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Über Driver Suspended, Responds to Anti-Semitism Accusations

MARCH 28, 2016 BY OMAR MAHMOOD — 2 COMMENTS

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In an exclusive interview with The Michigan Review, Artur Zawada, the Ann Arbor Über driver on the receiving end of a vitriolic student in his now-infamous YouTube video, spoke about being dropped by Über and about the allegations against him of anti-Semitism.

Channel 4 reported on Monday afternoon that Zawada was no longer allowed to drive for Über. He told the Michigan Review soon after that he has no idea why.

"They do whatever they want," said Zawada, exasperated. "No call, no email, no legal doc. I'm losing money everyday, and I did nothing wrong."

He strongly denied any allegations against him of anti-Semitism.

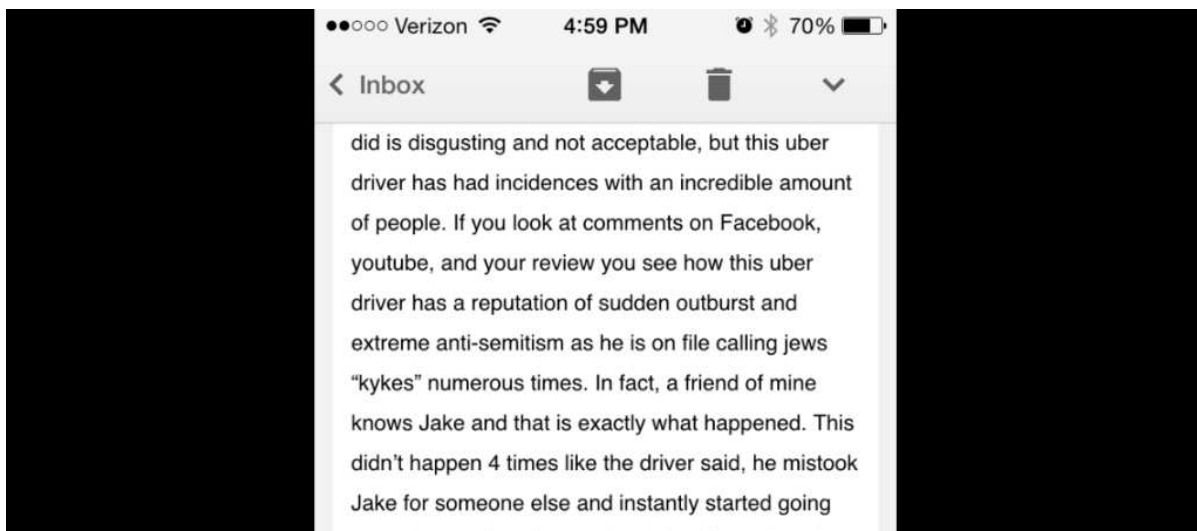
"It's depressing and frustrating. I want them to take a lie detector test," he said of the accusers, adding "It's unfair because they have the resources."

The Croman family certainly does have resources. Jake Croman is of course the son of New York multimillionaire and landlord Steven Croman, who is being investigated for using **harassment and illegal tactics to force out tenants**. Heavy.com reports that on his Facebook profile, Jake had only three words to say about himself in his **About section**: "I'm rich, bitch." Since then, his Facebook has been taken down. His page in the Eric Trump foundation has been taken down as well, and the cache deleted.

Zawada is an immigrant from Poland who has been in the United States for thirty years. He told the Review that he has no reason to be anti-Semitic, that he does not want to make this issue political. "Half the Jewish people who founded Israel," he said, "were Polish citizens."

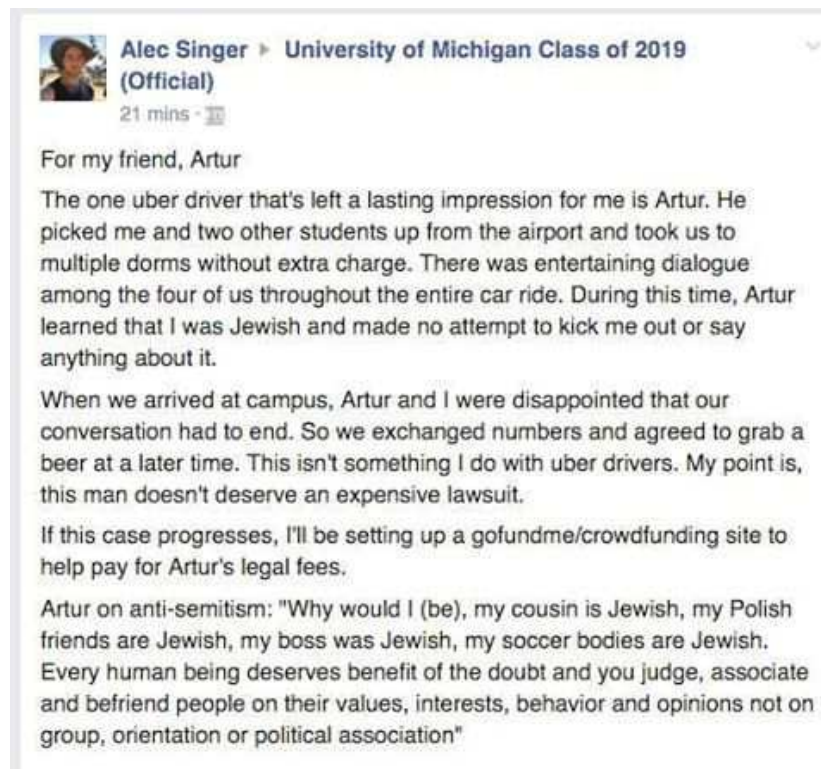
"I have Jewish friends," he said. "I have professors I know at the University of Michigan who are Jewish. I worked for my boss and he was Jewish."

One sophomore from the University accused Zawada on YouTube of repeated anti-Semitism, saying that they had told him to "take his anti Semitic beliefs back to nazi Germany." The commenter claimed that Zawada said, "This city is full of dirt of the earth kykes" :



around ann arbor threatening Jakes life and saying he wants "blood" which is what led to Jake's reaction. Jake is supposedly getting unanimous emails from people threatening his life because of

Zawada brought up the accusation himself in his interview with the Review, claiming that he does not even know what the word even means. The Review **received another email** also accusing Zawada of anti-Semitism. However, one Jewish student, Alec Singer, has publicly come out in defense of Zawada in a Facebook post. Zawada confirmed for the Review that he and Alec are friends.



Zawada expressed a sense of helplessness, saying that the Police Department had been unhelpful and had even told him to let the incident go, being ambivalent about whether or not the incident was a hate crime.

This was not Zawada's first run-in with Croman, but the fourth. Zawada explained that he had asked many the students he drove what Jake's last name was, because he did not want to file a report with just the first name. He even went to the Jewish community center, he said, to try to figure out the identity of the student.

Asked about how he even knew Jake was Jewish, Zawada claimed that in their third interaction, upon getting out of the car, Jake had retorted without cause, "Did you say something about Jewish people?"

Zawada added determinedly, "Don't strip me of my dignity. I'm not above you, and I'm not below you. My job is to take you from point A to point B."

Jake Croman has not responded to the Michigan Review's request for comment. Über has been reached for comment, and the story will be updated once they respond.

UPDATE (March 28 11pm): An Über Public Affairs Associate has responded to the Review with an email including the following statements:

"Any type of aggression or harassment is simply unacceptable and violates Uber's **code of conduct** for riders and drivers. We are looking into all the details as we investigate this incident and are in touch with everyone involved.

"Both parties involved in this incident have had their access to the app suspended while we investigate things."

To reflect the new information from Über, the title of this piece has been modified.