman, 11 November 2013; Breitman did not reply. In an email on 18 November 2013, Lichtman stated that he would not respond to questions about their sources.

In their source notes, Breitman and Lichtman thanked one Richard J. Garfunkel as the source for their information about Sara Roosevelt. Garfunkel is not a historian; he is the former host of a weekly radio show in New Rochelle, NY, who has described himself as "a collector of FDR memorabilia for over 50 years," and the owner of "over 5,000 pieces, that include buttons, books, pictures, campaign literature and ephemera of every imaginable type." Breitman and Lichtman, p.332, n.1; for Garfunkel's self-description, see <http://www.richardjgarfunkel.com/2005/05/15/warm-springs-and-fdr-the-television-production-2005/>

otherwise, since they chose to make Mrs. Roosevelt's alleged philosemitism the opening scene of their book, and they presented it as evidence that she influenced FDR to feel positively about Jews. Once they chose to make it a central issue, they should be prepared to defend their claim--and to explain Prof. Breitman's reversal from his 1987 position.

## 2. *Censoring Harold Ickes*

Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes was one of the few members of Roosevelt's cabinet who took a serious interest in the Nazi persecution of the Jews. According to Breitman and Lichtman in *FDR and the Jews*, in 1938 "FDR authorized Ickes to deliver an address on the CBS radio network blasting countries persecuting Jews. Ickes scheduled the speech for April 3, the fiftieth anniversary of the Chicago-based *Daily Jewish Courier*."

Breitman and Lichtman stated that Secretary of State Cordell Hull, seeing a draft of the speech, wanted Ickes to delete "some specific references to fascism and current dictators." Ickes then "went directly to FDR, who said criticizing fascism was fine." As a result, Ickes needed to make only "a few minor changes," and those changes did not significantly affect the content of the speech.

In their source notes, Breitman and Lichtman wrote that their source for this episode was a pair of entries in the unpublished version of Ickes' diary, which is held by the Library of Congress. But an examination of those entries reveals that Breitman and Lichtman misrepresented what the diary states, and altered the wording in the diary's key sentence about this episode.

To begin with, it was misleading for Breitman and Lichtman to state that FDR "authorized" the speech and Ickes then "scheduled" it. That made it

sound as if it was the president who came up with the idea for Ickes to give such a speech, as a way of speaking out for the Jews. In fact, Ickes wrote in his diary that he was the one who "accepted" an invitation to speak at a celebration of the *Jewish Courier's* fiftieth anniversary. The diary indicates that it was Ickes' idea, not Roosevelt's, to speak out about the persecution of the Jews.

Second, the disputed phrases in the draft of the speech were not just about "fascism" generally, as Breitman and Lichtman asserted. According to the diary, President Roosevelt told Ickes that Secretary Hull wanted to "cut out the reference that I [Ickes] had made to Naziism [*sic*] as well as references I had to current dictators." FDR then said to Ickes that he wanted him "to make Cordell happy." Later in the entry, Ickes indicated that the "current dictators" to whom he had intended to refer were "Hitler and Mussolini." Thus we see that both Roosevelt and Hull objected to any mention of Hitler, Mussolini, or Nazism. Ickes was permitted by the president to refer to fascism only in a general way. Hull even insisted that one reference to the term "fascist" be removed, lest it be seen as implicitly referring to Mussolini and thereby harm U.S.-Italian relations.

By deleting the word "Nazism" from Roosevelt's remarks to Ickes, Breitman and Lichtman in effect altered FDR's words and intentions. In reality, Roosevelt said (according to Ickes) that Ickes should not mention Nazism; but Breitman and Lichtman removed the word Nazism from the discussion. Then they went one step further, making it appear as if Roosevelt fully backed Ickes' version of the speech--when in fact, Roosevelt backed Hull in demanding the removal of references to Nazism, Hitler, and Mussolini.

## 3. *Jews Against Immigration?*

In the wake of the November 1938 Kristallnacht pogrom, the Roosevelt administration announced that there was no room to admit more refugees under that year's German quota. The British government then made a remarkable offer to the U.S.: it was willing to have the unused places from the British quota transferred to German Jews. The British quota was 65,721--more than twice the size of the German quota--and only 3,365 of those places had been used in 1938.

The Roosevelt administration rejected the offer. Here's how Breitman and Lichtman paraphrased the rejection: "[Undersecretary of State Sumner] Welles said [to the British] that many American Jews opposed a risky attempt to change the German quota."

Paraphrased that way, Welles' position seems reasonable. After all, if "many" American Jews themselves were against attempting to transfer British quota places to German Jews, who could blame the Roosevelt administration for turning down the offer? And the position that was (supposedly) taken by those American Jews seems reasonable, too: because if such an attempt was "risky" (i.e. it might provoke a backlash), who could blame Jews for being against it?

But Breitman and Lichtman had changed the wording of the document on which their assertion was based. Their source was Arthur Morse's 1968 book, *While Six Million Died*. Morse, however, did not merely paraphrase Welles--he quoted Welles' actual words. Here is how Welles himself characterized what he said to the British: "I added that it was my very strong impression that the responsible leaders among American Jews would be the first to urge that no change in

the present quota for German Jews be made."<sup>2</sup>

Note the discrepancies between the two accounts. The alleged opposition did not emanate from "many American Jews," as Breitman and Lichtman claimed. Rather, Welles had referred specifically to those in the Jewish leadership whom he considered "responsible"--in other words, those who agreed with him. Moreover, Welles was merely speculating; the British proposal was never actually presented to Jewish leaders for their consideration. Welles may have been correct that some Jewish leaders would have felt that asking Congress to act on the surplus British quota places was too risky; or it may be that Jewish leaders would have supported such a proposal if it had the endorsement of the president. But there is no way to know.

The problem here is twofold. First, Breitman and Lichtman changed Welles' phrase "responsible leaders among American Jews" to read "many American Jews," thereby making Jewish opposition appear more substantial than Welles himself had claimed. Second, Breitman and Lichtman added the term "risky" and falsely attributed it to Welles, thereby making the Jewish leaders' alleged position seem more reasonable.

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Scholars can debate the extent of antisemitism within President Roosevelt's family, or the degree to which FDR was concerned about the plight of German Jews, or the attitudes of American Jews regarding immigration. That is not our intention here. Our concern is the violation of accepted rules concerning the use of historical documents. The American

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<sup>2</sup> Breitman and Lichtman, p.117. Their footnote cited Morse, pp.343-44, but that must have been a typographical error, because the Welles statement appears on p.244 of Morse.

Historical Association's *Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct* warns historians against "false or erroneous use of evidence." (Article 3) Altering the wording of documents is not consistent with the AHA's guidelines for appropriate conduct by historians.

## II. MISREPRESENTING DOCUMENTS

### 1. *The Warning That Never Was*

Many readers of the *New York Times* must have been surprised to learn from a page 3 news article on April 22, 2004, that the conventional view that FDR was not seriously concerned about Hitler's plan to persecute European Jewry was, in fact, all wrong. "*Signs that Roosevelt was concerned about Hitler's plan early on,*" the pull-out quote announced.

The article, by *Times* correspondent Neil Lewis, focused on the diaries of the late diplomat and scholar James G. McDonald. The article featured quotes from two historians at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Severin Hochberg and the aforementioned Richard Breitman, who at the time were editing the McDonald diaries for publication. In their comments, Hochberg and Breitman focused on a diary entry from May 1, 1933. According to the *Times* article, that entry described how McDonald, having just returned from Nazi Germany, told FDR about the plight of the Jews. The president "seemed deeply concerned and said he wanted to find a way to send a warning message to the German people over the head of Hitler," the article asserted.

Prof. Hochberg was then quoted as saying that "this picture is very different from the claim that [President Roosevelt] was indifferent to the fate of the Jews." Breitman later used almost identical language about FDR not being "indifferent" in the book *Advocate for the Doomed* (the first volume of the McDonald diaries that he and Hochberg edited, which was published in 2007). Breitman wrote there: "In this diary Roosevelt is not the indifferent figure depicted in some of the scholarly literature about America and the Holocaust." (p.804)

The U.S. Holocaust Museum reinforced this narrative in its *James G. McDonald Calendar*: it used an excerpt from that May 1 entry about FDR's "warning message to Hitler" as one of the featured monthly quotations.

The diary excerpt that appeared in the *New York Times*, and in the museum's calendar, gave the impression that Roosevelt had asked McDonald about the plight of German Jews, and had intended to send a "warning message" about the persecutions.

But when the diaries were subsequently published, it turned out that the May 1 entry told a very different story. McDonald actually wrote that what "deeply interested" President Roosevelt was Reichsbank president Hjalmar Schacht, not the plight of the Jews. FDR wanted to know from McDonald "what sort of a person [Schacht] was." In fact, McDonald's long diary entry describing his conversation with the president (occupying almost three full pages in the published diaries), did not mention German Jews even once.

The "warning message" about German Jewry which Breitman, Hochberg, and the museum's calendar designers claimed FDR was going to send, was never sent. The message to which Roosevelt referred in his conversation with McDonald had

nothing to do with the Jews. He and McDonald were actually discussing the military situation in Europe and two upcoming conferences on disarmament and the world economic order. Two weeks after the McDonald-Roosevelt meeting, the president did send out a message--but it was not about the Jews. On May 16, 1933, FDR sent identical telegrams to the 54 countries represented at the disarmament and economic conferences, outlining America's hopes for peace and progress.

Probably not too many readers of that *New York Times* article in 2004 later read the published diaries and discovered the truth about the May 1 entry. Even the *Times* correspondent himself may not have seen the full diary entry before writing his article. But Professors Breitman and Hochberg must have known the actual contents of the May 1 entry, since they were preparing it for publication--and they were the only ones allowed access to the McDonald diaries. (The original, unedited diaries were given to the museum in 2003, yet to this day are closed to the public). It appears that when Breitman and Hochberg discussed the entry with the *Times* reporter, they presented it to him as something different than what it really was; they cited it as evidence of FDR's "concern" about German Jewry, when it was nothing of the sort.

(Further evidence that the narrative they presented to the *Times* was erroneous is the fact that nine years later, Prof. Breitman himself quietly reversed his position on the May 1 entry. However, he has never even acknowledged his original error. The reversal is described on p.25 of this essay.)

## **2. Antisemitism & Diplomacy**

In 1955, the State Department published the transcripts of President Roosevelt's conference with Josef

Stalin and Winston Churchill at Yalta, held ten years earlier. Two passages, however, were censored. One of them, according to *U.S. News and World Report*, involved an exchange in which FDR mentioned he would soon be seeing Saudi Arabia's king, Ibn Saud. Stalin asked Roosevelt if he intended to make any concessions to the king. "The President replied," according to the report, "that there was only one concession he thought he might offer and that was to give him the six million Jews in the United States." Many years later, the *U.S. News* account was confirmed, in the 1973 autobiography of Charles E. Bohlen, the State Department official who was FDR's translator and stenographer at the Yalta conference.

In *FDR and the Jews*, Breitman and Lichtman justified Roosevelt's remark to Stalin. They asserted that Roosevelt "was using anti-Semitism as an ice-breaker with Stalin." And after all, who could object to breaking the ice and thereby perhaps advancing the cause of world peace?

The problem with their claim, however, is that an "ice-breaker" is, by definition, something that is done at the *beginning* of a conversation, in order to facilitate a more open discussion. Yet Roosevelt did not make his 'joke' about Jews until the next-to-last day of the week-long Yalta conference. If Breitman and Lichtman did not check what day the remark was made, prior to declaring their assessment of it, that would represent a surprising degree of carelessness. If they were aware which day the remark was made, but withheld that information in order to be able to characterize FDR's remark as an "ice-breaker," that would appear to



constitute a significant violation of professional ethics.<sup>3</sup>

Remarkably, they did it twice. Describing a meeting between Roosevelt and a Soviet official at the White House in 1942, they claimed that there, too, antisemitism was used as an “ice-breaker.” That conversation took place on May 29, 1942, between FDR, his adviser Harry Hopkins, and Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov. At one point, Hopkins remarked that the American public’s perception of Soviet Communists had been negatively affected by the presence in the American Communist Party of what he called “largely disgruntled, frustrated, ineffectual, and vociferous people—including a comparatively high proportion of distinctly unsympathetic Jews.” The translator at the meeting, Harvard University professor Samuel H. Cross, stated in the transcript: “On this the President commented that he was far from anti-Semitic, as everyone knew, but there was a good deal in this point of view.” Molotov, Roosevelt, and Hopkins then apparently agreed that “there were Communists and Communists”—that is, there were good ones and bad ones—and likewise they agreed on what they called “the distinction between ‘Jews’ and ‘Kikes’,” which they said was “something that created inevitable difficulties.”

Could these remarks, too, really have been used merely as an “ice-breaker,” as Breitman and Lichtman asserted? The sequence of that day’s events indicates otherwise: first, there was a discussion about various topics

that was held when Molotov arrived at the White House; then there was another detailed conversation that took place before dinner; there was yet another discussion during dinner; and then a final conversation after dinner, in President Roosevelt’s study. It was only in that very last segment (and just prior to the conclusion of that segment) that the exchange about Jews took place. Thus, far from serving as an “ice-breaker,” the antisemitic remarks were uttered many hours after the ice was broken.<sup>4</sup>

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Scholars can debate whether President Roosevelt treated James McDonald’s report about German Jewry with appropriate seriousness, or whether it is justified for a president to use ethnic slurs in order to achieve a diplomatic goal. That is not our intention here. Our concern is the violation of accepted rules of scholarly conduct concerning the use of historical documents. The American Historical Association’s *Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct* states: “Historians should not misrepresent their sources.” (Article 3) It is a misrepresentation of sources to claim that FDR intended to speak out about German Jewry when his clear intention was to speak out about a different issue; or to claim that Roosevelt’s antisemitic remarks to Molotov and Stalin were “ice-breakers” when the timetables make clear that they could not have been.

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<sup>3</sup> Breitman and Lichtman, p.301; Charles E. Bohlen, *Witness to History, 1929-1969* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1973), p.203; Joshua Botts, “‘Out of the Frying Pan Into the Fire’: The Politics of the Yalta FRUS,” <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus-history/research/politics-of-the-yalta-frus> )

<sup>4</sup> Breitman and Lichtman, p.301; “Memorandum - Subject: Molotov Conversations,” 29 May 1942, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, NY, pp.7-8.

### III. INVENTING HISTORY

#### 1. *Immigration Statistics*

On December 8, 1993, Prof. Gerhard L. Weinberg of the University of North Carolina, speaking at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, made a remarkable claim. Referring to the 1930s, Weinberg said: "The United States accepted about twice as many Jewish refugees as the rest of the world put together: about 200,000 out of 300,000."

If true, that would certainly suggest the Roosevelt administration was generous in welcoming Jewish refugees. For that reason, Weinberg's statement subsequently was cited by other defenders of FDR's response to the Holocaust, including Robert Rosen, in his book *Saving the Jews*; and William vanden Heuvel, of the Franklin & Eleanor Roosevelt Institute, in articles and lectures.<sup>5</sup>

But the correct numbers for Jewish immigration in the 1930s are very different. According to Immigration and Naturalization Service statistics for 1933-1939, a total of just 77,557 German citizens immigrated to the United States during that period.<sup>6</sup> (Moreover, approximately 10% of

them were not Jewish.) Prof. Yehuda Bauer has calculated that 85,000 Jews from Germany and elsewhere came to the United States during those years. The INS and Bauer figures are not even close to Weinberg's 200,000.

Asked about this discrepancy, Weinberg declined to elaborate or to provide a source for his statistics.<sup>7</sup>

In the published version of Weinberg's remarks, the footnote for the 200,000 claim stated: "A fine review is Richard Breitman and Alan M. Kraut, *American Refugee Policy and European Jewry, 1933-1945*." That was the only source he listed. However, nothing in that book supports Weinberg's numbers. In fact, the figures supplied by Breitman and Kraut lead to a calculation of 74,698 German and Austrian immigrants for that period.<sup>8</sup>

With regard to Prof. Weinberg's statement that 300,000 Jewish immigrants were accepted by the "rest of the world," Bauer and other mainstream historians have calculated a total of 265,000 for the period of 1933-1939. In other words, the United States actually accepted less than half as many--not "twice as many"--as all other countries combined.<sup>9</sup>

If a scholar presents numbers that differ significantly from what experts in the field have found, he has an

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<sup>5</sup> Rosen, p.442; vanden Heuvel at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (24 October 1996), in *The Forward* (27 January 1995), and *American Heritage* (July-August 1999), p.41.

<sup>6</sup> This includes a small number of Austrian nationals in 1938-1939.

<sup>7</sup> Medoff to Weinberg, 25 September 2009; Weinberg to Medoff, 26 September 2009; Medoff to Weinberg, 26 September 2009; Weinberg to Medoff, 13 October 2009.

<sup>8</sup> Breitman and Kraut calculated "just over 120,000" for 1933-1944. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) reported 45,302 for 1940-1944. Subtracting the INS figures, the Breitman-Kraut total for 1933-1939 is 74,698, which is very close to the above-cited figures from the INS and Bauer for 1933-1939. (Breitman and Kraut, p.9.)

<sup>9</sup> Alex Grobman, "Fudging the Numbers: Another Look at the Use of Statistics by Some Critics of *The Abandonment of the Jews*," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 40 (Fall 2003), pp.381-385.

obligation to explain his sources. For Prof. Weinberg to drastically inflate the number of Jewish immigrants in the 1930s, and to refuse to reveal his basis for doing so, contravenes the American Historical Association's *Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct*, which states that "Historians should document their findings and be prepared to make available their sources, evidence, and data..." (Article 3)

## 2. *A Jewish Leader's Role*

The role of the American Jewish leadership constitutes an important part of the broader issue of the Roosevelt administration's response to the Holocaust. The actions of Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, the foremost American Jewish leader of that era, have attracted particular attention because his ardent support of President Roosevelt affected efforts by American Jews to bring about a change in U.S. refugee policy.

One episode that has attracted particular attention concerns Wise's suppression of some early news about the mass murder. In August 1942, Wise received a cable from the World Jewish Congress representative in Switzerland, Gerhard Riegner, revealing Hitler's intention to annihilate all of European Jewry. At the request of the State Department, Wise refrained from publicizing the telegram, pending further verification. It took the administration three months until finally, on November 24, 1942, it authorized Rabbi Wise to release the cable.

Wise's three-month suppression of the telegram has long stirred debate among scholars and within the Jewish community. Some have argued that he

had no choice but to obey the State Department. Others, including Elie Wiesel, have questioned the wisdom of Wise's decision as well as the fact that during those three months, he also suppressed other reports from Europe about the mass killings.<sup>10</sup>

In *Commentary* in 1984, Professors Breitman and Kraut engaged in an exchange with scholars and others concerning the Riegner telegram. One, Prof. David Kranzler, referred unsympathetically to the fact that Wise withheld the telegram from the public until November 24.

Breitman and Kraut countered by presenting what appeared to be a significant revelation: "Our sources provide a much different picture of Rabbi Stephen S. Wise from Mr. Kranzler's account here," they announced. "To give only one example, we have evidence that Wise made the [Riegner telegram] public on September 28, 1942, almost two months before the date [November 24] Mr. Kranzler gives."

Breitman and Kraut's announcement attempted to turn the existing historiography on its head. Every previous book about America's response to the Holocaust had reported Wise's three month-long suppression, from late August through late November. Now, Breitman and Kraut were declaring that they had uncovered new "evidence" from unnamed "sources" which showed that Wise suppressed the telegram only for a few weeks, not for three months as everyone else believed.

In addition to constituting a radical break from the findings of other historians, the Breitman-Kraut revelation would have struck a significant blow at the arguments of those who have questioned Wise's actions during the Holocaust.

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<sup>10</sup> Elie Wiesel, "Allies Fiddled As Jews Burned" (review of *While Six Million Died* and *The Holocaust: The Destruction of European Jewry*), *Hadassah* 49 (March 1968), p.16.

But then something odd happened.

Writing in the *Journal of Contemporary History* the following year (1985), Prof. Breitman described Wise as having revealed the Riegner information in late November, not in September as he and Kraut had announced in *Commentary*.

The following year, in a book that Breitman coauthored about Schulte and the Riegner telegram, he again gave November as the date Wise released the telegram. He and Kraut did so yet again in their 1987 book *American Refugee Policy and European Jewry*, and Breitman and Lichtman said the same thing in *FDR and the Jews* in 2013.

In a 1998 book concerning the Allies and the Holocaust, Breitman went even further. He cited Kranzler's criticism of Wise for suppressing the telegram until November--and then he rebutted Kranzler, not by claiming (as he had in *Commentary*) that Wise revealed it in September, but rather by asserting that in view of the circumstances, it was "logical" for Wise to suppress it until November.

What, then, happened to the "evidence" that Breitman and Kraut had so dramatically cited in *Commentary*, which supposedly would revise the public's view of Rabbi Wise? That remains a mystery. When asked to share their evidence, Prof. Kraut replied that he did not possess that information, and he referred the query to Prof. Breitman, who refused to respond at all. According to the American Historical Association's *Statement on Standards of*

*Professional Conduct*, historians should "make available their sources, evidence, and data..." (Article 3)<sup>11</sup>

#### IV. SUPPRESSING EVIDENCE

##### 1. "Jewish Blood"

On August 4, 1939, President Roosevelt met with an ally, Senator Burton Wheeler (D-Montana), concerning possible Democratic candidates for president and vice president in 1940. (Roosevelt himself had not yet declared his intention to seek re-election.) Near the end of the meeting, the president expressed doubt about the viability of a ticket composed of Secretary of State Cordell Hull for president and Democratic National Committee chairman Jim Farley for vice president. Wheeler responded (according to a memorandum that Wheeler composed following the meeting):

*I said to the President someone told me that Mrs. Hull was a Jewess, and I said that the Jewish-Catholic issue would be raised [if Hull was nominated for president, and Farley, a Catholic, was his running mate]. He [FDR] said, "Mrs. Hull is about one quarter Jewish." He said, "You and I, Burt, are old English and Dutch stock. We know who our*

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<sup>11</sup> Richard Breitman, "The Allied War Effort and the Jews, 1942-1943," *Journal of Contemporary History* 20 (1985), p.143; Walter Laqueur and Richard Breitman, *Breaking the Silence* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986), p.160; Breitman and Kraut, p.157; Breitman and Lichtman, p.205; Richard Breitman, *Official Secrets: What the Nazis Planned, What the British and Americans Knew* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), pp.143, 287; Medoff to Kraut, 19 October, 12 November, and 12 December 2014; Kraut to Medoff, 13 December 2014. Schulte was first identified by Monty N. Penkower in the *New York Jewish Week* (19 August 1983) and then in his *The Jews Were Expensible: Free World Diplomacy and the Holocaust* (Urbana and Chicago: U. of Illinois Press, 1983), pp.62-80.

*ancestors are. We know there is no Jewish blood in our veins, but a lot of these people do not know whether there is Jewish blood in their veins or not."*

FDR's disturbing remark about "Jewish blood" did not come to light until some 60 years later. It would have come to light much sooner, however, had it not been suppressed by a prominent historian. The file in the Montana State University archives which contains the Wheeler memorandum also contains two letters to Wheeler, dated November 30 and December 22, 1959, written by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. At the time, Schlesinger was working on *The Politics of Upheaval*, the final installment of his three-volume history of the New Deal. According to the letters, Sen. Wheeler sent Schlesinger a copy of his 1939 memorandum on the "Jewish blood" conversation with FDR. Schlesinger, after reviewing the memo, wrote to Wheeler that the document "offer[s] valuable sidelights on history."

Nevertheless, Schlesinger never quoted FDR's remarks about "Jewish blood" in any of the many books and articles he subsequently wrote about Roosevelt and his era. Ironically, in one of those articles (published in *Newsweek* in 1994), Schlesinger specifically defended FDR against any suspicion that he was unsympathetic to Jews; and he approvingly quoted Trude Lash (the widow of historian Joseph Lash) as saying, "FDR did not have an anti-Semitic bone in his body."

In an exchange of correspondence with Rafael Medoff in 2005,

Schlesinger insisted he had done nothing wrong in withholding the "Jewish blood" document from public view, since, in his view, Roosevelt's statement was not antisemitic. "FDR's allusion to 'Jewish blood' does not seem to me incompatible with Trude Lash's statement," Schlesinger wrote. "It appears to me a neutral comment about people of mixed ancestry."

But if that were the case--if Roosevelt's remark about Jewish blood was indeed "neutral" and not an expression of bigotry--then why did Schlesinger decide to suppress it? Why didn't Schlesinger mention it in one of his published writings about FDR? After all, it certainly sheds interesting light on Roosevelt's thought process in considering whether to run for a third term in 1940. Why didn't Schlesinger at least acknowledge FDR's remark when he himself raised the antisemitism issue in his *Newsweek* essay, and let readers judge for themselves?<sup>12</sup>

## **2. Blaming the Jews for Antisemitism**

On January 22, 1938, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise met with President Roosevelt. In his memo of the conversation, Rabbi Wise described a "very painful" moment when Roosevelt spoke about alleged Jewish domination of the Polish economy; FDR also suggested Jewish behavior was the cause of Polish antisemitism:

*Then F.D.R. said something that was very painful to SSW [i.e. Stephen S. Wise]; he composed his account in the*

<sup>12</sup> "Confidential - Memo on conference at the White House with the President---August 4, 1939," Burton K. Wheeler Papers, Box 11: File 18, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT; Schlesinger to Wheeler, 30 November 1959 and 22 December 1959, Wheeler Papers, Box 11: File 18; Arthur Schlesinger Jr., "Did FDR Betray the Jews?," *Newsweek*, 18 April 1994, p.14; Schlesinger to Medoff, 4 September 2005.

*third person], showing how much he is, alas, under the impact of the Ambassadors who have access to him.... F.D.R. gave a long explanation straight out of the mouth of [the Polish ambassador in Washington, Count Jerzy] Potocki, namely that, while forty and fifty years ago, [Potocki's] father and grandfather got all their products from the Jewish grain dealer and the Jewish shoe dealer and the Jewish shopkeeper and the little Jewish villagers surrounding their castle, in recent years the Poles have been turning to him and to the people in the castle and saying—"Why don't you buy things from us and not from the Jews"; and Potocki added—"We gave them a chance but we found they could not deliver the same goods at the same price, so they lost out in the competition with the Jewish shopkeepers. Then the next step was that the Christian shopkeepers complained—why must the Jews do all the business with the estate; and after that—the Jew should go."*

Wise was horrified by FDR's suggestion that it was the alleged Jewish domination of the local economy which was to blame for Christians demanding that "the Jew should go." Wise protested to Roosevelt: "But, Chief, this is pure Fascist talk. They must find scapegoats to whom to point in order to satisfy the landless and unfed peasantry, and the Jew is the convenient and traditional and historical scapegoat." Wise's plea was to no avail; Roosevelt "assented to every word" Potocki had spoken to him, according to Wise. "It was," Wise

wrote, "like a blow in the face to have F.D.R. swallow and regurgitate this stuff of Potocki, himself of the landed gentry."

Professors Breitman and Lichtman had Wise's memo in their possession when they were composing *FDR and the Jews*. We know this because on p.100, they quoted from the memo. But they quoted a different part of the memo (concerning remarks that Roosevelt made about Palestine) and suppressed the part containing FDR's remarks concerning Polish Jewry.

### **3. FDR and the Debate Over Immigration**

During the 1920s, there was a vigorous debate in the United States concerning immigration. Political figures, journalists, and others took sides in the discussion, and legislation was enacted to severely restrict immigration. Franklin Roosevelt took part in the debate, making remarks about immigration as a candidate for office and writing essays on the topic for several publications. For example, as the Democratic nominee for vice president in 1920, FDR gave an interview to the *Brooklyn Eagle* in which said he accepted the principle of some immigration, provided that the newcomers were dispersed and quickly assimilated:

*Our main trouble in the past has been that we have permitted the foreign elements to segregate in colonies. They have crowded into one district and they have brought congestion and racial prejudices to our large cities. The result is that they do not easily conform to the manners and the customs and the requirements of their new home. Now, the*

*remedy for this should be the distribution of aliens in various parts of the country. If we had the greater part of the foreign population of the City of New York distributed to different localities upstate we should have a far better condition.*<sup>13</sup>

FDR also authored a number of articles that addressed the question of Asian immigration to the United States. In a 1923 essay for the magazine *Asia*, he expressed sympathy for what he said was the widespread view “that the mingling of white with oriental blood on an extensive scale is harmful to our future citizenship.” He added: “As a corollary of this conviction, Americans object to the holding of large amounts of real property, of land, by aliens or those descended from mixed marriages. Frankly, they do not want non-assimilable immigrants as citizens, nor do they desire any extensive proprietorship of land without citizenship.”

That Roosevelt was not merely reporting on trends in public opinion, but himself agreed with the perspective he was summarizing, is evident from a series of articles he wrote at the time for the *Macon Daily Telegraph*, in which he expressed the same point of view. In an April 23, 1925 column, for example, FDR explained that he favored the admission of some Europeans, so long as they had “blood of the right sort.” He endorsed the need to restrict immigration for “a good many years to come” so the United States would have time to “digest” those who had already been admitted. He also proposed

limiting subsequent immigration to those who could be most quickly and easily assimilated, including through dispersal around the country. He argued: “If, twenty-five years ago, the United States had adopted a policy of this kind we would not have the huge foreign sections which exist in so many of our cities.”

In his April 30, 1925 column for the *Macon* newspaper, Roosevelt wrote: “Californians have properly objected [to Japanese immigration to their state] on the sound basic ground that Japanese immigrants are not capable of assimilation into the American population....Anyone who has traveled in the Far East knows that the mingling of Asiatic blood with European or American blood produces, in nine cases out of ten, the most unfortunate results.”<sup>14</sup>

These statements are relevant to studies of Roosevelt’s response to the Holocaust for two reasons. First, when FDR referred to the “foreign elements” in New York City (in the 1920 interview), that term undoubtedly was meant to include the large Jewish immigration population there; therefore that sentiment has to be taken into consideration when viewing his immigration policies later, as president. Second, because the 1920 remarks, and the statements FDR made about Asian “blood” and the danger of Asian and other “non-assimilable” immigrants owning too much land, are strikingly similar to remarks he later made about Jewish “blood,” the danger of Jewish immigrants not assimilating, and the need to “spread the Jews thin” so there would not be too many of them in certain professions and

<sup>13</sup> Greg Robinson, *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), p.35.

<sup>14</sup> The 1923 essay is in Robinson, p.40; the 1925 columns are in Robinson, pp.38 and 35.

institutions.<sup>15</sup> However one understands Roosevelt's remarks about immigration, there can be no doubt that they should be addressed.

In *FDR and the Jews*, Breitman and Lichtman described the 1920s debate in America concerning immigration. Then they stated categorically: "FDR took no part in debates over immigration restriction."

### **Suppressing FDR's Views**

It is obvious from the Roosevelt statements cited above that FDR *did* take part in the immigration debate. Is it possible Breitman and Lichtman were simply unaware of Roosevelt's numerous statements concerning immigration in the 1920s? Ample evidence indicates they must have known. To begin with, some of FDR's statements about immigration appear in at least three books that are cited in Breitman and Lichtman's source notes--in other words, in books which they must have read.<sup>16</sup>

Moreover, lengthy excerpts from FDR's immigration statements and writings also appeared in the 2001 book *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans*, by Prof. Greg Robinson. The book argued that Roosevelt's internment of Japanese Americans in 1942 was rooted in the attitudes he expressed in his 1920s statements about Asians. Since *By Order of the President* is one of the most significant works of FDR scholarship

to appear in recent years--and, in fact, was published by Harvard University Press, the same publisher as *FDR and the Jews*--it certainly would be surprising if Breitman and Lichtman were not familiar with it.

In addition, Roosevelt's writings on immigration, and his 1920 interview, are easily accessed in the collections of FDR's published statements at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library in Hyde Park, NY, where Breitman did much of his research for *FDR and the Jews*.

It seems implausible that Breitman and Lichtman did not read the books that they cite in their own source notes; are unfamiliar with important recent works of Roosevelt scholarship; and did not examine the collections of FDR's published statements at Hyde Park. That being the case, why did they falsely claim that "FDR took no part" in the debates? Why did they suppress information about FDR's views on race and immigration?

### **4. Portraying Dissidents as Draft-Dodgers**

During the Holocaust period, Jewish activists known as the Bergson Group challenged the Roosevelt administration's refugee policy by sponsoring rallies and newspaper ads urging U.S. action to rescue European Jews. The group's core leaders were Jews who had come to the United States temporarily from Palestine.

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<sup>15</sup> For details concerning Roosevelt's private remarks about Jews, see Rafael Medoff, *FDR and the Holocaust: A Breach of Faith* (Washington, D.C.: Wyman Institute, 2013), pp.1-32.

<sup>16</sup> Breitman and Lichtman, p.27; *Franklin D. Roosevelt: The Ordeal*, by Frank Freidel (Boston: Little, Brown, 1954), is cited on p.335, note 6 of *FDR and the Jews*; it mentions Roosevelt's immigration writings on pp.208-209. *FDR: A Biography*, by Ted Morgan (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985), is cited on p.343, note 52 of *FDR and the Jews*; it mentions Roosevelt's immigration writings on p. 628; *A First Class Temperament The Emergence of Franklin Roosevelt*, by Geoffrey C. Ward (New York: Harper and Row, 1989), is cited on p.332, note 4 of *FDR and the Jews*; it mentions Roosevelt's immigration writings on pp.725-726.



Books about the Bergson Group have noted that several of the group's leaders were exempt from military service during World War II for medical reasons, while several others served with distinction. Robert Rosen, however, in *Saving the Jews* (p.303), portrayed the entire Bergson Group leadership as contemptible draft-dodgers. He wrote: "A group of young Palestinian Jews stranded in the United States sat out the war in America, preferring to agitate for the overthrow of the British in Palestine rather than enlist and fight Nazis themselves."

Yet Rosen evidently was in possession of information to the contrary. One Bergson Group leader, Yitshaq Ben-Ami, wrote about his military service (including fighting in the Battle of the Bulge) in his autobiography, *Years of Wrath, Days of Glory* (p.338)--a book which is listed in Rosen's own bibliography. Another Bergson Group leader, Alex Rafaeli, fought at Normandy and elsewhere. His service is described on pp.20-21 of *A Race Against Death*, by David S. Wyman and Rafael Medoff--a book which is cited by Rosen in *Saving the Jews*.

After he was challenged by an attorney representing the families of the Bergson Group leaders, Rosen admitted, in December 2006, that what he wrote about the activists' alleged draft-dodging was false. He did not explain why he made the original claim despite apparently possessing evidence to the contrary.

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Scholars can debate the significance of FDR's remark about Jewish blood, or his assertions about the causes of Polish antisemitism, or his racially-charged statements about Jewish and Asian immigrants, or the merits of the Bergson Group's tactics. But to omit evidence that is in one's possession,

thereby hampering the public's understanding of the historical record, contravenes accepted scholarly standards. The American Historical Association's *Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct* warns that historians "should report their findings as accurately as possible and not omit evidence that runs counter to their own interpretation." (Article 3)

## V. A MUSEUM'S CURIOUS REVERSAL

In late 1994, an unusual manuscript landed on the desk of Dr. Michael Berenbaum, research director at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. Titled "The Bombing of Auschwitz: A Critical Analysis," it was authored by one Richard H. Levy, of Seattle. The essay argued that it was "beyond the power" of the Allies to interrupt the Holocaust by bombing Auschwitz or the railway lines leading to it; that many prominent Jewish leaders opposed such bombing (for fear of harming the prisoners); and that the museum should change its exhibit on the bombing issue to reflect these assertions.

Levy's arguments were surprising because they contradicted the findings of numerous veteran scholars in the field. Those scholars, most prominently Prof. David S. Wyman, had found that bombing Auschwitz was militarily feasible; that the Allies in fact bombed targets less than five miles from the gas chambers; and that only one Jewish leader opposed bombing Auschwitz from the air, while many others did urge the Allies to bomb it. As it happens, Levy was neither a historian of the Holocaust nor a scholar of military affairs but, rather, a retired nuclear engineer. Moreover, his arguments were based entirely on secondary sources, not original archival research. Needless to

say, someone who has no expertise and has done no original research was not likely to upend all the existing scholarship in a given field.

### ***Speculation, Not Scholarship***

Nonetheless, Berenbaum afforded Levy the courtesy of a peer review. Turning to the leading expert on the bombing issue, Berenbaum asked Prof. Wyman for his analysis of the manuscript. In his cover note, Berenbaum noted that Levy “calls upon the Museum to make some changes in its permanent exhibition, changes I am not inclined to make.” Wyman prepared a point-by-point critique, which he submitted to Berenbaum six weeks later. His review concluded: “Levy’s article is not scholarship. It is a verbose attempt to prove a preconceived set of conclusions....Levy simply omits important facts and developments which are inconvenient for his conclusions....Over and over, Levy turns to speculation to fill in when his limited sources leave the picture unclear.” According to generally accepted academic standards, such a devastating peer review should have ended any chance of the paper being taken seriously.

Prof. Wyman heard nothing further from the U.S. Holocaust Museum on this subject until eighteen months later. In July 1996, its Permanent Exhibit Coordinator, Dr. Steven Luckert, wrote to inform Prof. Wyman that the museum had recently changed the text of its exhibit on the bombing issue. Luckert reported that the original text, which stated that “American Jewish organizations repeatedly asked the U.S. War Department to bomb Auschwitz,” had been changed to: “A few Jewish leaders called for the bombing of the

Auschwitz gas chambers; others opposed it....No one was certain of the results...”

The museum did not publicize the change, but a reporter for the *Washington Jewish Week* who caught wind of it sought a comment from Prof. Richard Breitman, as editor of the museum’s scholarly journal. Breitman defended the change on the grounds that “There were a number of people and organizations [in the Jewish community in 1944] which opposed [bombing Auschwitz].” Breitman did not identify the individuals or organizations to whom he was referring. In fact, at the time Breitman made his statement, 23 officials of Jewish organizations had been identified by name, in reputable history books, as having urged the Allies to bomb Auschwitz or the railways leading to it. Only one Jewish official (and not a single organization) had been identified as having opposed bombing.<sup>17</sup>

In short, an accurate text in the U.S. Holocaust Museum had been changed to an inaccurate one. The new wording also carried an important broader implication: if only “a few” Jewish leaders favored bombing, while “others” (which sounds like a comparable number) opposed it; and if nobody could be “certain” of the results; then nobody can reasonably criticize the Roosevelt administration for not bombing Auschwitz.

Why would the U.S. Holocaust Museum make such a change? The answer would take more than a decade to emerge.

### ***A Journal Violates its Own Policy***

Levy’s essay, meanwhile, was taking on a life of its own. In January 1996, it

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<sup>17</sup> For a list of those who were identified, and by which historian, see Appendix I.

was published in a book, *FDR and the Holocaust*, edited by Verne W. Newton, director of the Roosevelt Presidential Library. The book consisted mostly of remarks made at a conference held at the library several years earlier, which Levy had not attended.

Later that year, Levy's essay was published again--this time in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* (HGS), the journal which Prof. Breitman edits for the U.S. Holocaust Museum. The essay was printed despite the journal's own stated policy that it will consider only a submission that "has not been published and will not be simultaneously submitted or published elsewhere."

Prof. Wyman, as a member of the journal's Editorial Advisory Board, filed a formal protest with the editors. He wrote that aside from some copy editing, "most of the newer version [of Levy's essay in HGS] is repeated verbatim from the earlier version." Wyman argued: "Articles in scholarly journals are published to move the boundaries of knowledge forward, not to provide authors the opportunity to make minor changes in already-published articles. The editors of *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* owe their readers an explanation for their violation of the journal's own rules." But no explanation was forthcoming.

Despite the essay's paucity of scholarship, and despite the journal's own policy, Prof. Breitman published it. Why did he do so? The answer to this mystery, too, was years away. Ten years, to be exact.

### ***A Diary's Revelation***

Richard Levy, it turned out, had some friends in high places.

In articles that he wrote for several Jewish newspapers in 1997, Roosevelt

Institute president William vanden Heuvel offered his version of the Levy-Museum affair. "I first encountered Mr. Levy in June 1994 when he sent the Roosevelt Institute a draft of an analysis he had made of the [bombing] question," vanden Heuvel wrote. According to his account, Levy then "met with representatives of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum" and persuaded them to change the exhibit. Vanden Heuvel did not indicate that he had played any role in the process.<sup>18</sup>

Vanden Heuvel's account raised more questions than it answered. How, without any outside influence, could a severely flawed essay about Auschwitz by a retired nuclear engineer--an essay which had been thoroughly discredited by the top expert in the field--convince a major museum to change an exhibit? How could the essay have been accepted for publication in the top scholarly journal in the field--in violation of the journal's own internal rules?

The answer came from an unexpected source. In 2007, Penguin Press posthumously published the diaries of the aforementioned New Deal historian Arthur Schlesinger, who happened to have been a close friend of vanden Heuvel. Buried deep within Schlesinger's 900-page book, *Journals 1952-2000*, was an unintentionally revealing entry dated August 21, 1996 (p.789). There Schlesinger celebrated the conclusion of what he described as "Bill [vanden Heuvel]'s successful campaign to persuade the Holocaust Museum to revise a most tendentious account of the failure to bomb Auschwitz."

In other words, there *had* been a "campaign" (behind the scenes) by the president of the Roosevelt Institute to change the bombing exhibit. The change was not, as vanden Heuvel had

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<sup>18</sup> "FDR Did Not Abandon European Jewry," *Washington Jewish Week*, 27 February 1997.

claimed, the result of Levy's persuasive powers; nor was it the result of the museum's historians discovering errors in the exhibit. The original exhibit, in fact, was accurate; it was changed--according to Schlesinger--because of the Roosevelt Institute's "campaign." Precisely what type of pressure vanden Heuvel's campaign employed was not specified in Schlesinger's diary. But the outcome demonstrated that the pressure had worked.

As a matter of course, history museums periodically update their exhibits. If a reputable historian points out an inaccuracy, and the museum's referees concur, a correction is made. Or if the museum staff itself uncovers new information, an exhibit will be revised. But it is another matter entirely to change an accurate text to an inaccurate one, in response to pressure from the president of an institute that has an agenda--in this case, the agenda of protecting the image of its namesake, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

### ***"There Was Pressure"***

Schlesinger's posthumous revelation went unnoticed by the news media and the academic community for more than two years. Finally, in 2009, *New York Times* reporter Patricia Cohen raised it. In the course of preparing an article about the bombing issue, Cohen interviewed the aforementioned Dr. Michael Berenbaum, since he had been research director of the Holocaust Museum at the time the exhibit was changed. Cohen asked Berenbaum whether vanden Heuvel indeed had pressured the Museum to make the change, as Schlesinger's diary indicated. Berenbaum replied (as quoted on Cohen's blog on October 5, 2009): "There was pressure from the Roosevelt Foundation and we paid no

attention whatsoever to that pressure."

Berenbaum's acknowledgement that "there was pressure" was significant. It contradicted the narrative that vanden Heuvel had presented in his lectures and articles, according to which Levy had, on his own, persuaded the Museum to make the change.

As for Berenbaum's statement that he and his colleagues paid no attention to the pressure--one can only note that they made the very change the Roosevelt Institute pressed them to make, even after being advised by the top expert in the field that the proposed change had no basis in the historical record.

### ***New Research on the Bombing Issue***

Ironically, the Museum's leaders subsequently proved entirely capable of refusing to budge on the bombing exhibit--this time, when historians provided fresh research proving that the original, pre-Levy caption had been correct.

In September 2009, the David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies provided the U.S. Holocaust Museum with new research identifying 29 Jewish leaders who advocated bombing Auschwitz, and one who was opposed. The research included new evidence that David Ben-Gurion reversed his initial position and supported bombing. This was significant because Roosevelt defenders, especially William vanden Heuvel, had frequently cited Ben-Gurion as an opponent of bombing. Along with providing the new documents to the museum, the Wyman Institute formally asked that the original caption in the bombing exhibit be restored.

### ***An Error Remains Uncorrected***

It took more than two years, but finally, in early 2012, the Holocaust Museum leadership responded to the Wyman Institute's report. In a ten-page memorandum, they stated that they agreed with the Wyman Institute regarding Ben-Gurion; they disagreed regarding only three of the 29 proponents of bombing; and they cited six additional individuals (although not leaders) whom they believe opposed bombing.

Hence the Holocaust Museum's final count was 26 in favor, 7 opposed. That tally directly contradicts the revised exhibit caption in the museum. The caption states that only "a few" Jewish leaders called for bombing; 26 is not "a few." The caption also states that "others" opposed bombing, a phrase implying a number similar to the number of advocates--even though, according to the Museum's own leaders, only seven (at most) were opposed. Nonetheless, the ten-page memo made no reference to any plans to correct the exhibit. The Wyman Institute's subsequent inquiry about changing the exhibit went unanswered. Today, nearly three years later, the inaccurate caption is still on display at the museum.<sup>19</sup>

The most recent public statement on the subject by a Museum representative--Richard Breitman--reflects the position articulated in the inaccurate caption. On p.281 of *FDR and the Jews*, Breitman wrote that there were "several" requests by Jewish leaders for the Allies to bomb

Auschwitz or the railways leading to it. He then named three Jewish officials who requested it. He also named the one Jewish official who opposed it--thus leaving readers to think that only a few Jewish leaders favored bombing, and a comparable number were against it. Readers would have no way of knowing that the actual count was 29 to 1 (according to the Wyman Institute) or, at least, 26 to 7 (according to the Holocaust Museum's memo).

There was another remarkable aspect to Prof. Breitman's portrayal of the bombing controversy. He wrote (p. 287): "Key Jewish figures such as Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, Joseph Proskauer, and Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver did not lobby the administration to bomb Auschwitz, either publicly or behind the scenes." That sentence created the impression that the most prominent Jewish leaders were against bombing. Yet Breitman knew that Allied officials were repeatedly approached on the bombing issue by Nahum Goldmann--who was Rabbi Wise's co-chair of the World Jewish Congress as well as a senior representative of the American Zionist movement, which Wise and Silver cochaired. In other words, Goldmann was the Jewish leadership's representative in Washington for this issue. Wise and Silver did not need to personally raise the issue when their representative was already doing so.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Wyman and Medoff to Luckert, 21 September 2009; Luckert to Wyman and Medoff, 10 January 2012.

<sup>20</sup> Breitman's mention of Proskauer was disingenuous. Proskauer was president of the American Jewish Committee, which as a matter of principle never asked the government to take specific steps just for Jews. The fact that the Committee refrained from lobbying for bombing was consistent with its overall attitude, and reveals nothing about its leaders' view of the bombing idea in particular.

Scholars can debate the pros and cons of bombing the railways versus striking the gas chambers, or other theoretical aspects of the bombing issue. But there is no doubt as to the documented positions taken by the overwhelming majority of Jewish leaders at the time. It is troubling that the U.S. Holocaust Museum altered its bombing exhibit in response to political pressure--and despite the negative peer review it received--and continues to misrepresent the positions of the Jewish leaders, by failing to correct its erroneous exhibit panel. The museum's actions in this episode do not accord with the American Historical Association's *Statement on Standards for Museum Exhibits Dealing with Historical Subjects*, which states: "Exhibits should be founded on scholarship, marked by intellectual integrity, and subjected to rigorous peer review." (Article 1)

## VI. UNQUALIFIED REVIEWERS

Book review editors for major publications generally act in accordance with widely accepted principles when choosing a reviewer for a particular book: the reviewer should have no personal connection to the book or the author; the reviewer should not have any known bias that would influence the review; and the reviewer should have expertise in the same field as the book.

Expertise is crucial because the reviewer will not merely be offering an opinion on a topic of interest. He will be passing judgment on the quality of the author's research and assessing

the merits of the author's findings as compared to other works in the same field. If the author has changed his positions from those taken in his previous works, the reviewer will need to account for that, too. To be able to do all of this competently, the reviewer should be someone who himself has researched and written in the same field, so that he is fully conversant with the topic and able to recognize a book's shortcomings. Put another way, the reviewer has to be capable of reading and understanding the footnotes.

Reviewers who have researched and published in the field of the Allies' responses to the Holocaust had no trouble seeing through William Rubinstein's *The Myth of Rescue*. Prof. Walter Laqueur (writing in *Commentary*) characterized it as based on "willful ignorance" and "arguments that are flatly and often outrageously wrong." Prof. Robert Herzstein (in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*) found the book to be an "apologia" for the Allies' abandonment of the Jews, filled with "blustery claims and extremist positions." Prof. Liza Schuster (in *Patterns of Prejudice*) wrote: "In this book, little new evidence is used, much is ignored and...existing evidence...is skewed by the author to support his arguments."<sup>21</sup>

The *New York Times*, however, assigned *The Myth of Rescue* to Prof. Michael Sherry, who is the author of books on such subjects as American military preparedness and gay culture. His lengthy resumé does not contain a single publication related to the Holocaust, much less the Allies' response to it. Sherry found Rubinstein's arguments to be "mostly

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<sup>21</sup> Walter Laqueur, "No Exit?," *Commentary*, October 1997, pp.59-62; Robert Edwin Herzstein, "Is It Time to Stop Asking Why the West Failed to Save More Jews?," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 12:2 (Fall 1998), pp.326-338; Lisa Schuster, "Democracies in the Dock," *Patterns of Prejudice* 33:1 (1999), pp.84-85.

persuasive.” Evidently he lacked the background to recognize the book’s numerous inaccuracies.

Robert Rosen’s book *Saving the Jews* was so tendentious and extreme that almost no publications of significance reviewed it. One exception was the scholarly journal *American Jewish Archives*. It assigned the book to Prof. Alonzo Hamby, who has authored books about American politics but not the Holocaust or America’s response to it. “Most of Rosen’s points stand up pretty well,” Hamby concluded, although clearly he was unfamiliar with the details of the issues involved. In an odd twist, Hamby used the review as a platform from which to chastise American Jewry for being “obsessed with the Holocaust.” He even went so far as to patronizingly bemoan the fact “that so accomplished a people seem to have made it the touchstone of their contemporary identity.”<sup>22</sup>

### ***A Certain Type of Reviewer***

Breitman and Lichtman’s *FDR and the Jews* enjoyed unusual treatment by book review editors. Major publications that reviewed the book invariably assigned it to someone who has never done original research in the field of America’s response to the Holocaust. For example, the reviewer selected by the *New York Times* was David Oshinsky, a scholar who specializes in McCarthyism. In the *Washington Post*, it was reviewed by James McAuley, a graduate student and self-described “aspiring journalist.” The *Los Angeles Review of Books* assigned it to Jon Wiener, the author of books about the Cold War, the Chicago Eight, and John Lennon.

In the *Sunday Times*, *FDR and the Jews* was reviewed by Dominic Sandbrook, author of a two-volume history of England since the 1950s and a book about Eugene McCarthy.<sup>23</sup>

The *Journal of American History* assigned it to David B. Woolner, who happens to be the Resident Historian at the Franklin & Eleanor Roosevelt Institute. As such, his job is--as the Institute’s mission statement puts it--“to carry forward the legacy and values of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt.” Moreover, Woolner has never published any research concerning President Roosevelt’s response to the Holocaust. It is not clear on what basis the editors of JAH believed Prof. Woolner’s review of *FDR and the Jews* could be either objective or well-informed.

Sure enough, Woolner’s review contained significant errors that someone familiar with the sources would not have made. For example, as evidence of FDR’s intention to rescue Jews, Woolner cited the creation of the War Refugee Board. But how could he explain the Roosevelt administration’s opposition to the congressional resolution that sought the creation of such an agency? Woolner claimed that Congressman Sol Bloom was responsible for trying to block that resolution--as if the administration had not opposed it. He further claimed that Rabbi Stephen S. Wise played a role in bringing about the creation of the Board--even though Wise testified *against* the resolution. But when privately questioned about these statements, Woolner backtracked, saying he did not mean to credit either Roosevelt or Wise for the creation of the Board. While Prof. Woolner acknowledged these significant errors in private

<sup>22</sup> Alonzo Hamby book review, *American Jewish Archives* LIX 1 & 2 (2007), pp.131-135.

<sup>23</sup> McAuley’s self-description appeared in *Harvard Magazine*, 29 November 2011.

correspondence, he did not publish a correction in the *Journal of American History*.<sup>24</sup>

The *New York Review of Books* assigned *FDR and the Jews* to Noah Feldman, a Harvard law professor who has written books about America's relations with the Muslim world, church-state issues in the United States, and President Roosevelt's Supreme Court appointments--but nothing related to America's response to the Holocaust. What made the *New York Review's* selection of Feldman all the more surprising is that an effusive blurb on the dustjacket of *FDR and the Jews*, hailing the book as "the definitive word on the subject," was written by--Noah Feldman.

### **Endorsing a Book, and Then Reviewing It**

Without mentioning Breitman, Lichtman, or *FDR and the Jews*, we contacted the current or former book review editors of four major scholarly journals of history and asked if they considered it appropriate to assign a book to a reviewer who had written a blurb endorsing the book. All four replied that they would not use that reviewer for the book since, as one of the editors put it, if someone has written a blurb, "they are already pre-committed to be positive about [the book]."

That editor also mentioned a common courtesy in the profession: "On a couple of occasions...authors I contacted about writing a review declined because they'd already published a blurb." Prof. Feldman, however, did not decline the invitation to review the book he had blurbed.

The online version of Feldman's review in the *New York Review of Books* contained a footnote, in tiny print, stating that "two sentences" of his "appear" on the dustjacket of *FDR and the Jews*. That vague wording fell short of explicitly acknowledging that Feldman had written a blurb; from the phrasing, a reader might think that someone else on the dustjacket had simply quoted two of Feldman's sentences. Even worse, the print version of Feldman's review in the *New York Review* made no reference at all to Feldman's prior endorsement of *FDR and the Jews*.

### **Inexplicable Reversals**

One of the major handicaps facing reviewers in this situation is that since they are not sufficiently versed in the source material in this field, they did not notice the numerous significant discrepancies between the arguments made by Prof. Breitman in *FDR and the Jews* and those he made in his 1987 book *American Refugee Policy and European Jewry* or in his 2004 book, *Advocate for the Doomed*.

The reviewers of *FDR and the Jews* were evidently unaware, for example, of the aforementioned shift from Breitman 1987 stating that President Roosevelt's mother "was anti-Semitic" to Breitman 2013 portraying her as a philosemite. Some examples of other unexplained reversals of which reviewers were unaware:

#### ***FDR's "Concern":***

As noted earlier, Breitman 2004 claimed that a May 1, 1933 diary entry by James G. McDonald showed that Roosevelt intended to speak out for German Jewry. But Breitman 2013 stated the opposite. He wrote that the

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<sup>24</sup> Woolner's review of *FDR and the Jews* appeared in *Journal of American History*, June 2014, pp.300-301; Medoff to Woolner, 29 September 2014 and 3 October 2014; Woolner to Medoff, 12 November 2014.



May 1 diary entry showed that McDonald “inferred correctly that, despite Roosevelt’s concern, the Administration would not publicly reprimand Germany and jeopardize international economic negotiations and disarmament efforts.” (p.58)

### **Quotas & Evian:**

Breitman 2013 gave FDR credit for combining the German and Austrian quotas and for initiating the Evian refugee conference (p.102).

But Breitman 1987 credited those moves to State Department official Herbert Feis and journalist Dorothy Thompson, respectively. (p.57) When Noah Feldman reviewed *FDR and the Jews* in the *New York Review of Books*, he likewise credited FDR for “unilaterally combining the German and Austrian quotas.” Evidently he never checked either Breitman’s source notes or Breitman’s earlier writings; he simply parroted what he read in *FDR and the Jews*.<sup>25</sup>

### **Suppressing Immigration:**

In a 2014 letter defending *FDR and the Jews*, Breitman (and Lichtman) claimed: “[T]he failure to fill the German quota during FDR’s first term did not result from ‘extra requirements and regulations’ that [the Roosevelt administration] ‘piled on.’ Rather it resulted from an executive decision by former president Herbert Hoover in 1930...”

But Breitman 1987 stated (p.9) that the failure to fill the German quota during FDR’s first term was due to the actions of officials of the Roosevelt administration, not the Hoover

decision: “Our research makes clear that such figures [in the Roosevelt administration] as Assistant Secretary of State Wilbur Carr, George Messersmith, Breckinridge Long, Commissioner of Immigration Daniel MacCormack, and many other officials at lower levels of authority devised and carried out adjustments to immigration regulations that had a major effect upon the level of immigration to the United States.”<sup>26</sup>

### **The 1937 Increase:**

Breitman 2013 claimed that the modest increase in German Jewish immigration to the U.S. in early 1937 happened because “With his election triumph behind him and the economy continuing to improve, FDR finally broke the bureaucratic logjam on Jewish refugees.” (p.94) And: “[After the 1936 election,] FDR finally smashed the bureaucratic barriers to the expanded admission of Jewish refugees to the United States.” (p.316)

But Breitman 1987 wrote: “There is no evidence that Roosevelt issued any instructions to the State Department [in 1936-37] about German Jewish immigration...” (p.48) In fact, Breitman 1987 specifically suggested the change might have been due to the actions of Immigration Commissioner Daniel MacCormack (p.27) or Assistant Secretary of State George Messersmith (p.48). Moreover, in a footnote, Breitman 1987 actually chided historian Henry Feingold for having once implied that FDR was responsible for the 1937 change.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Noah Feldman, “Could FDR Have Done More to Save the Jews?,” *New York Review of Books*, 8 May 2014, p.42.

<sup>26</sup> “Communications,” *American Historical Review*, October 2014, p.1427. Breitman and Lichtman were commenting on a letter by Rafael Medoff.

<sup>27</sup> For the critique of Feingold, see p.261, n.101 of Breitman’s *American Refugee Policy*.

### ***The Missing \$150-Million:***

Breitman 2013 reported that President Roosevelt intended to ask Congress for \$150-million to help resettle refugees. (p.117) Likewise, Breitman 2009 (*Rescue and Refugees*) trumpeted this claim as “new evidence” that FDR was deeply concerned about the Jews. (pp.152, 335) Neither book mentioned that Roosevelt never actually requested the funds. Yet in a 1993 lecture, Breitman himself had criticized Roosevelt for not requesting the funds.<sup>28</sup>

### ***Was Rescue Possible?***

In a 2014 letter about *FDR and the Jews*, Breitman claimed that bringing any significant number of Jews to the U.S. after the outbreak of the war would have been impossible, since “in October 1941 the German government banned the emigration of any Jews from Germany or its occupied countries.”

Yet when this issue arose in a public debate back in 1987, Prof. Breitman took the opposite position. After a *Providence Journal* editorial claimed the outbreak of the war made it impossible to rescue Jews, Breitman responded with a letter arguing that more Jews indeed could have been saved--if FDR had only established the War Refugee Board earlier: “Some of its policies and actions could have been tried earlier and would have been more effective then. The fate of Europe’s Jews was not simply sealed with the outbreak of the war.” (Many Jews did escape Europe long after the German ban. For example, some 26,000 were smuggled to Palestine by

Zionist activists; 27,000 found haven in Switzerland, although thousands more were turned away; more than 7,000 Danish Jews escaped to Sweden; thousands of French Jews fled to Spain; and thousands more reached Allied-liberated Italy.)<sup>29</sup>

\* \* \*

Scholars can, and sometimes do, change their positions on historical issues--that is, if they discover, or are presented with, new evidence. That is the accepted practice in the profession. For a historian to publicly change his positions, without presenting any explanation as to what evidence caused the changes, raises questions as to what motivated him to take the new positions.

If Prof. Breitman’s changes of position involved some minor or inconsequential historical issues, they would be of less concern. But in *FDR and the Jews* (and in letters defending it), he has reversed himself on some of the most important issues in the debate over President Roosevelt’s response to the Holocaust. Unfortunately, Prof. Breitman has declined to respond to queries about his reversals, even though the American Historical Association’s *Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct* requires historians to “make available their sources, evidence, and data.”

Thus to a significant extent, the success of *FDR and the Jews* among reviewers rested upon editors assigning the book to reviewers who were unfamiliar with the field and

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<sup>28</sup> Breitman in Verne W. Newton, *FDR and the Holocaust* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1996), p. 134. Multiple emails from Rafael Medoff to Richard Breitman, inquiring about these and other contradictions and errors in his work, have gone unanswered. For some reason, he has chosen not to defend what he wrote.

<sup>29</sup> Richard Breitman, “Britain and the U.S. Did Not Try to Halt the Slaughter” (letter), *Providence Journal*, 27 March 1987.

thus unable to spot the errors and major reversals of position contained in the book. Not one of the positive reviews of *FDR and the Jews* made reference to the contradictory positions that Breitman took in his earlier writings.<sup>30</sup>

## VII. PLAGIARISM

The American Historical Association's *Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct* defines plagiarism as "the use of another's language without quotation marks and citation." It also notes: "Plagiarism can also include the limited borrowing, without sufficient attribution, of another person's distinctive and significant research findings or interpretations." (Article 3)

Robert Rosen's *FDR and the Jews* contained at least 19 separate instances of unattributed use of others' language. For example, Rosen wrote, without quotation marks: "Any time the president touched the issue—even by merely receiving Zionists—he triggered explosive reactions in Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia." (p.296) More than three decades earlier, James MacGregor Burns, in his Pulitzer Prize-winning biography *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom*, wrote: "Any time the President touched the issue—even by merely receiving Zionists—he triggered

explosive reactions in Egypt or Syria or Saudi Arabia." (p.397) (For a complete list of instances in which Rosen used others' words without attribution, see Appendix II.)<sup>31</sup>

At least three published articles about FDR and the Holocaust by Roosevelt Institute founder William vanden Heuvel have contained language taken from other authors without attribution. For example, in vanden Heuvel's 1999 article in *American Heritage*, he wrote: "All such strategic raids on military-industrial bases proceeded only after months of preparatory intelligence work, entailing the creation of a target folder with specific information about the size, hardness, structure placement, and defenses of the target and detailed aerial photography." He did not use quotation marks or indicate the source of that statement, but evidently it came from William Rubinstein, who two years earlier wrote in *The Myth of Rescue*: "All such strategic raids on military-industrial bases proceeded only after months of preparatory intelligence work, entailing the creation of a target folder with specific information about the size, hardness, structure placement, defences and so on, of the target and detailed aerial photography." (p.164) The only notable difference between the two statements was that vanden Heuvel, an American, wrote "defenses," while

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<sup>30</sup> A similar phenomenon helped *FDR and the Jews* win a National Jewish Book Award. Although the sponsor of the award, the Jewish Book Council, does not identify the individual judges for each category, it did release a list of the names of all 55 judges (for all categories). Only one of the 55 has ever published original research concerning American responses to the Holocaust, and he was not among the group that chose to award *FDR and the Jews*. Thus the book was judged by a panel that did not include a single historian who has done original research on the same subject as the book they chose for the award.

<sup>31</sup> James MacGregor Burns, *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1970).

Rubinstein, who resides in England, spelled it “defences.”<sup>32</sup> (For a complete list of instances in which vanden Heuvel used others’ language without attribution, see Appendix II.)

### **Same Words, No Attribution**

In the case of *FDR and the Jews*, Breitman and Lichtman borrowed both a disingenuous theory as well as the language used (by others) to articulate it. Writing in *The Forward* in 2011, attorney Robert Morgenthau and law professor Frank Tuerkheimer proposed that President Roosevelt should be credited with “saving” the 500,000 Jews of Palestine because Roosevelt’s supply of tanks helped the British stop the Germans at El Alamein, in Egypt--and had they not been stopped, they likely would have conquered Palestine and killed the Jews there. The purpose of that tank shipment, however, had nothing to do with Palestine or the Jews, so the Morgenthau-Tuerkheimer argument was comparable to crediting Josef Stalin with “saving” the Jews of Moscow, since the defeat of the Germans at Stalingrad prevented the Germans from ultimately reaching Moscow.

Nonetheless, Breitman and Lichtman not only made the same argument in *FDR and the Jews*, but used some of the same language, without quotation marks or attribution. Morgenthau and Tuerkheimer had written that the Nazis “planned to annihilate the region’s Jews.” But then FDR sent tanks with “greater range and

firepower” than the Germans. The result was that the mass “slaughter of Jews in Palestine and North Africa was averted.” This stopped the Nazis’ plan for an “extension of the Holocaust” from Europe to the Middle East.<sup>33</sup>

Similarly, Breitman and Lichtman wrote that the Nazis had an “annihilation plan” for the region’s Jews.” But then FDR sent tanks with “superior range” and “superior firepower” to the Germans’ tanks. The result was that “the mass slaughter of Jews” in Palestine and North Africa was averted. This stopped the Nazis “from extending the Holocaust” from Europe to the Middle East. Breitman and Lichtman did not mention Morgenthau and Tuerkheimer in either their source notes or their acknowledgments. On this matter, too, Breitman and Lichtman have refused to answer inquiries.

### **CONCLUSION**

Altering quotations, misrepresenting the contents of historical documents, inventing statistics, refusing to identify sources, suppressing evidence, and using other authors’ words without attribution contravene the American Historical Association’s *Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct*. Such actions also undermine the credibility of those authors. The AHA *Statement* notes: “Those who invent, alter, remove, or destroy evidence make it difficult for

<sup>32</sup> William vanden Heuvel, “America and the Holocaust,” *American Heritage*, July-August 1999, p.51.

<sup>33</sup> Morgenthau and Tuerkheimer, “How FDR Helped Save the Jews of the Holy Land,” *The Forward*, 21 October 2011; Breitman and Lichtman, pp.260-261. Morgenthau and Tuerkheimer also claimed that because of the tanks, “the State of Israel would not exist” if not for Roosevelt. Similarly, Breitman and Lichtman concluded that without President Roosevelt, there would have been “no Jewish State, no Israel.” (p. 318)

any serious historian ever wholly to trust their work again.” (Article 2)

Assigning a book for review to individuals who have previously endorsed it likewise violates generally accepted practices in the academic world. A museum that inserts erroneous information into an exhibit in response to a political pressure campaign, or a journal editor who publishes an essay in violation of the journal’s own stated policy, undermines principles that are supposed to ensure the integrity of the scholarly profession. Such behavior should be opposed by the academic community.

## Appendix I:

### Jewish Leaders and the Bombing of Auschwitz

Raul Hilberg, in *The Destruction of the European Jews* (1961), was the first historian to note that Chaim Weizmann, president of the World Zionist Organization and Jewish Agency, urged the British to bomb Auschwitz. (p.771)

Nora Levin, in *The Holocaust* (1968), mentioned the bombing appeals that were made by Slovak Jewish rescue activist Rabbi Michael Dov Weissmandel. (p. 541)

Henry Feingold, in *The Politics of Rescue* (1970), reported that Nahum Goldmann, co-chairman of the World Jewish Congress and Washington representative of the Jewish Agency, asked the Roosevelt administration to bomb Auschwitz. (p.270)

David S. Wyman, writing in *Commentary* in May 1978, identified a number of the Jewish leaders and organizations who called on the Allies to bomb Auschwitz or the railway lines leading to it: Isaac Sternbuch, a Switzerland-based representative of the U.S. Orthodox rescue group, the Va'ad ha-Hatzala; Rabbi Abraham Kalmanowitz, of the Va'ad ha-Hatzala in New York; Slovak Jewish activist Gisi Fleischmann; Gerhard Riegner, representative of the World Jewish Congress in Geneva; Benjamin Akzin, Revisionist Zionist activist and War Refugee Board staff member; Agudath Israel leader Jacob Rosenheim, in New York City; Ernest Frischer of the Czech government in exile; Yitzhak Gruenbaum, chairman of the Jewish Agency's Rescue Committee; and Johan Smertenko, vice president of the Emergency Committee to Save the Jewish People of Europe (the Bergson Group). Wyman also noted that A. Leon Kubowitzki of the World Jewish Congress opposed bombing from the air.

Bernard Wasserstein, in *Britain and the Jews of Europe 1939-1945* (1979), identified additional proponents of bombing: the Jewish Agency's Political

Director, Moshe Shertok; the Jewish Agency's representatives in Geneva (Richard Lichtheim), Budapest (Moshe Krausz) and London (Joseph Linton), and A.G. Brotman of the Board of Deputies of British Jews. (pp.309, 315, 318)

Martin Gilbert, in *Auschwitz and the Allies* (1981), added one more: Chaim Pozner, of the Jewish Agency's Geneva office. (p.245)

Monty N. Penkower identified Ignacy Schwartzbart, of the World Jewish Congress and Polish National Council, and Reuben Hecht, the Bergson Group's representative in Switzerland (in *The Jews Were Expendable* [1983], p.197 and *Archives of the Holocaust* [1990], p.426).

Dina Porat, in *The Blue and the Yellow Stars of David* (1990), reported that when David Ben-Gurion and the Jewish Agency Executive in Jerusalem learned the true nature of Auschwitz, "the JAE reversed" its original decision to refrain from requesting bombing, and Agency officials around the world began lobbying for bombing. Among them, she noted, was Eliahu Epstein, who met with a Soviet diplomat in Cairo to urge bombing. (pp.218-219)

Rafael Medoff, in 2009, documented the attempt by Berl Locker, of the Jewish Agency's London office, to persuade the Soviets to bomb Auschwitz.

In 2012, Medoff and Bat-Ami Zucker identified additional advocates of bombing: Maurice Perlzweig of the World Jewish Congress in New York; Anselm Reiss of the WJC in London; Golda Meir (then known as Goldie Myerson) and Heschel Frumkin, senior officials of the Histadrut in Palestine; Israel Mereminski, the Histadrut's U.S. representative; and the editors of the U.S. Labor Zionist magazine, *Jewish Frontier*. In 2013, Medoff (in *FDR and the Holocaust*, pp.170-171) described the attempts by Agudath Israel emissary Meir Schenkelowski to persuade Secretary of State Cordell Hull and Secretary of War Henry Stimson to bomb the railways leading to Auschwitz.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Rafael Medoff, "The Roosevelt Administration, David Ben-Gurion, and the Failure to Bomb Auschwitz: A Mystery Solved," *The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies* (Washington, D.C.: 2009), p.19; Rafael Medoff and Bat-Ami Zucker, "America's Failure to Bomb Auschwitz: A New Consensus Among Historians," *The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies* (Washington, D.C.: 2012), pp.11, 13, 15.

## Appendix II:

### Plagiarism

The American Historical Association's official *Statement on Plagiarism* defines plagiarism as "the use of another's language without quotation marks and citation." It also notes that historians "should never simply borrow and rephrase the findings of other scholars."

#### **William J. vanden Heuvel:**

1. From vanden Heuvel's address at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum on October 24, 1996:

*Jews were now prisoners of a psychopath who was also the absolute dictator of Europe....His central obsession, the life's mission of this deranged monomaniacal psychopath, was to kill as many Jews as he could.*<sup>35</sup>

From William Rubinstein's *The Myth of Rescue*, p.79:

*[I]n 1939-40 the Jews of Nazi-occupied Europe ceased to be refugees but instead became the exact opposite: prisoners--prisoners of a psychopath whose life's mission consisted in killing every last one of them and who happened to be the absolute dictator of most of Europe.*<sup>36</sup>

2. From vanden Heuvel's article, "What the Allies Knew and When They Knew It," *The Forward*, February 16, 2001, p. 15:

*[T]he CIA, applying advanced technology not available during World War II, enlarged, cropped and captioned reproductions that for the first time*

*revealed the details of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp.*

From William Rubinstein's *The Myth of Rescue*, p.165:

*It was these enlarged, cropped and newly captioned photographs which were published and republished in the press.*

3. From vanden Heuvel's article, "America and the Holocaust," *American Heritage*, July-August 1999, p.51:

*It is often noted that American bombers were carrying out raids in the summer of 1944 on industrial targets only a few miles away from Auschwitz, suggesting how easy it would have been to bomb the gas chambers.*

From William Rubinstein's *The Myth of Rescue*, p.164:

*If is often noted that American heavy bombers were carrying out raids at this time on industrial targets only a few miles away from the Auschwitz gas chambers...*

4. From vanden Heuvel's article, "America and the Holocaust," *American Heritage*, July-August 1999, p.51:

*All such strategic raids on military-industrial bases proceeded only after months of preparatory intelligence work, entailing the creation of a target folder with specific information about the size, hardness, structure placement, and defenses of the target and detailed aerial photography.*

From William Rubinstein's *The Myth of Rescue*, p.164:

<sup>35</sup> The address was also published in the *National Jewish Post and Opinion*, 27 November 1996, p.9.

<sup>36</sup> *The Myth of Rescue* was officially published in May 1997. However, vanden Heuvel indicated in several articles in 1996 and early 1997 that he had received an advance copy of the manuscript. (William J. vanden Heuvel, "The Holocaust Was No Secret," *New York Times Magazine*, 22 December 1996, p.31; idem., "FDR Did Not Abandon European Jewry," *Washington Jewish Week*, 27 February 1997, p.21.)

*All such strategic raids on military-industrial bases proceeded only after months of preparatory intelligence work, entailing the creation of a target folder with specific information about the size, hardness, structure placement, defences and so on, of the target and detailed aerial photography.*

5. From vanden Heuvel's article, "America and the Holocaust," *American Heritage*, July-August 1999, p.51:

*The Allied air forces simply lacked the intelligence base necessary to plan and execute a bombing raid against the Auschwitz extermination camp.*

From William Rubinstein's *The Myth of Rescue*, p.164:

*However, the United States Air Force totally lacked the intelligence base necessary to plan and execute a bombing raid against the Auschwitz extermination camp.*

### **Robert Rosen:**

1. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews*, p. 1:

*Hitler hated and feared his father, and his mother moved from place to place.*

From James MacGregor Burns' *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom*, p.67:

*Hitler as a boy had hated and feared his father and loved his mother, had moved repeatedly from place to place and from school to school...*

2. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews*, p.16:

*Jews could leave Germany with 35 percent of their capital in 1936, 10 percent in 1938, and by June 1938, nothing.*

From Howard Sachar's *A History of the Jews in America*, p.474:

*By 1936, emigrating Jews were left with 35 percent of their capital; by 1938, with 10 percent; and by June 1938, with nothing.*

3. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews*, p.15:

*The new president had no mandate to do anything about foreign affairs, and he was not about to wreck his critical domestic agenda on the shoals of foreign policy.*

From James MacGregor Burns' *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom*, p.247:

*But even after Roosevelt was safely in office he cautiously skirted foreign policy shoals on which he feared his political popularity and domestic program might be wrecked.*

4. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews*, p.18:

*He despised Nazi brutality against Jews and political opponents and their hatred for democracy. Indeed, he despised everything about them.*

From Irwin Gellman's *Secret Affairs*, pp.16-17:

*The American chief executive ultimately came to despise everything the Nazis represented, especially their renewed efforts at rearmament and the brutality that they unleashed upon their opponents.*

5. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews*, p.23:

*Jewish New Yorkers, the Yiddish-speaking leadership, Jewish War Veterans, Zionist and labor groups, and other Jewish organizations supported the boycott. So did the Yiddish Press and Justice Brandeis.*

From Howard Sachar's *A History of the Jews in America*, p. 469:

*Zionist and labor groups also favored the notion. So did the Morgen Djurnal and Tog. So did Brandeis.*

6. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews*, p.7:

*Between July 1, 1933, and June 30, 1942, 161,051 Jews immigrated to the United States--35.5 percent of all immigrants to America. Jews comprised more than half*



*of all immigrants to the United States between 1938 and 1940...until Kristallnacht, fewer German Jews wished to enter the United States than one would assume.*

From William Rubinstein's *The Myth of Rescue*, pp.34-36:

*Between 1 July 1933 and 30 June 1942 a total of 161,051 Jews migrated to the United States, comprising 35.5 percent of all migrants...settling in America....In both 1938-9 and 1939-40 Jews comprised more than one-half of all immigrants admitted to the United States...until Kristallnacht, many fewer German Jews actually wished to enter the United States than one would assume.*

7. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews*, pp.27-28:

*The epitome of a bureaucrat, he used his position...*

From Richard Breitman and Alan M. Kraut's *American Refugee Policy*, p.28:

*Called by one historian "the epitome of the bureaucrat," Wilbur Carr was...*

8. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews*, p.40:

*In 1924 and 1925 barely 10,000 Jewish immigrants entered the United States.*

From Howard Sachar's *A History of the Jews in America*, p.324:

*In the fiscal year 1924-25 barely ten thousand Jews entered the United States from all countries.*

9. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews*, p. 11:

*The internal political situation in Germany was unstable.*  
From Henry Feingold's *The Politics of Rescue*, p.67:

*The internal political situation in the Reich was simply too unstable to offer any assurances.*

10. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews*, p.149:

*One report had reached him that in New York only the Jews were solidly for him.*

From James MacGregor Burns' *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom*, p.453:

*One report had reached Roosevelt that in New York City only the Jews were solid for him.*

11. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews*, p. 185:

*There were hundreds of thousands of non-Jewish refugees in flight from Poland, Finland, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands.*

From Richard Breitman (in Newton, ed., *FDR and the Holocaust*, pp.135-6):

*First, there were now hundreds of thousands of non-Jewish refugees (as well as additional Jewish refugees) in flight from Poland, Finland, Belgium, the Netherlands...*

12. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews*, p.224:

*After Germany invaded Poland in 1939 ... So many events crowded out news of the persecution of the Jews.*

From Deborah Lipstadt's *Beyond Belief*, p.140:

*As soon as Germany crossed the Polish border, news of the persecution of European Jewry began to be crowded out of the press by news of the war.*

13. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews*, p.296:

*Any time the president touched the issue—even by merely receiving Zionists—he triggered explosive reactions in Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia.*

From James MacGregor Burns' *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom*, p.397:

*Any time the President touched the issue—even by merely receiving Zionists—he*

triggered explosive reactions in Egypt or Syria or Saudi Arabia.

14. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews*, pp.367-368:

*The Joint Chiefs of Staff asked him to retreat from his stand on unconditional surrender....To some degree, Roosevelt's harsh attitude may have been affected by the agony of Jews.*

From James MacGregor Burns' *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom*, pp.40-41:

*[T]he Joint Chiefs of Staff asked the President to retreat from his uncompromising stand [on German surrender]...The President's harsh attitude toward Germany was not unaffected by a growing burden on the world's conscience. This was the agony of the Jews.*

15. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews* p. 62:

*FDR's use of the full German-Austrian quota was well in advance of American public opinion.*

From Richard Breitman and Alan Kraut's *American Refugee Policy*, p.58:

*By encouraging the full use of the German-Austrian quota, the administration could actually increase immigration to the United States--a move that was well in advance of American public opinion.*

16. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews*, p.52:

Roosevelt won a resounding victory in the immigrant wards of the big cities, where turnout increased a third over 1932, and the vote for FDR was overwhelming.

From David M. Kennedy's *Freedom from Fear*, pp.284-5:

*In the immigrant wards of the great industrial cities...turnout rose nearly a third over 1932, and voters went overwhelmingly for Roosevelt and the Democrats.*

17. From Rosen's *Saving Jews*, p.160:

*A Gordon Gallup public poll on April 1, 1941, showed 79 percent of citizens opposed sending American troops overseas, for any reason.*

From T.R.Fehrenbach's *FDR's Undeclared War 1939-1941*, p.213:

*On April 1, 1941, the Gallup poll showed fully 79 percent of the people opposed to sending of American troops overseas, for any reason.*

18. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews*, p. 116:

*FDR was incensed....But Roosevelt could only do so much. He could not undermine Britain's strategic position in the Arab world on the eve of war.*

From Peter Grose's *Israel in the Mind of America*, p.138:

*Roosevelt was incensed....For all his dismay, Roosevelt's hands were tied. He wanted to avoid any action that would weaken Britain's strategic position in the Arab world on the eve of war.*

19. From Rosen's *Saving the Jews*, p. 121:

*At ten minutes to three on the morning of September 1, William Bullitt called the president from Paris with the news of the German invasion.*

From Frank Freidel's *Franklin D. Roosevelt: A Rendezvous with Destiny*, p.321:

*At ten minutes to three on the morning of September 1, William Bullitt called the president from Paris with the news of the German invasion.*