

**World Zionist Organization
American Section**

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**Kalman Sultanik
Chairman**

June 27, 2003

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

Dear Israel and Julius,

I regret not being able to attend the Board of Directors meetings convening in New York on 22 & 23 July, 2003, since I will be leaving for Poland on July 6th, to participate in meetings of the Foundation for Preservation of Jewish Heritage. From there I will proceed to meetings in Israel and in Europe. Unfortunately, I cannot change my schedule, but I am looking forward to attend future meetings.

As requested, I am writing to you this letter with regard to my position on the issue of allocations and the use of restitution funds for social welfare needs of survivors and Shoah education and research.

I am happy to reiterate my position as stated in my article **Carry the Legacy of Remembrance**, printed in the **FORWARD** on March 7, 2003, copy of which is attached.

I just returned from Poland where I attended a Conference for the Conservation and Preservation of Auschwitz-Birkenau and the opening of the Laboratories of Auschwitz-Birkenau, in which Ronald Lauder participated. It was a constructive and thoughtful conference. I am taking the liberty of enclosing the statement I delivered there. As you will see, the main theme of my statement is that through education can we preserve the memory of the Holocaust, once the survivors are gone. With the passage of time, the urgency with which Holocaust survivors contemplate their legacy to succeeding generations becomes more imminent. Only by creating excellent historical, educational and cultural institutions that will preserve the testimonies of the survivors, we will succeed perpetuating the memory of the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust. The Holocaust victims have bequeathed to us the responsibility to guarantee for posterity that their story be told and passed on from generation to generation.

Best regards,



Kalman Sultanik

Cc: Mr. Gideon Taylor

FORWARD

MARCH 7, 2003

Carry the Legacy of Remembrance

By KALMAN SULTANIK

In the death camps, strangers became friends. When anyone was near death or about to be killed by the Nazis, they asked their fellow inmates, "Don't forget me. Keep the memory alive."

The delegates who at last month's annual meeting of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs called for restricting the disbursement of funds dedicated to Holocaust remembrance efforts, it appears, need a reminder.

The Nazis, it must be remembered, sought not only to annihilate the entire Jewish people physically, but also to eradicate Jewish history and Jewish culture. As we age and become fewer in number, the urgency with which Holocaust survivors contemplate their legacy to succeeding generations deepens. We have a particular obligation to carry the legacy of remembrance and its accompanying commitments to create historical, educational and cultural institutions that will preserve survivors' testimonies, thus perpetuating the memory of the 6 million who perished.

But that same aging that has given urgency to our task means that many survivors are also becoming more in need of physical and psychological assistance. Restitution funds are now being used, and must continue to be used, primarily to provide essential services such as home care, medical care, hunger relief and social programs that bring comfort and companionship.

These funds, coming from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany are derived primarily from that organization's recovery of unclaimed German Jewish property. During German reunification, when the Claims Conference fought for the right of heirs to claim property in the former East Germany, it also won the right to recover any property that went unclaimed — to prevent it from reverting back to the state or postwar non-Jewish owners.

When the Claims Conference started receiving proceeds from its recovery of the property, there were no earmarked funds for assistance to needy survivors in North America. More than 50 social service agencies in the United States and Canada now have Holocaust survivor assistance programs begun by the Claims Conference. In 30 countries, the Claims Conference has allocated \$500 million for needs such as home care, hunger relief and medical care.

More than 80% of the proceeds from the unclaimed German Jewish property goes to meet these critical needs of survivors, regardless of their countries of origin or current residences.

The Claims Conference also allocates up to 20% of these property proceeds — amounting to no more than 1% to 2% of the organization's total budget — to Holocaust education, research and documentation. These allocations are made as an effort to preserve the memory of those who perished and give future generations knowledge of the Holocaust.

The victims bequeathed to us the responsibility to guarantee for posterity that their story be told and passed on from generation to generation. We can implement this legacy by developing educational programs for future generations and by supporting documentation and preservation of irreplaceable documents, pictures and artifacts.

While concentrating on the commemoration of the Shoah for posterity, we cannot and must not neglect the physical and psychological needs of survivors globally, wherever they are. No survivor in need should feel abandoned. It is the responsibility of all Jewish social service organizations to make sure that all survivors receive the care they need.

Kalman Sultanik is president of the Federation of Polish Jews in the United States and chairman of the World Zionist Organization, American Section. In 1946, he represented Jewish Holocaust survivors in the Displaced Persons camps at the World Zionist Congress in Switzerland.

*Provide for survivors
and develop Shoah
education programs.*
