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Board of Directors
Conference on Jewish Material Claims
Against Germany

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We have been informed that the coming Board of Directors meeting will discuss the reevaluation of the Claims Conference policy regarding the allocation for programs of Shoah research, documentation and education and I feel it is my duty to present my position on this issue.

The Claims Conference is in charge today of major financial sources - those which derive from compensation money from the German government and those deriving from the restitution of unclaimed properties in East Germany.

I think that one should differentiate between them. The money received for the suffering, forced-labor and/or other damages endured by the Holocaust survivors cannot compensate for the atrocities and suffering but does serve as a form of material compensation rightfully and legally deserved by Nazi victims.

The case is different when dealing with monies received from unclaimed properties owned by Jewish institutions or individuals before the Holocaust. These properties belong to the Jewish people.

The Claims Conference has taken upon itself to represent the Jewish people, according to the will left by those who are no longer with us, by ensuring the remembrance of the Holocaust and of the deceased, the continuity of Jewish life, by strengthening the sense of identity and the belonging to the land of Israel, by passing on their heritage to the generations to come and by disseminating the testimonies and evidence of the crimes committed.

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From here it is self-understood that the activities, in which the Claims Conference is a partner, which deal with the development, expansion and reconstruction of spiritual, cultural and religious institutions and projects dealing with the Holocaust, is the appropriate way of commemorating and eternalizing the memory of those who were so brutally taken away.

There is no better and more just way of continuing in this path than by encouraging activities in the Land of Israel which was built from the ashes of the victims and where hundreds of thousands of those who survived, built their new homes.

At this point it should be pointed out that due to the economic crisis of the country, the State of Israel is cutting down its financial support amongst others, of projects such as those mentioned above. If, in addition to this trend, the Claims Conference should also decrease its support, many organizations and activities would probably close down.

The conclusion therefore is that the Claims Conference should increase the allocations for programs of Shoah research, documentation and education from the present twenty percent (20%) to at least twenty-five percent (25%) for a period of the coming five years after which, the issue should again be reevaluated and discussed.


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