

## **Joint Statement on Dealing with Holocaust Revisionism**

**By delegates of the Synagogue Council of America and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops**

**March 14, 1994**

Ever since World War II various extremist, often neo-Nazi groups have sought to deny the crimes of the Nazis, particularly the attempt to exterminate the Jewish people. We condemn these prejudiced efforts and the racial hatred they would incite.

In the 1970's, proponents of Holocaust denial began to camouflage their message of hatred and antisemitism under a veneer of scholarly terminology in order to regain respectability. Rather than stating their beliefs straightforwardly, they began to call themselves "historical revisionists," pretending to be interested in challenging and "revising" common understandings of the period.

In this guise of holocaust revisionism, the denials of the evils perpetrated by Nazism against so many peoples and groups in Europe sought to rehabilitate the tattered image of National Socialism (Nazism). To some extent they succeeded in getting their views considered in unsuspecting academic symposia that took their claims to scholarly integrity at face value.

Increasingly blocked from academic fore as word spread, the Holocaust deniers have adopted a new tactic, placing advertisements in college newspapers. Again hiding their true intent under more respectable guise, such as so-called committees for "open debate" on the Holocaust, the unsolicited ads deny the reality of the gas chambers and of Nazi genocide.

The deniers then argue that the First Amendment should be read to impel university and college publications to publish whatever material they may choose to provide. This is a perversion of the First Amendment. All educational institutions and their publications, whether official or student-sponsored, should unconditionally reject any efforts to deny the horrifying realities of the Holocaust.