



ישיבת

הר עציון

YESHIVAT
HAR ETZION

אלון שבות, טוש עציון 90433 ISRAEL, Gush Etzion, Alon Shevuth, טל. (02) 9931456-8 פקס. (02) 9931298 FAX.

ק"ר

3 July 2003

Mr. Julius Berman
Chairman
Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, Inc.
15 East 26th Street, Rm. 906
New York, NY 10010

Fax: 001-212-679-2126

Dear Mr. Berman,

It was recently brought to my attention that an issue which I view as most serious will be raised at the upcoming board meeting of the Claims Conference, namely, the possibility that allocations to institutions and projects involving Holocaust remembrance and education will be reduced.

Although I am not a member of the organization, I feel that as a Holocaust survivor and a rabbi, I should express my opinion on a matter that is close to my heart and which may have dire consequences, pending the outcome of your discussions.

The horrific Shoah perpetrated against our nation wrought not only devastating physical destruction but also spiritual and cultural ruin. Entire communities, yeshivot, torah scholars and thinkers, spiritual works and literature rich in Jewish tradition and Jewish culture in general, all these were destroyed, leaving only a small vestige of what could have been.

The Germans waged war against the Jewish spirit, against its rich heritage and cultural creativity that enriched all of humanity, and to a great extent they were successful.

In our attempt to restore, to rebuild from the ruins – utilizing the remaining property of the victims – we must rehabilitate and strengthen this same heritage and spiritual edifice. We must preserve the memory of the victims; not only their physical memory but also their spiritual and cultural world, their thoughts and ideas, their cultural and spiritual works.

With this in mind, we must strengthen Jewish education in general and Holocaust education in particular. We must document, preserve, and research every finding, every scrap of writing and cultural creativity from a world that was almost lost.

It is through these activities that we will fulfill the last will of the victims: to remember and never forget. We will bear the proud banner signaling that despite the past, the culture and heritage will never perish and "נצח ישראל לא ישקר".

I hope that my words will be welcome and will positively influence your decisions.

Sincerely yours,


Rabbi Yehuda Amital