

**CENTRE OF ORGANIZATIONS OF HOLOCAUST
SURVIVORS IN ISRAEL
&
AMERICAN GATHERING OF JEWISH HOLOCAUST
SURVIVORS**

STATEMENT

**GOODWILL FUND – JEWISH PROPERTY IN THE FORMER EAST
GERMANY**

The most important priority of the Claims Conference is to fund programs that are critical for thousands of Holocaust survivors in Israel, the United States, the Former Soviet Union and around the world. Tens of thousands of survivors are dependent on the food, medicine and homecare provided by these programs which are largely funded by the recovery of unclaimed property in the former East Germany by the Claims Conference.

The organizations of Holocaust Survivors in the United States and Israel have taken the position that heirs to Jewish property in the Former East Germany should be able to reclaim their property. The German property legislation of 1990, in which the Claims Conference played a vital role, enabled them to do so and most applied at that time. The right of the heirs who did not file under the German law for these properties ended in 1992.

In addition, the Claims Conference, which was the successor to unclaimed property, voluntarily established the Goodwill Fund in 1994 to make payments to certain heirs who missed the deadline and thousands more have applied since then. The initial deadline of December 31, 1997 for the Goodwill Fund was extended until December 31, 1998 and further extended until March 31, 2004. A list of the owners of properties was published on September 30, 2003. The Goodwill Fund has been very widely publicized at various stages in this process in order to identify heirs.

The Goodwill Fund was a special mechanism established to help close relatives of the original owner to recover funds even though they had missed the deadline.

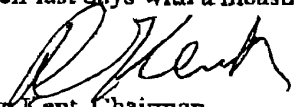
But for the efforts of the Claims Conference, including the survivor organizations, the relatives would not have been able to receive any payment and the properties would have remained with the aryanizers or their heirs or with the German government.

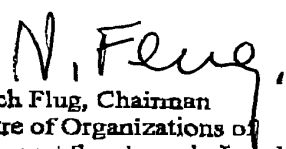
It would have been impossible for these vital allocations for food, medicine and homecare for Holocaust survivors in need to continue if the Claims Conference did not know how much it had to allocate. If there had been no deadline these life saving programs would have to have been curtailed. In addition, the income available for these programs is declining very rapidly.

The Goodwill Fund was open for almost 10 years giving relatives of the original owner a very extensive opportunity to pursue claims that they have. We believe that a deadline is necessary and fair and should be maintained.

Similarly the Goodwill Fund was designed to help close relatives of the original owner and thus this special fund provides for payments to certain close relatives only. We believe that the current circle of heirs of persons eligible for the Goodwill Fund is the appropriate one as the purpose of the Goodwill Fund was to help close relatives who had not filed their claims with the German authorities.

We believe that this is a proper way to deal with the funds of those who perished during these terrible times and to try to ensure that Holocaust survivors in need of help can live out their last days with a measure of dignity.


Roman Kent, Chairman
American Gathering of Jewish
Holocaust Survivors


Noach Flug, Chairman
Centre of Organizations of
Holocaust Survivors in Israel

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