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Letter

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## LETTER

### *To the Editor—*

I must be blunt. Shraga Elam's fall 2003 review of *51 Documents: Zionist Collaboration with the Nazis*, which I edited, so obviously violates the minimal requirements expected of a review that it raises a serious question as to the competence of the review editor of your magazine.

In quality journals, reviewers are obligated to tell readers what is in the book under study. While faultfinding is to be expected, a reviewer is only allowed to write about the book the editor could have/should have written, but did not, after they describe the book that actually was written. And, of course, a reviewer is not allowed to substitute an essay on the wonderful book the reviewer wrote for the review of the book actually in front of him.

Look again at the grotesque review you published. Elam does not trouble himself to list even one of the historic documents in my book, much less quote or describe a single one of them. How then can the reader possibly know anything about what is in the book?

Instead of describing, much less quoting, any document in the book, he magisterially declares that the documents I gathered are "diminished by the absence of more relevant documents, partly cited in more recent studies. Therefore, this book does not reflect in many instances the latest body of knowledge and cannot replace the necessary systematic study of information that has become accessible since Brenner's original research."

Elam then launches into his could have/should have critique of what he claims is my view of "the Kasztner affair," without even mentioning to his readers that I presented, for the first time in English, thirty-six pages of Rezső Kasztner's post-World War II "Report of the Budapest Jewish Rescue Committee" to the World Zionist Organization, plus Adolf Eichmann's description of his relationship with the Zionist collaborator in 1944-45, later taped in hiding in Argentina.

Elam's critique of my book, if it can even be called that, is just an introduction to a review of *Hitler's Forgers: How Jewish, American, and Swiss Agents Helped the SS Launder Counterfeit Money* written by himself of course, which gives us—you guessed it—the real poop on Kasztner.

Once having treated your readers to a discussion of his wonderful tome, Elam is done. They would not know that my book deals with other issues besides the subject of his soaring opus. But in fact it contains, among other things,

1. The complete translation of the German Zionist Federation's 1933 offer to collaborate with the new Nazi regime.
2. The complete text of the British court's 1933 decision regarding the assassination of the secretary of the World Zionist Organization's Jewish Agency by members of Vladimir Jabotinsky's Zionist Revisionists.
3. The complete translation of a 1934 article in Goebbels' *Der Angriff*, by SS-man Leopold von Mildenstein, describing his voyage to Palestine as the guest of the German Zionist Federation.
4. The complete text of a 1935 article by Jabotinsky, telling American Jews not to denounce the Italian fascist regime.
5. The complete translation of a 1936 article in the Revisionists' Italian magazine on the opening of the Revisionists' headquarters at Mussolini's naval academy.
6. The complete text of the 1937 SS report on the Berlin visit of Haganah agent Feivel Polkes and his offer to spy for the Nazis.
7. The complete text of Yitzhak Shamir's Stern Gang's 1940-41 offer to go to war on Hitler's side.

Your review editor read my book's title, *51 Documents: Zionist Collaboration with the Nazis*. The fact that Elam's piece did not name, discuss, or quote a single word from even one of them was a red blinking sign that something was very wrong. Middle Eastern scholars were entitled to learn something substantial about a collection of historic documents on Zionist collaboration that had just been published.

No mincing words: The editor must assume full responsibility for publishing Elam's junk review. Hitherto, I've written several articles and reviews for *JPS*, the latest in your spring 2003 issue. But now I must insist on your publishing the complete text of this letter, or I will have no choice but to terminate my relationship to your Journal.

*Lenni Brenner*