



Tactics of Organized Jewry in Suppressing Free Speech

By Prof. Tony Martin

First of all, thank you very much, Greg, for the introduction. I'd like to thank also the IHR and Mark Weber particularly for inviting me here. I'm very happy to be here, to be part of this event. I like long-winded topics, at least topic titles, so I'll read the topic which I have selected for today. It's as follows: "Jewish Tactics as Exemplified in the Controversy Over Jewish Involvement in the Transatlantic Slave Trade." So I won't be speaking that much on the controversy itself. What I'm trying to do is to use my subjective experience, that is, the experience I've had, for close to a decade now, in dealing with this controversy.



And what I'm going to try to do now -- to use my concrete, subjective experience on the firing line, so to speak. And I'm going to try to extract from my experience certain basic sort of tactics that I think the Jewish lobby has used over the years pertaining to my particular situation. But in trying to extract these tactics from my own situation, I suspect that I may very well resonate with the experience of some other people here, because my suspicion is that there tends to be a generalized practice which transcends your particular situation. So, even though in my case I was dealing with a specific situation -- the transatlantic slave trade -- my suspicion is that the kinds of tactics which were used against me may be not very dissimilar to those experienced by many other folks who have been involved in other kinds of disputes with this particular lobby.

The first thing I should do by way of introduction is just to basically summarize precisely what my controversy was. I know it's familiar to many people here, but I'm sure not to everybody in this audience. As was mentioned a minute ago in the introduction, I teach at Wellesley College in Massachusetts. For many years I've taught a survey course in African-American history. This is a one semester course, that moves very rapidly over the whole gamut of African-American history. In 1993 I introduced to this course a book which is on sale here, a book which then was fairly new, a book which I myself had only just recently become introduced to. This book, which is published by the historical research department of the Nation of Islam, is entitled *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*. And what that book did, relying primarily on sources written by Jews, and Jewish sources of a variety of types, is to try to sort of synthesize the existing information on Jewish involvement in the slave trade, the bringing of Africans as slaves from Africa to the so-called new world. There wasn't that much in the book that was new -- all the information, practically, was secondary information, which had been already published, although hidden away to a large extent in very esoteric Jewish journals, which the average Jew, I discovered later, had no idea about.

Nevertheless, it wasn't new information. It was new to many people, including myself, and I found it very interesting that even though I had taught African-American history for many years, I had been only dimly aware of the role of Jews in that slave trade. What I discovered was that the Jewish role in that slave trade had been very cleverly camouflaged for many, many years. Where Jews were involved, usually they tended not to be identified as Jews, whereas where Christians were involved, or where Muslims were involved, there was ready identification of such persons by their ethnicity, by their religious affiliation, and so on. In the case of Jews, they would be called other things -- Portuguese, Spanish, Brazilian, whatever. But, you know, that crucial identification tended to be obscured. So, as a good professor -- I think I'm a good professor. I'm always on the lookout for new information, to enrich my classes. So I was very fascinated by this new information, and decided to add a few readings from this book in my class. And that's when, as the saying goes, all hell broke loose. [Laughter]

Apparently, I didn't realize it, but I actually stumbled into a controversy which was already brewing because the book had apparently caused some consternation in Jewish circles. And it's only afterwards, when I went back and did my research, that I discovered that one or two editorials had already appeared, by way of the Jewish power structure, in a sense warning people like myself to stay away from the book. There already apparently had been a full-page op ed piece in *The New York Times*, one that, I was told, was the largest, longest op ed that had ever been published in that paper. It was actually typeset in the form of a Star of David. It was written by someone called Henry Lewis Gates of Harvard University, one of the black spokesmen for the Jewish lobby. Even the paper from my basic home town, the Boston Globe, had carried an editorial, which I was unaware of at the time, not long before I began to use the book. And in a sense, the purpose of these editorials and op eds was to warn folks to stay away from that book, or else. But me, in my foolhardiness,

ignored the warnings, being largely unaware of the warnings in the first place. And so I stumbled into this problem.

In fact Jews had been involved not only in the African slave trade, but also, and for a very long period of time, in a variety of other slave trades as well. Apparently, they had actually dominated slavery and the slave trade in medieval times. A couple of days ago, while on the plane on the way here, I was re-reading a Ph. D. dissertation from 1977 ["The Ebb and Flow of Conflict: A History of Black-Jewish Relations through 1900"] by a man called Harold D. Brackman, who is a functionary of the Simon Wiesenthal Center. In his dissertation, which details Black-Jewish relations from ancient times up to 1900, he actually acknowledges the fact that Jews were the principal slave traders in the world for several hundred years -- although, and in the typical fashion, he puts a very interesting spin on it. He acknowledges, as I guess he has to, that Jews were the major slave traders in the world, trading slaves everywhere from Russia to western Europe, to India, to China -- but he says that they dominated the world trade only for a few hundred years -- only. [laughter] He said that they were the main slave traders from the eighth century to the twelfth century -- but that was no big thing. It was only a few hundred years.

I discovered also that the Jews were very instrumental in the ideological underpinning for the African slave trade -- the notorious Hamitic myth -- which more than anything else has provided a sort of ideological underpinning or rationale for the slave trade. This comes out of the Talmud. In fact, Harold Brackman himself acknowledges that this was the first explication of the story in the Biblical book of Genesis about Ham, the so-called progenitor of the African race, having been cursed by Noah, and so on. But apparently, according to Brackman, the Talmud was the first place that put a racist spin on this story. The Biblical story was racially neutral, but the Talmud apparently put a very awful racist spin on this story, which later on became the basis, the ideological underpinning, for the African slave trade. So all of this I was to discover as I became embroiled in the controversy.

One of the things that interested me, too, was that the Jewish element was apparently also a major element in what came to be known in the 19th century as the white slave trade. The white slave trade was a major multinational, international trading in women for immoral sexual purposes, as prostitutes, and so on. And I found, too, that Jewish entrepreneurs in Europe apparently were also major figures in that so-called slave trade.

So I became aware of all of this. Just to summarize briefly what I discovered in the book, *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*, and in the subsequent readings, with regard to the African slave trade, is that once it got going in the 15th century, the Jews again were a very important part of it. The book was not suggesting, just I have never suggested, that the Jews were the only people involved, or even the major people involved. My basic point has always been that whereas everybody else that I'm aware of who was a part of the slave trade has acknowledged being part of it. In fact, many of the people who were a part of the genesis of the slave trade later also became part of the abolitionist movement to end the trade. But as far as I know, the Jewish element is the only one that has resisted acknowledging its participation in this trade. In fact, it has gone beyond merely resisting knowledge of this information coming out. It has become very upset when this information has come to the fore.

And that has been my basic problem. Why? What's so special about this group that places itself beyond the pale, so to speak -- no pun intended -- beyond the pale of criticism. And whereas any other group can be criticized, this group -- it seems to me -- is beyond criticism. Especially for me as a black person, I become very upset if someone tries to walk into my classroom to tell me that I, as a black person teaching black history, have to sort of regard their involvement in my history as somehow out of bounds.

So, after becoming involved in this history, via the Hamitic myth, Jews were some of the important financiers of this slave trade in the very early periods. One of the major multi-national corporations that financed the Atlantic slave trade very early on was the Dutch West India Company. As we know, the Jews had been chased out of Spain, and chased out of Portugal. The Netherlands was the one area which welcomed them to some degree. And this was right around the same time, the 15th century, that the slave trade was gearing up -- so they were positioned, geographically and in other ways, to become an important element in the financing of the Dutch West India Company, a major multinational corporation that was involved in the slave trade.

In the early 17th century Jews were, in fact, a major element in the slave trade in places like Brazil and Surinam in South America, in places like Curacao in the West Indies, and in Jamaica, Barbados and other places. I discovered that they were also very well positioned in this country -- that many of the traders in colonial times who brought slaves across the Atlantic to this country were in fact Jewish ship-owners and slave traders. Some of the best known names in colonial North America who were involved in that traffic were people like Aaron Lopez of Newport, Rhode Island, who was one of the best-known names of all.

I discovered that Jews owned many of the ancillary corporations that sort of fed into the slave trade. For example, rum distilling was a major business that was ancillary to the slave trade because rum was used as an item of trade, to exchange for slaves in West Africa. And most of the rum distilleries in places like Boston and elsewhere in New England were, I believe, owned by Jews, and so on.

I discovered that according to the 1830 census, even though Jews were a small proportion of the population in North America, nevertheless they were inordinately represented among the slave owners. Yes, they were a small portion of the population overall, but on a percentage basis that were significant. Jewish historians who have analyzed the 1830 census have discovered that whereas something like 30-odd percent of the white population may have owned one or more slaves in the South, for Jewish households it was over 70 percent. So according to an analysis of the 1830 census by Jewish historians, Jews were more than twice as likely, on a percentage basis, to own slaves.

I also discovered that Jews, despite their involvement in the slave trade, were very few and far between in the abolitionist movement. They were much, much less likely than other groups to be involved in this movement. So that in a nutshell, then, is the set of facts that caused me to become involved in this interesting controversy. And what I want to do, then, is to dwell not on the facts themselves, but on what I perceive to be the main tactics that were used, because I found myself, like I said, on the front line of this situation, and I became very fascinated, looking at their tactics. And the more I began to read around this question, the more I saw patterns emerging.

The first and major tactic that I discovered in their attack on me was their reliance on lies -- just straight-up lies. There's no other way to describe it, just telling lies. Many of the categories that I will enumerate overlap, and many of them could also come under this general rubric of telling lies. But I think that if one had to isolate a single tactic, it was a tactic of telling lies. I think they've elevated telling lies to a very high artistic form. [Laughter]. For example, very early in my controversy, the major Jewish organizations became involved. And this is very fascinating. Here am I, a professor in a very small college, teaching a class of maybe 30 students, but they attached such great importance to this, that within a very short space of time the major Jewish organizations became involved, and it became a national event. For example, one Sunday morning on the ABC network television program "This Week With David Brinkley," there was a whole segment dealing with this question -- about my telling my students that Jews were involved in the slave trade.

Up to that point I was still a little astounded, considering the prominence given to what, to me, was a totally inconsequential thing. Shortly after all of this started, four of the major Jewish organizations issued a joint press release attacking me: the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, and the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston. Afterwards they said that this was somewhat unprecedented for these major Jewish organizations to combine their efforts to attack one little obscure professor at a small school. They also admitted that it was unusual to issue this press release in the middle of one of their high holy days -- of which there are quite a few, I understand -- to sort of disturb the sanctity of this high holiday by issuing something along these lines.

Now, I actually saw one of the original press releases, which I have likened to a medieval scroll. It reminded me of a movie I saw as a boy, with Robin Hood, in which the Sheriff of Nottingham went into Sherwood Forest [laughter], and he would unroll a long proclamation and tack it on a tree, saying "Robin Hood, beware. We're looking for you." That kind of a thing. [laughter]. This was literally a scroll. You couldn't read it without having to unroll it. I've never seen anything like it. It had the logos of these four organizations. And this opened my eyes to the proclivity of these folks to tell lies.

This proclamation told the world that I was refusing to let my students discuss this information. First of all, it presented me as providing wrong information -- blatantly false information, as another Jewish person described it to my classroom. And it said that in the classroom I was apparently ramming this stuff down my students' throats, and forbidding any discussion -- a claim that was absolutely, hideously untrue. It said that I had a history of all kinds of problems with my school, and that my colleagues had been complaining about me for many years. Up to now I have had no inkling of what these complaints could possibly be. I know of no such incidents, certainly not before this time.

I was able to take this press release and read it out to my class. It was a very good learning experience for the students, because here were the students who I was accused of misleading and whatnot, and I was able to show them the kind of information that gets into the major media. One of the interesting lies that came out around this time was by the campus rabbi. She came into my office -- yes this was a "she," actually -- complaining about my teaching this information. So I told her: Well look, if you think this information is false, why don't you come to my class? I will invite you to my classroom. I will allow you to stand up in front of my class and explain what's wrong with this information, and then we can have a debate in front of the

class. And she agreed. But of course she quickly changed her mind. And not only did she change her mind, but then she put it out that I had refused to discuss the material with her. [laughter].

So point number one is the proclivity to tell lies. Point number two was a very interesting proclivity towards attempting to damage one's professional credibility. There was a tendency to libel and slander whoever they were upset with. In this case it was me. There was one Jewish gentleman, about 50 years old, who began making anonymous calls, random calls, to the campus. He would call the dorms, he would call people's offices, just randomly. And he would tell them he was a Jewish student at Harvard University. He would tell them that he had discovered that I did not really have a PhD, and that I was not qualified to be teaching at Wellesley College. This was one of the more bizarre examples of the attempt to discredit me professionally.

There was a gentleman who I subsequently brought a libel case against, and lost. I brought three cases, but lost them all. This gentleman suggested that I was an affirmative action PhD, and that the only reason I got a PhD was because of affirmative action. He said the only reason I got tenure at Wellesley College -- I was one of the youngest professors ever tenured there -- was because they were afraid of me. I was portrayed as this great, black, loudmouthed person, so just to keep me quiet they decided to give me tenure. [laughter].

One of the most interesting of these efforts to discredit me was by a gentleman called Leon Wieseltier, who describes himself as a literary editor of the *New Republic* magazine. Now in 1994, I think it was, at the height of all this hysteria, *The Washington Post Book World* invited me to review four new books for an issue, which I did. They gave my review a lot of space. It was the longest book review in that issue.

And in the very next week's issue, there were, predictably, two or three outraged letters from Jewish individuals asking *The Washington Post Book World* if had been aware of who this person was -- the great anti-Semite Tony Martin. Don't you know who this is? [laughter] How can you let him write in this prestigious periodical? And this guy Wieseltier went a step further. The title of my book is *The Jewish Onslaught*, and the subtitle is "Despatches from the Wellesley Battlefield." Now, I spell despatches "d-e-s." Most Americans spell it "d-i-s." I grew up in a British tradition, in a British colony, and to this day I spell honor "h-o-n-o-u-r." Most of you do not. The "e" in "despatches" is a British spelling. And this idiot [laughter] obviously didn't realize that there are alternative spellings of the word. Again, so anxious to try to discredit someone they disagree with, this guy actually told *The Washington Post Book World* in his letter that I was so ignorant and stupid that I couldn't even spell the word "despatches." [laughter]. Look at how stupid I was, who had been allowed to publish in their journal. Luckily for me, the editor of *The Washington Post Book World* was one of those rare persons who was apparently not too cowed by the Jewish onslaught. And she wrote a very nice rejoinder telling Wieseltier that she had checked two dictionaries, and in both of them she saw "despatches" -- spelled with an "e" -- as one of the optional spellings of the word. [Applause]

Then there was Mary Lefkowitz, one of my colleagues at Wellesley College. In a little literary magazine I'd never seen before, she actually alleged that I had pushed, had physically assaulted, a white student. Now, I teach at a women's college. So, here she is playing into, I guess, all these perceptions of a big, black rapist or whatever. But she actually alleged that I physically pushed down a white student. This would be a white woman, and the woman fell down. Then, she said, I bent over her and raged. That was the word she used: I bent over her and raged. One had a vision of a raging animal. [laughter]. So of course I brought a libel suit against her.

And one of the things I discovered was that these folks are very, very well positioned in the court system. In fact, after having lost, well, I guess, two libel suits, I was beginning to think they must have had something to do with fashioning the libel laws in this country. [laughter]. Because in this case, you know, Lefkowitz actually acknowledged that what she said was wrong, and she acknowledged that she had not taken due care in ascertaining the facts. But even those acknowledgements were not enough for me to win the case. I had to prove that she had acted with reckless abandon, and all kinds of things. But it was a very interesting learning experience for me. The way libel laws work in this country, once they identify you as a "public person," anyone basically has *carte blanche*. A person can say anything he wants. It can be true. It can be false. He doesn't have to do research. He can say anything he wants. It's almost literally that bad.

So, those are some of the efforts that were made to discredit me. Of course, I don't think they succeeded. But again, this was a very persistent effort to sort of tarnish my image. And very much aligned with this, of course, was the generalized question of character assassination. This was part of that effort to damage one's credibility.

There was also the tactic of what I describe as dirty tricks. Of course, this too is a subset within the general rubric of lies, I suppose. At Wellesley College there is a Hillel group. Hillel is the Jewish student organization that exists on campuses around the country. I remember reading in Paul Findley's book, *They Dare To Speak*

Out, that the Hillel people are formally trained, apparently by the ADL and other organizations, in tactics: how to disrupt meetings, how to push false propaganda on campuses, and so on. And even though I don't know it for a fact, certainly those Hillel students who were part of the campaign did appear to be professionally trained.

In fact, the whole campaign against me was initiated by students from the Hillel group. They sat in on my class on the first day of the semester, just for one day. And somehow from that one day's class they somehow figured out that I was teaching this book as fact. Apparently they figured that if I was teaching the book as "hate literature," quote unquote, that would be okay. But the fact that I was teaching the book just as any other book, as one having some basic academic credibility -- they considered that, of course, to be a grossly anti-Semitic thing. And they were the ones who raised the hue and cry.

There's a group on campus called "The Friends of Wellesley Hillel." This is a group of faculty and alumni who work very closely with the Hillel students. In the midst of this campaign they actually put together a packet of mostly libelous information, and mailed it to the mother of one of the students who was very, very vocal on my behalf. The students rallied around me. It's quite incredible the extent to which these folks would operate. This is a group of grown people, such as deans of the college, professors, who take the time to sit on committees to put together a packet of basically lies and misinformation, and send it out. They actually targeted this one student because she was a leader of the students who were supporting me, and they sent this information to her mother.

Somebody came and tacked up a flyer around my office one day -- I wasn't in the office at the time -- alleging sexual misconduct between myself and this same student who was vocal on my behalf. Fortunately for me, it didn't work. And at one point they started a rumor that if I wrote recommendations for those students, they would not get jobs and would not get entry into graduate school, or anything. These are some of what I call dirty tricks.

There was also the tactic of what I call "going for the economic jugular" -- to remove my ability to survive economically. An example of that was a joint press release that called for my expulsion from the college. It called for my tenure to be revoked. So again, that's one of the hallmarks of their tactics, it seems to me. And I am sure that this is of wider application than in just my own case.

There was also the tactic of what I call Great Presumptuousness. I heard somebody last night mention the word "chutzpah." I call it presumptuousness -- the idea that a rabbi, a student chaplain, could come into my office to demand an explanation for why am I teaching this information. That to me is sheer presumptuousness. Even though I was polite, the essence of my response was, basically, "Who the hell are you to come here to tell me what I must teach [laughter] in a black studies class. I'm an expert on black studies. Who the hell are you?" I didn't say it in those terms, but that was the import [applause] of what I was saying.

Before this Jewish onslaught began with me, just by sheer coincidence a few months earlier, I had been doing some research in a Jewish archive in New York City, and at that time a case similar to mine had just erupted concerning Professor Leonard Jeffries at City College in New York City. He had made a speech in Albany in which he had pointed out that Jews had a very large hand in fashioning Hollywood. In fact, there's a book by a Jewish author, Neil Gabler, called *An Empire of Their Own*. And the subtitle, interestingly enough, is "How the Jews Invented Hollywood." [Laughter]. What could be more explicit than that? The author is boasting about the way Jews basically shaped American popular culture.

So Len Jeffries, in his speech in Albany, had said Well, okay, so you all [Jews] invented American popular culture. You therefore have to take a large portion of the blame for the negative stereotypes concerning black folk that have been nurtured by Hollywood over the years. But of course they want to have their cake and eat it, too. They want to invent Hollywood, but they don't want to take responsibility for the negative elements coming out of Hollywood. So Jeffries was branded as anti-Semitic, as usual, for having said that. So at that time, when I was visiting the Jewish archive, my own case had not yet emerged. But they tried to put me through this litmus test. It was almost as though they would not let me use the archives unless I disavowed any kind of association with Jeffries. The woman in charge asked me: "Do you know Len Jeffries?" I said Yes, I know him. He's a good friend of mine, a colleague of mine. And she was very upset.

Again there's this presumptuousness, this feeling that they have a right to put you through all these litmus tests -- a right to demand of you why you are doing something that, to anybody else, is totally correct, and totally inoffensive.

Another tactic which I think I can distill out of my experience is a tendency to sidestep the real issues. I discovered that throughout this whole period of almost ten years now, they would almost never engage me on the facts of the matter. They would say: Okay, you say that Jews were involved in the slave trade. You're a big anti-Semite. So I'll say: Okay, let's discuss it. Were Jews indeed half of the slave owners in Brazil in the 17th century? I'll say, look at your own *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. It says that Jews were half the slave owners in Brazil. But they would never engage in that kind of factual debate. Never. They would always go off on a tangent, trying to besmirch your character, trying to take away your economic wherewithal, and so on. But they studiously avoid ever engaging in a discussion of the actual facts of the matter.

I had a graphic illustration of this just a few weeks ago when this question flared again, very briefly, on my campus. Somebody mentioned that ten years ago I had taught these [allegedly] blatant falsehoods, and whatnot. So I responded in the newspaper. And a couple of Jewish students wrote back, responding to me. And again, although I laid out several examples of Jewish historians acknowledging the Jewish involvement in the slave trade, there was no reference to this at all by the Jewish students. Instead, they began talking about stories from Europe in the Middle Ages, or some other era, about Jews killing white kids to take their blood and put it in matzos, and stories of their Jewish holocaust. In short, all kinds of stuff that had nothing to do with anything. In fact, I responded asking them what any of this has to do with the point that I was making. They did not read my article. They did not acknowledge the evidence I had given concerning Jewish involvement in the slave trade. What do stories of Jews killing somebody for their blood to put in matzos have to do the slave trade? But this was always their tendency. They would studiously avoid the facts and avoid the issue at hand, but instead bring in what we call Red Herrings -- off the wall stuff. And this was a very persistent tactic, which I've been able to discern.

Another tactic -- which may be just saying the same thing in a different way -- is the tendency to introduce "straw men." For example, I'm discussing Jewish involvement in the slave trade, but somebody responds by writing an article saying that I alleged -- which is not true -- that Jews were genetically predisposed towards enslaving others. This has nothing to do with anything that I was talking about. But again, they would totally disregard the facts of the case and introduce something totally different. They would introduce a "straw man," get it on the record, and then they would attack the "straw man" they've created. And because they have such great influence in the media, this "straw man," this false information, all of a sudden becomes part of the record. Even in court they'll reference the same lies that they put in the newspaper, as though this is some disinterested source, some third party. And then this brings me to my next point -- their ability to plant misinformation in the record, and then use that misinformation as though it's some kind of well-documented, primary source.

Point number ten. This is what I call the use of quislings or surrogates, or what we in the black community call Uncle Toms. They have developed this art to a very high level -- at least in my case, or in the black community. I've mentioned Henry Louis "Skip" Gates. There are many other notorious figures like that in the black community, who are all too willing to do their bidding. I must say that these folks are very, very well recompensed. These folks have been given incredible prominence. They go around the world speaking, sometimes for fifteen thousand dollars at a time. Those are the kind of honorariums these folks get. They've been given endowed chairs in their universities. Many of them can hardly put two sentences together. But because they've been willing to play this game, they've been elevated to prominence. When you pick up *The New York Times*, you'll see them on the cover of the Sunday magazine section with regard to issues that pertain to black folk. And it doesn't matter what it is specifically. It can be the history of Africa. It can be contemporary politics in the Caribbean. It doesn't matter. They are quoted as the authorities, and so on. You'll also see them on PBS television, on multi-million dollar programs and documentaries, and so on. And this has been a very effective tactic on their part; to pick out people from within, in this case, my own group -- that is, people who are willing to, in a sense, sell themselves for the admittedly very ample rewards they're given as a result.

Another tactic is their ability to leverage off of the influence which they undoubtedly have in high places. At Wellesley College, for example, a new president was coming on just as my case was moving to its climax, so to speak. And this new college president came in not knowing anything about what had been happening. And somehow these folks got her to write a letter, which I suspect they must have drafted themselves because she had no real knowledge of the background of what was happening. This was a letter condemning me for teaching that Jews were involved in the slave trade. This letter, according to newspaper reports, was sent out to maybe 40 to 60 thousand people. So you had the incoming president of Wellesley College sending out 40 to 60 thousand letters. This must be unprecedented in the annals of American higher education, I think. This is something for the *Guinness Book of World Records* [Laughter]. A university president sending out as many as 60, that's six-zero, thousand letters, condemning one of her own professors for teaching something that is historically true. I've never, ever heard of such a case. Maybe I should indeed write to the *Guinness Book of World Records* and see if they can immortalize me by mentioning this.

Then there was the American Historical Association. Three Jewish historians actually went to the American Historical Association and got it to decree – that’s the only term I can use – to decree, by executive fiat, that the Jews were not involved in the slave trade. [Laughter] I’ve never ever heard of any such thing. This is totally antithetical to the way that academia operates. Who’s ever heard of such a thing: historical fact being determined by presidential decree from the American Historical Association. “We decree...” [mocking]. It’s like a Papal Bull in the Middle Ages... “We decree: The Jews were not involved in the slave trade.” [Laughter] It is absolutely amazing, but they actually succeeded in having this done.

Then there’s one of the most amazing cases of all. I was invited to speak in the city of Worcester, Massachusetts, by Worcester State College, round about 1994 or 95. And the Jewish groups were actually able to get the mayor of Worcester – one of the largest cities in the state – to call together a special press conference, in which he had leaders of all the major religions. He had a Roman Catholic head. He had a Baptist head -- heads of various Protestant denominations -- and rabbis, ADL types, and so on. The mayor assembled an entire coalition of religious and apparently civil rights organizations. For what? To denounce me prior to my appearance at Worcester State College. They had already tried to put pressure on the college, and on the people who’d invited me. To their great credit, those people stayed strong. They refused to bow, and I spoke. You would think that the mayor had more important things to do. [Laughter]. But here these groups were powerful enough to get the mayor of a major city to pull together a special conclave on a Jewish press release to denounce me.

Of course, the result was that my speech, when indeed it did take place, drew the largest audience in the history of the school. [Laughter and applause] Actually, I didn’t originally include this in my talk, but I really should mention their tendency on occasion to shoot themselves in the foot. [laughter] If they had left me alone, I think the only people who would have known of the Jewish involvement in the slave trade would have been my 30 students and myself. [Laughter, applause]. But now, of course, the whole world knows about it. And, as a result, the question of African slavery will never ever again be raised without the question of the Jewish role being part of the discussion. It’s now in the forefront of people’s consciousness. And that’s due to them. I mean, I never could have promoted this idea the way that they did. [Laughter].

Another tactic, of course, is their use of the major media. They become very agitated when one speaks of their control of the media. That’s one of the worst anti-Semitic things it’s possible for anybody to say. And yet, as in the case of the Jewish involvement in Hollywood, they themselves boast about their prominence in the media. In fact, in my book, *The Jewish Onslaught*, I quote Charles Silberman, a Jewish author, who wrote a book in the 1980s called *A Certain People*. And in it he boasts that of the seven top editors of *The New York Times*, all seven were Jews. He wrote about the major TV networks, and although I forget the precise figure, he mentions that the majority of the senior television network producers were Jews, and that it’s these producers who really determine what gets on the news, what stays out, what spin is put on information, and so on. So the people who are crucial to spinning the news, he wrote, are primarily Jews. He named names. And I quoted him in my book. But I was anti-Semitic for quoting him [laughter], which was not unusual.

When that huge scroll, that press-release scroll, was issued by the four major Jewish organizations, the *Boston Globe*, the city’s leading newspaper, published four major articles, including editorials and op eds, within about six days, attacking me on that question. That included an op ed in the Sunday paper and a major editorial on the editorial page. Again, these were filled with lies and distortions. I responded with a letter, which they refused to publish. So they had four major items attacking me in less than a week, but they refused to publish my rejoinder. And so, because these folks have such a sway over the major media, it gives them a very great advantage.

I remember being interviewed for the Fox front page program. They interviewed me for over an hour, but I guess that my responses to their questions were so tight that they could not find any sound bite to extract to make me look bad. So they gave me a couple sound bites, maybe half a second each, but instead of letting me talk, they had a narrator of some kind who spent about five minutes telling folks what I had said, but not letting me say anything, practically. And that, too, is one of their tactics.

The use of organizations is another tactic. Of course, I don’t have to tell this audience about the Anti-Defamation League. I think I also have pride of place on the ADL website. Although I haven’t checked recently, for several years I had Honorable Mention every year in their listing of anti-Semitic occurrences, and so on. In their listing of anti-Semitic occurrences of the previous year, there would be an item like, “Tony Martin gave a lecture at XYZ college.” That would in itself be cited as an anti-Semitic event -- the fact that I gave a lecture someplace. The ADL actually issued a book about me. And although I’ve had it for years, I haven’t got around to reading it. They took the title of my book and turned it around. This ADL report is titled *Academic Bigotry: Professor Tony Martin’s Anti-Jewish Onslaught*.

Another tactic is what I call their unseemly histrionics. When I spoke at Worcester State College, there was a Jewish lady (I think her name was Schneider) who was on the College's board of trustees. Amidst great fanfare, she resigned from the board because of the school's invitation to me. But that's what I call nothing but stupid histrionics. It got a lot of press, of course. It created a lot of media interest. But again, this was a case of shooting herself in the foot. As I remember they had initially scheduled me to speak in an auditorium that held about a hundred people. But after all the hysteria, which they themselves had generated, they had to change the venue to the largest auditorium they had, which held about 300 people. And even that wasn't big enough. So eventually, when I turned up on a cold, wintry morning in February, they had that 300-capacity auditorium totally full. Then they had to run closed-circuit televisions outside for another 300 people to hear what I had to say. And of course, my speech got to be front-page news the next morning in the Worcester *Telegram & Gazette*, and so on.

Another thing they try to do is to pin what I call a nickname on you. They try to find some little slip of the tongue, or some little thing they can take out of context. And if they find it, then every time your name is mentioned in the media, they stick that on you. For example, Minister Louis Farrakhan of the Nation of Islam once made a slip. He was talking about a fact, as I mentioned earlier, that 75 percent of Jewish households in 1830 owned slaves. But he kind of got it wrong, as one often does in the midst of a speech -- a slip of the tongue. And it came out, when he said it, that Jews owned 75 percent of the slaves. It was obviously a slip of the tongue. But they mentioned it repeatedly ever since, often using that sound bite to make it look like he was a great distorter of the truth.

In my case, fortunately for me, the most they could pin on me was the term "controversial." So every time they mention me, I get to be the "controversial" professor. [Laughter]. They're also very good at the good cop/bad cop game. While someone is trying to destroy you on one side, someone will come on the other side, all smiley and whatnot. But beware of the good cop. Very often it's better to deal with the bad cop because the good one will often get you in jail much more quickly and smoothly than the bad one.

And sometimes they try to play you for a fool. At the same time they're trying to destroy you, they're trying to give you advice. [laughter] Last year, for example, when I decided to accept David Irving's invitation to speak in Cincinnati, there was a guy whose name I don't recall who sent me an e-mail telling me what a racist David Irving was. He sent me this copy of some poem that Irving had written, saying he didn't want his daughter to marry a Rastafarian or something -- which is neither here nor there as far as I'm concerned. If he wants he wants his daughter to marry a Rastafarian or anybody else, or not marry them, So what? That has nothing to do with anything as far as I'm concerned. But again, here are people who are trying to destroy me, people who have spent the last ten years trying to portray me as all kinds of things, trying to take my livelihood away, and these same people can have the chutzpah, I guess, to warn me against somebody else. The whole idea is just totally amazing to me. Of course, I didn't pay any great attention to what these guys are trying to say.

Another one of their tactics is hate mail. Their propensity for hate mail, I discovered, is absolutely amazing. Up to now, I still get a lot of hate emails. And a few days ago I got a hate postcard. On the one hand they try to portray themselves in public as these great liberals and nice folks and whatnot, but at the very same time they're getting out this other kind of stuff.

Which also reminds me of the tendency towards violence. There was one Jewish guy, he said he was a Russian Jew, called Alexander Nechaevsky, who actually came onto my campus saying that he had come to get me. Luckily I wasn't there to be gotten that day. I was somewhere out of town. But he came to the office, saying he had come to get me, and whatnot. They had to call the campus police, and he was given an order -- a trespass order, I think they called it -- not to appear on the campus again.

So these, then, are some of the kinds of tactics that I've been able to distill from my interaction with these folks over the last nine or ten years. Again, I've been very fascinated by the fact that I've become more broadly aware of similar situations involving others so that, it seems to me, many of these tactics may be of much more generalized application.

I don't necessarily know the best way to respond. But I can just maybe outline, very quickly, the ways that I have tried to respond. I have tried to respond, first of all, by trying to stand on principle. From the very beginning, as far as I'm concerned, I'm talking the truth. I've said that the Jews were indeed involved in the slave trade. And as long as I am convinced in my own mind that I'm talking the truth, then that's it. I've tried to disregard all of the other foolishness, and I've tried to stand on the truth. I've been on TV many times, debating people from the American Jewish Committee, and so on. And again, in such face to face debate, all of these tactics come into play. They try to attack your credibility, your character. But what I've always tried to do in those exchanges is to ignore, as far as I can, all of the *ad hominem* attacks, and concentrate on the facts. So they'll say "Tony Martin is an anti-Semite." I'll just ignore it. I'll say, 75 percent of Jewish

households owned slaves, according to the 1830 census. I'll stick to the facts, and I'll use those kinds of media appearances as an opportunity to inform whoever happens to be listening.

I've also tried, where I could, to myself leverage off of their media power. There have been times when they have unwittingly given me an opportunity to appear before the mass media, and I've used those opportunities to the hilt -- again, to push facts. I know in advance that I have only 30 seconds, so I try to ram as many facts into those 30 seconds as I can, and just forget all the anti-Semitic stuff. I can deal with that later.

I've also tried to develop, to the best of my limited resources, some kind of independent response. I find that independence is a very, very great benefit. I started my own little publishing company. It's a little company, but it was very, very effective. My book, *The Jewish Onslaught* got out and sold like hotcakes. It's really made a difference, just to have some kind of an independent medium. It wasn't a major corporation or anything, but it was independent. I controlled it, and I was able to fight back to some degree.

I also think it's important to have some kind of a support structure. I was very fortunate. They attacked me at a time when I already had established a pretty good sort of a support structure in academia. I was relatively well known. It wasn't as easy for them to destroy my credibility as it might have been for people who were perhaps less accomplished. But I found that having a support structure and being able to avail oneself of it was very important.

And finally, in my case I tried wherever possible to take the matter to them. I didn't sit back and wait, once the battle was joined. I found it, in fact. In the early days especially I think that they weren't used to having people fight back the way that I did. I think it sort of threw them off balance. They came at me with all their usual bag of tricks, expecting me to fold immediately. But I once I was able to fight back, and once it began to appear to them that they had a long protracted struggle on their hands, and not an easy victory, it took them a while to actually try to regroup and figure out what to do.

So, I just offer these as perhaps things for folks to think about in their response. Thank you very much.

This is an edited transcript of Prof. Martin's address given in June 2002 in Irvine, California, at the 14th Conference of the Institute for Historical Review.

About the Author

Tony Martin, a historian, was best known as a specialist of African American history. For years he served as a professor of Africana Studies at Wellesley College (Massachusetts).

He was born in 1942 in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. He earned a B.Sc. honors degree in economics at the University of Hull (England), and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in history at Michigan State University. He authored, compiled or edited 14 books. He was perhaps best known for his work on the life and legacy of the Black Nationalist leader Marcus Garvey. Martin's many articles and reviews appeared in a variety of academic journals and popular periodicals, as well as in reference works and anthologies. He was also a popular lecturer, and addressed general and scholarly audiences across the US, in Canada, and in other countries. Martin retired in June 2007 as professor emeritus after 34 years with Wellesley College's Africana Studies Department. He died in January 2013 at the age of 70 in Trinidad.

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