

REJOINDER: A REPLY TO BUCHHEIM AND SCHERNER

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The circularity of Prof. Buchheim and Dr. Scherner's argument will be apparent to anyone who reads their footnotes: In them the authors buttress their points almost exclusively by citing their own publications or those resulting from dissertations Prof. Buchheim directed. Since their response to my critique, therefore, is merely to reiterate the views of the Mannheim School, I will leave it to readers to judge the weight of our respective cases.

Permit me, however, one correction and one observation. First, before charging me with *quellenkritische* carelessness [carelessness in source criticism], Buchheim and Scherner should have read Henry Turner's footnotes more attentively. The remark about a "veiled threat of confiscation" was not made by Opel executives to their home office in an attempt to get dollars, as Buchheim and Scherner state, but was made by the head of General Motors' European operations to the U.S. Ambassador in Berlin George Messersmith, who passed on the comment in a letter to Acting Secretary of State Moore (see p. 171, note 22, of Turner's book, *General Motors and the Nazis*).

Second, the sheer artificiality, even naiveté, of the Buchheim/Scherner line of argumentation seems captured perfectly by their assertion that because business was not intimidated by the provisions of the Weimar and Bonn constitutions that permitted property confiscations for the good of the community, business under the Nazis was similarly unconcerned. I rather doubt that Buchheim and Scherner would blithely make the same sort of ahistorical claim if the subject were homosexuals, even though the legal basis for proceeding against them was exactly the same under all three regimes. Obviously, what made all the difference in each era was enforcement and knowledge of it. These made people subject to prosecution a great deal more circumspect during the Third Reich than under the governing systems that preceded or followed it. The point holds for corporations, too.