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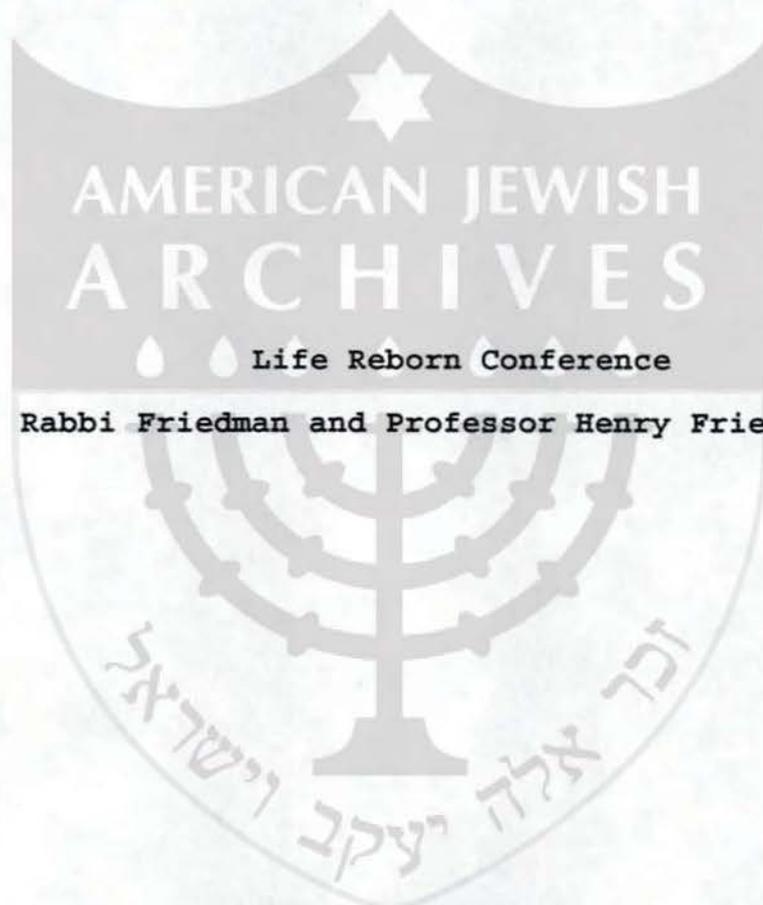
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United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Life Reborn
conference. 1998-2000.

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U.S. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM



Rabbi Friedman and Professor Henry Friedlander

Washington, D.C.

January 15-16, 2000

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Presentation by Rabbi Friedman

(All non-English words and phrases are transcribed phonetically.)

RABBI FRIEDMAN: Yes, it will be a different perspective. Sam gave us a beautiful, emotional, comprehensive, Jewish, nationalistic, all of the right, all of the right factors. And yet, that's not the whole story and the people who arranged this conference I think showed wisdom in asking for you to hear the background of the whole thing.

I was a military chaplain, I was a captain in the 9th Infantry Division of the 3d Army, commanded by General Patton. We ended the war at Wasserborg-Amin, which was almost opposite Salzburg, Austria, and not far from Hitler's house in Berchtesgaden.

When the war ended, I started to take trucks from the quartermaster and from the transportation depot and combed the area south of Munich in which there were several large DP camps, Farenwold, Feldefein, Sedachtilian and others. That area's full of lakes, dark forests, and in those woods, there were units of the

Edelweiss, which were the extremist fanatical Nazi youth that even though the war was over, they continued to try to terrorize the small numbers of survivors who came out of those camps and who came out from the underground munitions factories, working as slave laborers in German armaments factories to keep the German military machine going.

Thousands died, thousands more emerged and came to the surface. And I started to go through the woods, picking them up. There were not just Jews, but in order to distinguish and in order to know how many we could handle -- you can only put 50 to 60 people on a truck, a six-wheel GMC, and you've got to take, if you collect 60 people, to a place where you can find a building that's got two walls or one wall or one wall and a roof. Germany was laid flat at the end of the war, you know that, and if you have 60 people and they've just come out of the hell of several years and they're miraculously alive, you then begin with very simple things, where can I place them. I then go and bring blankets, I then go and bring DDT powder. I have to fight the lice, the lice eat human blood, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

It was during those tumultuous days, truckload after truckload and finding a wrecked barn, finding a small German city hall in a little village, throwing everybody out. All you did was come into this little vathaus, hit your Colt .45 with a hard bang on the table and say, "Thees haus est beschlagnopt," this house is hereby requisitioned. By whose authority? Nobody's, except the Colt, the American uniform and the ragged survivors out on the truck. And you want that evacuated and you want everybody out and all the German workers out and you want the house clean and you want it in 24 hours. And the Germans understand that.

And so that's how small beginnings of Jewish DP camps gradually collected by accretion. There was no order, there was no superbody giving instructions. It was all hit and miss. But after several weeks of that, probably two or three months -- the war ended in May and by September, we had already collected some thousands of people.

Suddenly, I got a telephone call, I was in a little village called Batilts, down near the alps, near Garmischbartenkirschen. And the lady on the phone said

that she wanted to meet me and she offered me the name and room number of her hotel. So why not? And she was in Paris. And so some days later, I was at the --

(Begin Tape 5, Side B.)

RABBI FRIEDMAN: -- aliabit brecha. You know, I am a rational person and I'm accustomed to thinking things through, pro and con, I try to get facts on both sides of an issue in order to try to decide what to do. Well, all of that falls apart in this atmosphere of tension, nervousness and with the fate of thousands of people to be decided, and so your gut has to tell you, not your intellect, and I said yes.

She then walked across the room, I could see she had the door open, and out of another door at the end, a short fellow with white hair, Sam described so properly, walked out. She did not introduce him. He walked up to me. She said, "Friedman says he'll work for us." "Thank you," turned around, walked out, I never saw him again for a year.

I said, "Who was he?" She said, "His name is David Ben Gurion." I said, "Who's he?" And she said, "He's the chairman of the Hagenna, he is hiding from the

British here in this hotel." And if you remember Edgar Allen Poe's story about the purloined letter, if you want to hide something, hide it right under the other person's nose. And when Ben Gurion was hiding, together with Moshes Neh, from the British who had arrested everybody in Palestine connected with the Jewish agency, and those two guys got out, where did they go to? They go to British Army Headquarters in the Royal Monsol Hotel and the British flag is flying outside the hotel and these guys are running the Hagenna operation right under the British nose. It was brilliant, it was gorgeous.

She then invited me from the corridor into the room, sat me down, gave me a cup of coffee, and I said, "What do I do now?" She said, "Number one, get yourself transferred to Berlin. Number two, we will send you from the brigade . . .," the Palestine brigade that Sam referred to. Bivouacked in Belgium, there were thousands of Jewish trained soldiers who had fought with the British up the Italian peninsula. They were good soldiers, they were well armed, they were experienced, and the British did not want them to go back to Palestine at that point and so the British kept them in bivouac in

Belgium. What were they doing? They were picking up cigarette butts, they were painting stones, whitewashing them. You know what you do in a camp when you have nothing else to do -- well, you don't know. But what you do in a camp when you have nothing else to do, you try to keep the house clean.

"I will send you . . .," said she, ". . . all the drivers you need, the gunners you need, the mechanics you need, and you will do the following. In Berlin, where you will get yourself situated, then you will let me know, then I will send you all these men, you steal enough trucks and enough gas tickets to last you for a year. And you will go every day at 6:00 p.m., in the evening, from Berlin up to Stettin." How many people in this room came out of Stettin into Berlin? Okay, well, I brought you and I'm delighted. Sir?

MR. : (Inaudible.)

RABBI FRIEDMAN: Ah, Stettin, yeah.

Stietienne, okay, pardon my pronunciation.

MS. : (Inaudible.)

RABBI FRIEDMAN: We got up there, from Berlin up to Stettin on the Polish border, up near the Baltic

Sea. It was 150 kilometers, it was six hours of driving through the Russian zone of Germany, more difficult, Russian on one side, Polish on the other side, six trucks, 50 people on the truck, 300 people, load the trucks, cover it up with a tarpaulin. That whole thing has to take a half an hour. Pay the bribe on both sides. The bribe was one carton of cigarettes per Jew and the carton of cigarettes on the black market was \$150.00. 300 people times \$150.00 is \$45,000.00 a night, every night, every night, every night. We brought 90,000 people down through that route and it was a schlep.

To get the money -- to get the cigarettes, we had in Berlin -- I was the only Jewish chaplain in Berlin. That's an incidental fact, but it gave me a resource. British, French, Russian and American armies, four allied troops, Valiel Turkmandatorvor was there, headquartered in Berlin, and in all four armies, there were 2,000 Jewish soldiers. The first Seder we had after liberation, when the war was over, in Berlin was held in Schernebaer Grathaus, the building from which President Kennedy later made his famous speech from the balcony, "Icht ben ein Berliner," and he didn't know that

"Berliner" was a slang word for a jelly doughnut. He thought he was saying, "I am a Berlin citizen"; he wanted to express friendship between America and the new Germany. So that's always been a great inner story.

2,000 troops at a Passover Seder after liberation, Jewish troops. I got cigarettes from all of them. I got cigarettes from my father in Connecticut. I had the Army postal officials on my doorstep every single day looking at these huge mail sacks full of cigarettes. And finally, finally, when we had one port opening in Europe, at Antwerp, the Joynt, the blessed Joynt, brought shiploads in and I then began to get freight car loads full of cigarettes, and then the flow was going like viegaglicken, smooth, lovely.

Okay, now I was in uniform. I'm an American Army captain, chaplain, and I have military duties, of which I didn't do very many and I was very busy with this operation. Now I tell you this as the background story of how the DP community assembled itself. In the beginning, the minute that the war was over, the Jews were intermingled, they were not separate. There were ten million slave laborers on German soil when the war

ended, French, British, Dutch, from every country, Romania, Bulgaria, and as far east as Tajikistan and Azerbaijan, way beyond the Ural Mountains, deep in Russia.

All of these people whom the Germans had captured as prisoners and who were working as slave laborers and who were dying, but millions living, all had to be repatriated back to their home countries. And at the beginning, General Patton, who was a pragmatic, nonemotional, tough soldier, he made no distinction and he said, "I don't want to bother with any of them. I'm an Army man, I don't know how to deal with civilians." He had an argument with General Eisenhower on that subject. General Eisenhower said, "You are right, the Army does not know how to deal with civilians. But the thing you have to understand is that Jewish civilians are different from other civilians and we have to separate out the Jews from . . . The Jews cannot go into the same camp with people, Lithuanians, Poles, other people who were cooperating with the Nazis and who were persecuting Jews, so you've got to separate them." So they were separated and that's how separate Jewish camps began to

come into existence about three months after the war ended.

There was a big fight later on between Patton and Eisenhower because Patton was setting those Jewish camps up with sentries around them, with the gates locked, requiring passes in and out, and the word of that got back to Eisenhower and he didn't like it and he called Patton in and said, "George, why don't you be nice to these people," and Patton said, "Why the hell should I be?" And Eisenhower said, "Well, among other reasons, because I'm ordering you to do so," finished.

The camps were set up and at the conclusion of the huge influx that took place after the pogrom in Kielts, which was on the Fourth of July in 1946, when 42 Jews were killed and laid out like firewood, like logs around the central fountain in town, and I was there and saw it, that's when the flood started. And at the height -- I take exception with Sam on one figure. He said 200,000. Our figures at Army Headquarters were 250,000 people in 64 camps in Germany in the American zone, not counting the British zone, not counting -- well, there was nothing in the French zone.

In the American zone of Germany, Austria and one camp in Italy under American general command, 250,000 people at the height of the operation, which was in 1947. And toward the end of '47, when the exodus loaded down in Fort Dubuque near Marseille and then moved over to Setiere, also the other side of Marseille, and I helped load that ship, 4,400 people we put on board, that meant a convoy from the American zone of Germany up between Berlin and Frankfurt, down across France into French territory, of a hundred trucks. And you can imagine how many siderunners we had and how many armored cars we had at fore and aft and 5,000 people and we got 4,400 onto the ship and off she went. And she wound up, of course, back in Sam Bloch's territory in Bergenbelsen and the whole business -- well, he told you the end of the story, 1947.

So now what we have is a distribution of camps. Each place grew up by itself and slowly, but surely, internal organization inside the camps, building little schools and orchestras and police force on bicycles, everything that a community needs. Then a national organization formed called the Central Committee of

Liberated Jews and a bit fight took place about the preposition, Liberated Jews of Germany or Liberated Jews in Germany. You understand what the difference is. And the fight was finally resolved, "We do not call ourselves of Germany. We do not intend to stay here," et cetera, et cetera, "We are in, but we are not of. We want out, we want Palestine," and they were unanimous.

The Central Committee of Liberated Jews in Germany was the governing body, it was a sort of a self-cabinet. There were about 13 or 15 members, I don't remember all of them, just some. I'm getting old, I'm going to be 82 years old, and you lose track of some names after a while.

And then we did the thing which really locked it in. General McNarney, the successor to General Eisenhower, General McNarney agreed with our request to grant a charter of recognition to the Central Committee, which gave the Central Committee status. When the next Seder came for Pasach, I took a convoy of trucks down to Army Headquarters in Mannheim, brought back matzot, wine from Algeria, et cetera, et cetera, all under the Central Committee of Liberated Jews. They were an official body

and designated to care for the welfare and the health of the people in the camps. McNarney signed the charter of recognition in a great ceremony at U.S. Army Headquarters, which was in the I.G. Farbin Building in Frankfurt. Frankfurt was bombed flat. The I.G. Farbin Building, there wasn't a window broken. That had been predesignated as future U.S. Army Headquarters and that's where the general's staff sat and our office was right next door to General McNarney's office.

Now let me tell you how the Army operated.

Eisenhower said at the beginning -- as I told you, he didn't know how to handle and he didn't want to handle civilian affairs. But he did co-opt the only Jewish chaplain who was there at the time, a major by the name of Judah Nadich, who was the rabbi of Park Avenue Synagogue in New York, and some of you may know that synagogue. He's still alive, he also is 80 something. We ought to write a book, *All The 80 Somethings, Please Stand Up*. And Eisenhower said, "Nadich, you have to be my advisor on what I do with these Jews." But then Eisenhower went back home, demobilized, so did Nadich.

And so a new office was created by the War

Department in the United States at the request of the Army that an official advisor on Jewish affairs to the commanding general in Europe. Such a person should be designated and shipped over and be situated physically next door to the commanding general's office, okay? One caveat, the non-Jewish civilians in the War Department knew perfectly well that one of the outstanding characteristics of the Jewish people is they don't agree with each other. They argue, they fight, they have committee meetings, they have endless conferences on process before something can be decided.

The Army doesn't work that way. The Army says, "You guys in America get all of your Jewish organizations together, American Jewish Committee . . .," blah, blah, blah, "Get everybody together, get everybody to agree on one man. We don't want to hear how you do it. Send us one man. We will give him the rank of a two-star general. He's a civilian, not in uniform, but he is a two-star general, which gives him all the perks. He gets a car and a driver, he gets an military man in uniform as his deputy. He gets two cases of whiskey a month. He gets a house to live in of the rank of a German general."

And we lived in a house in Badhamburg, a suburb of Frankfurt, where the general, former German general, was in jail and his wife and two daughters asked if they could live in the house with us in the attic. And so the advisor on Jewish affairs pulled me out of Berlin, where I was so happy, running up to Stedgen, pulls me out of that and brings me back down to Frankfurt to be his deputy. So I now am the deputy advisor on Jewish affairs to the American commanding general, there we were.

Now these guys, they don't know anything about Jewish psychology, they don't know anything about Jewish yearnings. They don't know anything about Palestine. They don't know anything about what are Jewish values. They don't know how these people are living in the camp. They need help in terms of background.

The background took place in Bernstein's house, and I lived with him in that house in Badhamburg, and with the assistance of lots of cigars and the two cases of whiskey. You can't believe a scene -- about once every ten days, three, four generals, two-star generals, one-star generals; a week later, five or six full colonels, bird colonels. These are the people who make

the decisions and the Army decisions are made from the top. And if you get acquiescence to something at the top, then you've got it, and the order goes all the way down the line and everybody obeys the order, that's it.

And so we gave an indoctrination to about 30 of the top American officers about how the Jews have to be handled and you've got to treat them with kid gloves and why and what the Holocaust was all about and we read Hitler's *Mein Kampf* to them and we told them things. And they're all bright, you're talking about very bright men. Most of them went through West Point and if any of you know the West Point curriculum, it's hard, it's tough, and it does not just contain mechanics and technical things. The courses are in philosophy, there are courses in religion. It's very, very good. And many who didn't go to West Point came out, minimally, with master's degrees. So when you're talking about 30 or 40 top officers of the Army, you are talking about people who can understand the subtleties and the intricacies of the behavior of this very ancient people.

And they were fascinated. We made the connection between Judaism and Christianity for them,

they didn't understand that. But they warmed up and they were sympathetic and they were friendly and it was the most gorgeous thing that the advisor did.

Now the first advisor was a judge from New York by the name of Simon Rifkin, from a very important law firm, and he came over and spent a few months doing it. But then the champion came over, a rabbi by the name of Philip Bernstein, Philip Bernstein. And the Army knew him and they loved him, because he was the man in charge of vetting rabbis to be sworn in as Army chaplains and his choices the Army accepted and they knew that he understood the Army. So when the Jewish organizations in America appointed him and he came over, General McNarney, Eisenhower's gone, was delighted.

So now our office is set up, McNarney, Bernstein, I'm Bernstein's deputy, and we have a sympathetic understanding constantly growing. _____ something like that should have happened in the British zone, Sam, but it didn't, nobody bothered with the top military staff of the British Army.

At any rate, after Bernstein finished -- I'll just tell you the names of the other men, they deserve to

be mentioned. You won't recognize them, no reason why you should, but their names should be in the record. There came a judge from Philadelphia by the name of Louis Leventhal; he was there from August of '47 to January of '48. There was Dr. William Haber, who was a professor of economics at the University of Michigan; he was there from January of '48 to January of '49. There was Harry Greenstein, who was the executive director of the Federation in Baltimore; he was there from February of '49 to October of '49. And the final advisor, acting advisor, was a Major Abraham Hyman, who was there from October '49 to '51, when Farenwold was closed as the last camp.

Now I know that there's a big argument about whether Farenwold was closed in '51 or in '57 and I don't want to take you into that argument, it's totally irrelevant. Whichever you choose to believe is okay by me, it could be '51 or it could be '57, and there are reasons for both dates. But the advisor on Jewish affairs, the last one, was -- and by the way, General McNarney has gone now and the new general is a man named Lucius Clay. And General Clay was a brilliant person,

brilliant, and the greatest brilliance he performed was to save me from a court martial because I had stolen a lot of things. And he said to me, "Okay, Friedman, you've done enough, go home."

I'd like to tell you something about the attitude of these top Army men toward the DPs. I referred to the Eisenhower-Patton thing, so there's no point in my repeating that, "If for no other reason, George, you be nice to those people because I'm ordering you to do so." Now Eisenhower was never known particularly as a great friend of the Jews or as a great enemy of the Jews, but Eisenhower, looking at the situation -- he went to one camp Orduff, and that shocked him. And he had his assistant with him, General Walter Beatle Smith, that name might be known to some people, and Eisenhower's sympathetic attitude permeated the ranks.

Eisenhower took Patton with him and they attend a Yom Kippur service in 1945 in Feldefein. He said, "Take me someplace where I will sense the emotions of the people," and so we said -- an aide had said, "Go to a Yom Kippur service," October '45, it was the last thing

Eisenhower did before going back to America.

Later on in Berlin, I took General Clay to a Yisskar service in Schlaktenzei in 1946. He cried. General McNarney attended a Hanukkah party in 1946 in a camp called Lindenfels, where there were 200 Jewish orphans. And he got out on the floor and he danced with them and he sang songs with them. I mean this is a four-star commanding general. And afterwards, he said, you know, he said, "That was refreshing, I felt good." He was thinking of his own grandchildren back in the United States.

I told you about General McNarney who, in '46, granted official recognition to the Central Committee, and the last thing I want to refer to is General Keyes, who became the 3d Army general following Patton. And that has to do with an episode that occurred in a camp called Babenhausen.

Just think for a minute of some of the things I've told you before. You have an organization called the Hagenna, the Aliabed, the Brehagh, all those names are the same thing. What they are is a handful, no more than about a hundred or 150 Palestinian kids, young men,

working on the European continent like shepherds, shepherds, shepherding people from the east, as far east, out, as I said, beyond the Urals, all the way west, moving west across Europe.

Where are they headed? They're headed for the American zone in Germany. Why there, Germany, of all places, as a refuge? Yeah, because it's the American zone of Germany and the American flag is there and the American Army is feeding 2,000 calories a day, and the Joynt is supplementing, God bless the Joynt, supplementing a thousand calories a day. So the people are being fed 3,000 calories and they're coming back to strength and medical attention.

The Jewish agency from Palestine is sending over all kinds of support. They were working inside the camps, they were not working with the illegal immigration. There were doctors, there were nurses, there were school teachers, there were children's experts, special education for children. Everything that you could think of that was needed in a normal society was coming from the Jewish agency in Palestine. It was a strong, powerful organization at that time, it was for

half a century. It's now struggling with its own sense of identity, what it should do and what it should be. That's a whole other story.

The flight, the flight took the form of the trucks from Stettin, and that was called the northern route coming into the American zone. The southern route was by train, by train, from Neiderschlesien, from Silesia in Poland, Klatznahord across the border into Czechoslovakia, down to Bratislava on the Hungarian border, west to Vienna, Vienna into Munich. The southern route was feeding into Munich, the northern route was feeding into Berlin.

Okay, in comes a trainload of over about 1,200 people, schlepping, schlepping, on the train, on the train, tough. And they disembark at a camp. And by the way, very camp was set up by the United States Army, the Army picked the place. The first camp I had anything to do with, Schlaktenzei, used to be, up in Berlin, used to be an Army camp where they kept Russian prisoners of war, Germans conquering brought Russian troops as prisoners. Okay, so what was a prison camp became a DP camp, the Army requisitioned.

So the train pulls in on the track in front of this camp and the word goes through that the name of the camp is Babenhausen and the people won't get off the train. Why? Barbed wire all around the camp, watchtowers standing up at places around the perimeter, dirty straw pallets out in view. And the people on the train said, "This is another concentration camp. Where are you taking us?" Strike, nobody got off the train.

Well, I found out later what happened. General Clay said, "Listen, get down there and straighten this thing out, that's what you're supposed to do. You're my advisor. We've got a problem, it's your problem. Fix it." Okay, so down we go and the first thing we did was set up some microphones on the side of the tracks, opened up all the cars. And by the way, they were the same German freight cars that the people were very familiar with. They were the same cars that went to Auschwitz, Treblinka and all the other camps. So that was not a very happy beginning, but there was no other transportation, what are you going to do?

We set up some microphones on the side of the track and started talking to people, talking Yiddish. My

Yiddish was not very good. I learned hochdeutsch at Yale University and so I had to transfer that into Yiddish. It took me a year, but after that, my Yiddish got to be pretty good. Talked to them in Polish, talked to them in Romanian, talked to them in Russian. We had all kinds of people helping us. What happened, very simply, was the Army was opening up so many camps so fast that somebody overlooked something, somebody forgot to do something, and they forgot to tear down the barbed wire and forgot to tear down the watchtowers and the people's first image of the place was absolutely correct.

So right away, the Army got in with a whole gang of soldiers, tore everything down, tried to clean it up, and slowly, but surely, a few people got off, a few people got off. But then, I tried one trick that didn't work. I got the chief chaplain of the 3d Army, a full colonel, a Catholic priest, to agree to come and he started talking on the microphone to them, pleading with them. And they could see that he was sincere and they could see that he meant it; they didn't react very well.

So there was only one shot left and that's to call the commanding general, lieutenant general, three

stars, Keyes, Patton's successor. And darned if he didn't say, "I'll be right over, give me a couple of hours." And he came over and I would like to read to you what General Keyes said to them. "I know this place is far from ideal, but it's the best housing we can now give you. You left your homes because you feared for your life. Here, in Germany, with us, you can drop this fear. We are in the midst of setting up new and better camps. As soon as a better place is available, I will see that you are moved there." And he kept that promise within about three months.

"If you do not accept what we offer you, you will give us no choice but to send you back to Poland. This is something you do not want, nor do we. If you make difficulties for us, you will be hurting not only yourselves, but also the innocent people at the borders who are waiting and pressing to come in after you. I plead with you to accept our hospitality. You will not regret it."

He got in his Jeep and he started to drive. Now the barbed wire is gone, so there's no gate, there's nothing. He started to drive away from the tracks into

the camp area and the people began to get off the trains, jumping off a long line of freight cars, jumping off, jumping off. And pretty soon, there you had General Keyes in his Jeep, leading a whole column of Jewish DPs into the camp at Babenhausen.

The end of the story comes a couple of months later. This was October. Ben Gurion called and asked for permission to come into Germany and we got him a permit to visit a DP camp. And he said, "Don't send me to an easy place," and I said, "I'm going to take you to Babenhausen," he didn't know where it was. But when he came and I took him into Babenhausen, he stood up on the platform and he said very simply, "I have no certificates in my pocket for you. I know you want to come as much as we want you to come. Hang on, hang on, just live with hope and live with the assurance that you have a lot of us working for your future."

And then he did the same thing, he turned to me and he said, "Sing Hatikvah." Well, I have a monotone, you can hear that by now, I can't sing. Abe Hyman was standing over here, our legal deputy, and Hyman's worse than I am. And Ben Gurion, alachem camavacama, you know,

you couldn't get a song out of that man's mouth. So the people started to sing and when the people started to sing, we all joined in, and from that point on, the Babenhausen saga, which had spread through all 64 camps, quieted down and we all lived happily ever after.

(Applause. End of presentation by Rabbi Friedman.)



This fragment is part of a 10-meter-long Italian marble table given by Mussolini to Hitler, upon which military maps could be spread out, as Hitler loved to do.

When the Russian troops entered Berlin and stormed into the Chancellory, they smashed the table into bits.

The same Russian Sergeant, Mark Shapiro who gave me the Hitler fork, also gave me the marble fragment.

I took it to a gravestone maker to have the words cut and gilded into the marble.

Fork with seal of Israel given to me by Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, to match the Nazi fork. His comment was that death in the Holocaust and new life in Israel were linked for all history.

The Nazi era lasted twelve years.

The homeland of Israel lasted 2000 years in the mind of the Jewish people, and was finally realized.

Fork with Nazi emblem taken from Chief-of-Staff General Keitel's air raid shelter in basement of Hitler's bombed out Chancellory building in Berlin.

Given to me by Sergeant Mark Shapiro, who was in charge of the Russian occupation detail.



February 11, 2000

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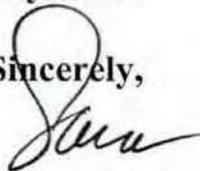
Dear Herb,

On behalf of the Museum, I want to thank you for playing an important role in the Life Reborn Conference. I have received abundant praise from participants, presenters, supporters, and staff. It was not only substantively significant, but also emotionally meaningful for the many survivors and their children, for whom this may be one of the last gatherings.

I appreciate your investing the time and effort to help make the Conference such a resounding achievement. Your presentation enhanced our ability to achieve our goal of increasing public awareness and understanding of this little-known aspect of Holocaust history.

Again, thank you for helping make this momentous occasion such a success. It would be our pleasure to welcome you at the Museum anytime.

Sincerely,



Sara J. Bloomfield
Director

*It was a privilege to
hear your remarkable speech.*

RELEASE for USE of VIDEOTAPE RECORDING

I, Herbert A. Friedman, understand and acknowledge the following:

1) My image and my spoken words were recorded on videotape by the staff of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum during a conference titled "Life Reborn: Jewish Displaced Persons, 1945-1951" which took place between January 14-17, 2000 in Washington, D.C., and which was sponsored and administered by the Museum.

2) The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum desires to use and reproduce the videotape recording (or textual transcripts of the recording) in all media for non-profit and educational purposes relating to Holocaust education or otherwise relating to the Museum's mission.

3) I understand and acknowledge that my consent and permission are required to allow the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to use my name, my image, and the videotape recording of my spoken words.

4) Therefore, I hereby grant permission to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to use my name, my image, and the videotape recording of my spoken words, and the textual transcript of the recording, in whole or in part, in any and all media now known or yet to be developed in the future, but only for non-profit and educational purposes relating to Holocaust education and to the Museum's mission. This grant of permission extends throughout the world in perpetuity.

Signature: Herbert A. Friedman

Date: 01/04/00

Name: HERBERT A. FRIEDMAN

office
Phone: 212-355-6115

Address: 551 Madison Ave., NY NY 10022



UNITED STATES
HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

December 21, 1999

Herbert Friedman
The Wexner Foundation
551 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear Herbert:

The "Life Reborn: Jewish Displaced Persons" conference is rapidly approaching and we are looking forward to your participation.

The Museum has decided that because of the unique significance of this event, we will also be videotaping the proceedings. Enclosed you will find a new release form. I apologize for any inconvenience, but ask you to please complete and return the form in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided. You may also fax it to me at (202) 488-2693.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact me at (202) 488-0414.

Looking forward to working with you in January.

Sincerely,



Martin Goldman
Director, Survivor Affairs

Life Reborn: Jewish Displaced Persons 1945-1951

Herbert A. Friedman
Wexner Heritage Foundation
551 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10022
United States

Thank you for your registration for the Life Reborn International Conference in Washington, DC, January 14 - 17, 2000. Accept this letter as confirmation of your attendance for the conference. Please check the details below, with care, and contact us if there is an error in your registration.

We are pleased to inform you that due to the generosity of a major benefactor the registration fee has been reduced from \$190 to \$100 per person. You may therefore be due a refund and if applicable the amount is shown below. If you wish to support the Museum's education and outreach activities by waiving your refund we would be most appreciative. In that case, the refund amount will be considered as a tax-deductible donation to the Museum's Education and Remembrance Fund, its annual giving program. If your initial payment was by credit card, the refund will be credited to your account; otherwise, the Museum will issue a refund check. **Please check your preference and mail a copy of this letter to the address below.**

I wish to receive a refund. I wish to make a donation to the Education and Remembrance Fund.

I wish to apply this refund to attend additional meals or events during the conference or bring additional delegates. Please call me at: _____

PROGRAM SESSION INFORMATION

Saturday Session

Sunday AM Session

Sunday PM Session

Monday Session

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Conference Type	Speaker	\$0
Friday Dinner		\$0
Saturday Lunch		\$0
Saturday Dinner		
Donation Amount (if applicable)		
	Total Due	\$0
	Amt Paid	
	Balance or Refund Due	\$0

HOTEL CONFIRMATION INFORMATION (if applicable)

Arrival Date 1/14/2000 Departure Date 1/17/2000

Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, 2660 Woodley Road, Washington, DC

There may be changes and additions to the final conference schedule. You will have the opportunity at registration to confirm the choices listed here, or to change your schedule. We are pleased that you are able to join us for this memorable program. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to call the Conference Office at 1-800-955-8741.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
Life Reborn Conference Registration
PO Box 10190, Silver Spring, MD 20914
Telephone: (800) 955-8741



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

JANUARY 14-17, 2000 WASHINGTON, D.C.

Life Reborn JEWISH DISPLACED PERSONS 1945-1951

This extraordinary International Conference will present and record the remarkable, but not widely known, history of the rebirth of Jewish life in Europe after the Holocaust. The four days of events will include extensive opportunities to participate in sessions on personal experiences, historical overviews, and academic discussions; reunions; group meetings; film screenings; a special performance; and a keynote address by Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel.

The Conference will bring together children of Holocaust survivors, scholars, and those with firsthand experience of the era—survivors who organized themselves into the *Sh'erit ha-Pletah* (Surviving Remnant) and representatives of the Allied armed forces and relief organizations.

A PROJECT OF THE UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM and its
SECOND GENERATION ADVISORY GROUP held in association with the AMERICAN
JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE

FOR CONFERENCE DETAILS AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION call (800) 955-8741 or visit the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's website, www.ushmm.org, and select the *Jewish Displaced Persons Project* listing on the home page. A registration form can be completed and submitted online.

Generous supporters of the Conference include the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the Theodore and Renee Weiler Foundation, the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, and Projekt.

SPECIAL EXHIBITION
OPENING DECEMBER 8, 1999
LIFE REBORN—Jewish Displaced Persons 1945-1951
Admission free—no passes necessary

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW
Washington, D.C. 20024

UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

11/26/99



UNITED STATES
HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

October 8, 1999

Dear Friend,

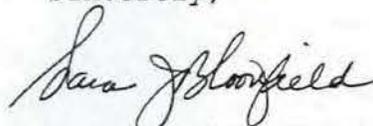
As you may know, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and its Second Generation Advisory Group have undertaken a major project, *Life Reborn, Jewish Displaced Persons 1945-1951*, to document and present the inspiring story of the renewal of Jewish life immediately after the Holocaust. The Project includes a special exhibition on DP camp life, highlighting cultural, social, political, and religious activities, the search for family, and the creation of new families, and culminates next January in an international conference.

It is my pleasure to invite you to the opening of the *Life Reborn* exhibition on Tuesday, December 7, 1999. The evening will begin promptly at 7 p.m. with a short program and ribbon-cutting ceremony, followed by a preview of the exhibition and reception. Valet parking will be available at the Raoul Wallenberg Place entrance. Please respond to (202) 488-0407 by December 1 if you are able to attend.

If you have not yet registered for the January 14-17, 2000, conference in Washington and would like more information, please call (800) 955-8741. This historic event will bring together children of Holocaust survivors, scholars, and those with firsthand experience of the displaced persons camps, including survivors, members of the armed forces, and relief agency workers.

I hope you will join us for both of these important occasions, as we commemorate the spirit and resilience of those grieving survivors who, thrown together by fate in DP camps, immediately began the remarkable process of rebuilding their lives.

Sincerely,



Sara J. Bloomfield
Executive Director



UNITED STATES
HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

November 1, 1999

Rabbi Herbert Friedman
President Emeritus
The Wexner Foundation
551 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear Rabbi Friedman:

I am delighted that you will be participating in the "Life Reborn: Jewish Displaced Persons 1945-1951" conference this January 14-17, 2000. You will be presenting your recollections at the Sunday morning plenary session entitled, "The DP Experience - Personal Recollections." Immediately following the plenary, you will be speaking on a panel session entitled, "The US Army, the Germans and the DPs" in which you will discuss the relationships of the Army to the DPs. For your information, I am enclosing a current program of the conference.

Our final step is to choose a moderator for the plenary session. The moderator will be in touch with you regarding your presentation. Your presentation should take 20 minutes. After the presentations have been completed, the moderator will lead a discussion.

The Museum is considering publishing the conference proceedings. In addition, we are planning to audiotape all the sessions. We would appreciate your signing the release form we have enclosed.

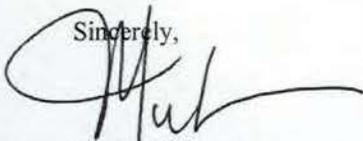
We would like to begin to process your hotel accommodations and travel arrangements. Please complete and return the enclosed Speaker Registration form. With this information, we will make your airline and hotel reservations. Your conference registration fee and the cost of meals provided at the conference will also be covered. Please also indicate which of the meals provided at the conference you will be attending. For meals not listed, you will be reimbursed \$10 for breakfast and \$18 for dinner. We will also reimburse the cost of regular taxicab transportation to and from the airport with receipt.

We will make your hotel reservations and cover the cost of your hotel room while you are at the conference. *If you wish to extend your stay at the hotel, please complete the information on the back of the Speaker Registration form.* We are enclosing a regular registration form in case there will be someone accompanying you to the conference. Their completed form should be sent with a check or credit card number to the address on the registration form.

When you return your registration form, please also include a brief one paragraph, biographical description of yourself with emphasis on the DP period, to be included in our registration package. Please return the two attached forms and the bio to Betsy Anthony by November 19th. You may fax them to (202) 488-2693 or mail them to her at 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW, Washington, DC 20024-2126.

I look forward to working with you on this conference. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (202) 488-0414.

Sincerely,



Martin Goldman
Director, Survivor Affairs

cc: Romana Primus



UNITED STATES
HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

October 26, 1999

Rabbi Herbert Friedman
551 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear Rabbi Friedman:

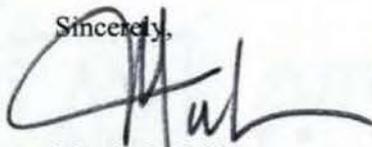
As you know, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Second Generation Advisory Group have undertaken a major project, *Life Reborn, Jewish Displaced Persons 1945-1951*, to document and present the inspiring story of the renewal of Jewish life immediately after the Holocaust. The Project includes a special exhibition on DP camp life, highlighting cultural, social, political, and religious activities, the search for family, and the creation of new families, and culminates next January in an international conference.

It is my pleasure to invite you to the opening of the *Life Reborn* exhibition on Tuesday, December 7, 1999. The evening will begin promptly at 7 p.m. with a short program and ribbon-cutting ceremony, followed by a preview of the exhibition and reception. Valet parking will be available at the Raoul Wallenberg Place entrance. Please respond to (202) 488-0407 by December 1 if you are able to attend.

You should soon receive a letter confirming your speaking and travel arrangements for our January 2000 conference, "Life Reborn." This historic event will bring together children of Holocaust survivors, scholars, and those with firsthand experience of the displaced persons camps, including survivors, members of the armed forces, and relief agency workers. We are pleased that you will be a part of this gathering.

I hope you will join us for both of these important occasions, as we commemorate the spirit and resilience of those grieving survivors who, thrown together by fate in DP camps, immediately began the remarkable process of rebuilding their lives.

Sincerely,



Martin J. Goldman
Director, Survivor Affairs

UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM
100 RAUL WALLENBERG PLACE, SW, WASHINGTON, DC 20024-2126
TELEPHONE (202) 488-0400, FAX (202) 488-2690
WWW.USHM.MUSEUM

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

FOR H.A.F

DATE 9.29.99 TIME 4:35 ^{AM}_{PM}

M Martin Goodman

OF Holocaust Museum

PHONE 202.488.0414

AREA CODE NUMBER EXTENSION

FAX

MOBILE

HERBERT FRIEDMAN

Martin Goldman
in charge of Jan. ^{DP} conference

he will call



IMPORTANT MESSAGE

FOR H.A.F

DATE 9.27.99 TIME 1:04 AM
P.M.

M Judith Cohen

OF Holocaust Museum

PHONE 202-488-0429

FAX

MOBILE

TELEPHONED	PLEASE CALL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CAME TO SEE YOU	WILL CALL AGAIN	<input type="checkbox"/>
WANTS TO SEE YOU	RUSH	<input type="checkbox"/>
RETURNED YOUR CALL	SPECIAL ATTENTION	<input type="checkbox"/>

MESSAGE

Has question about
a picture.

wanted to know if it was post-war
destruction (ie. in RP period) or in-war.

I suspect pre-war, or war

SIGNED [Signature]



UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW
Washington, DC 20024-2150

FAX

Date: _____

Number of pages including cover sheet: 2

To: Rabbi Herbert Friedman

Phone: _____

Fax phone: 212-751-3739

CC: _____

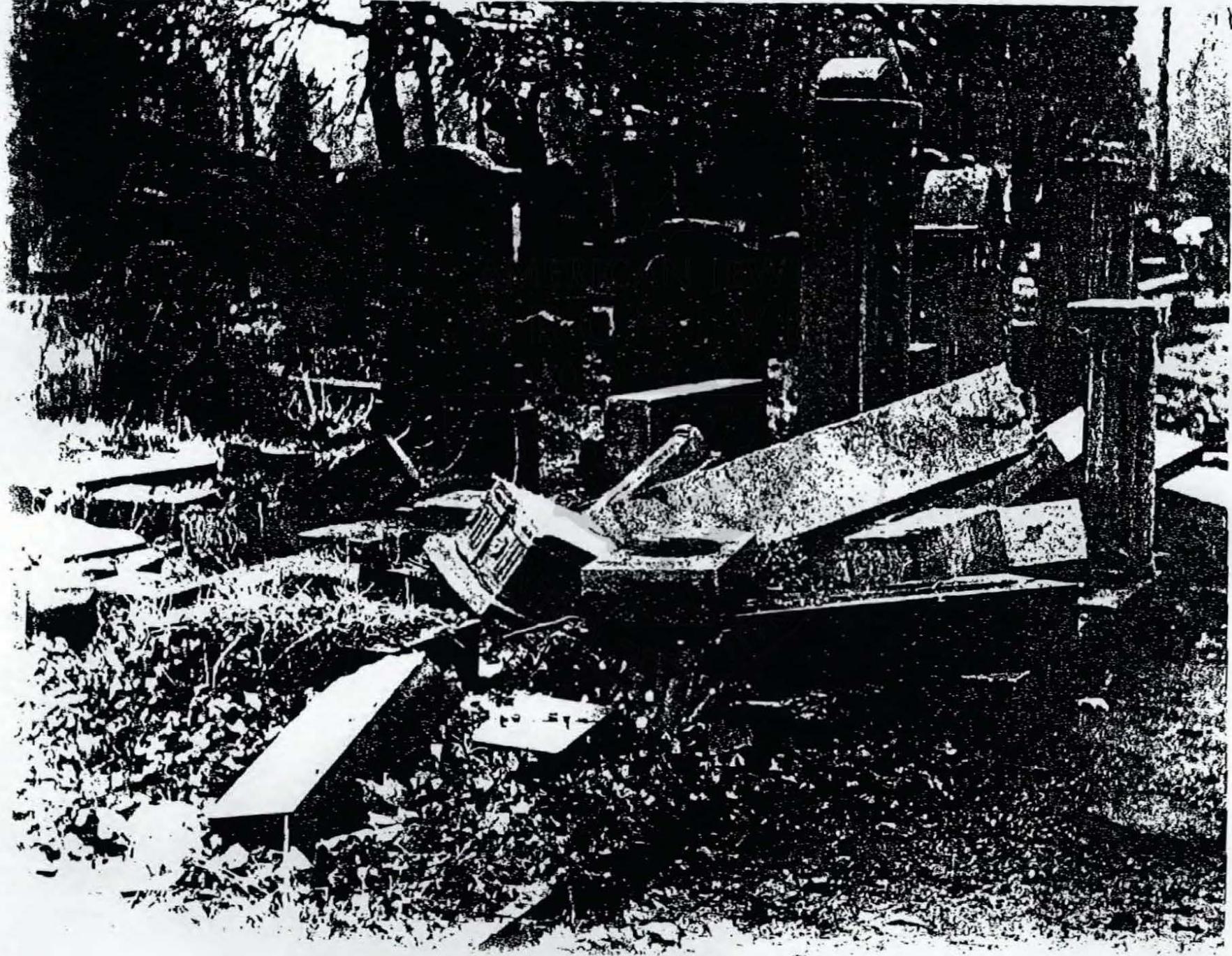
From: Judith Cohen

Phone: _____

Fax phone: _____

REMARKS: Urgent For your review Reply ASAP Please comment

Thank you for reviewing this photograph -
I will call you back this afternoon to
see if it seems familiar.





UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW
Washington, DC 20024-2150

FAX

Date: _____

Number of pages including cover sheet: 2

To: _____

Rabbi Herbert Friedman

Phone: _____

Fax phone: 212-751-3739

CC: _____

From: _____

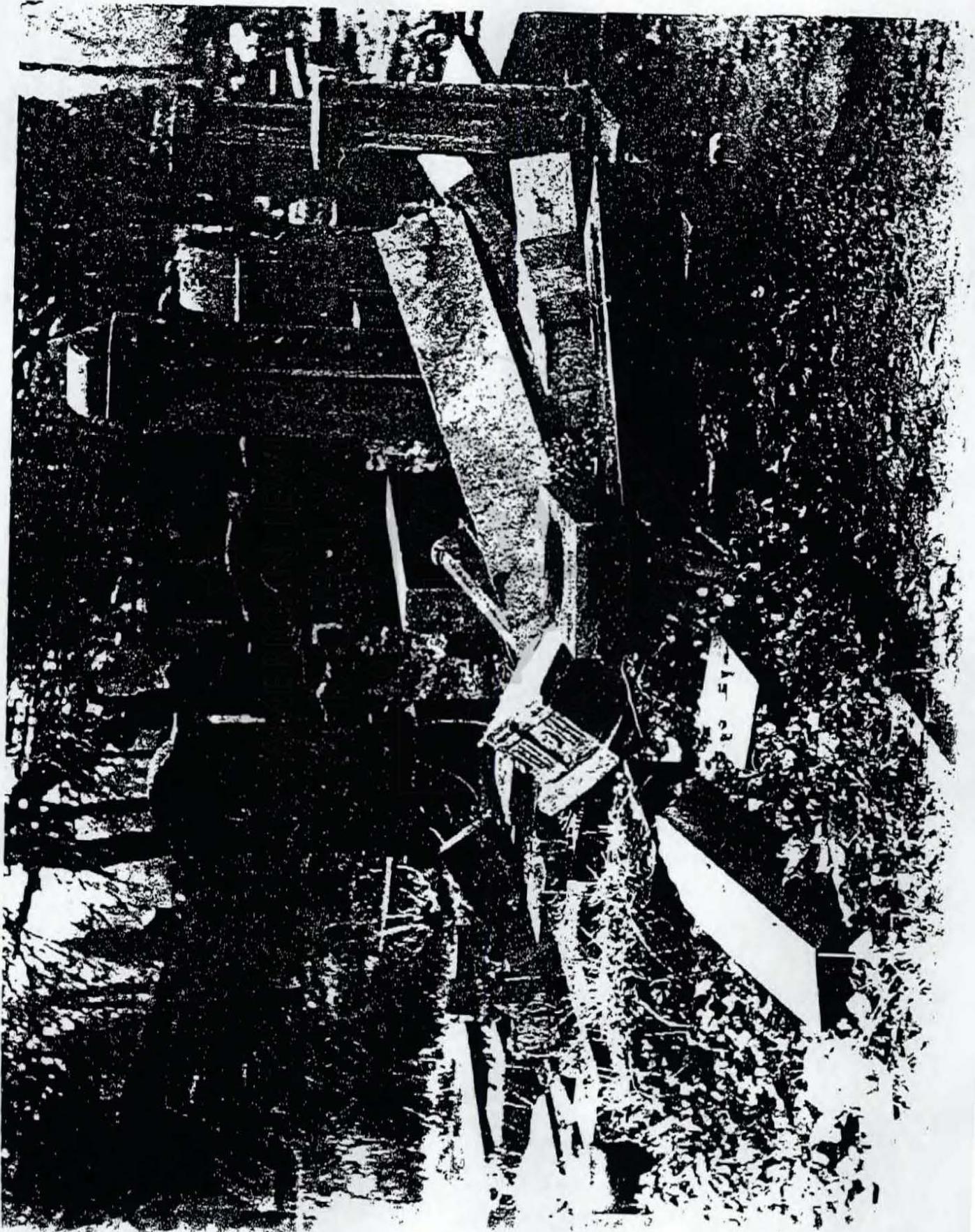
Judith Cohen

Phone: _____

Fax phone: _____

REMARKS: Urgent For your review Reply ASAP Please comment

Thank you for reviewing this photograph -
I will call you back this afternoon to
see if it seems familiar.



IMPORTANT MESSAGE

FOR Rabbi Friedman

DATE 3/6/00 TIME 3:00 P.M.

M Mr. Horowitz

OF Jewish War Veterans Museum

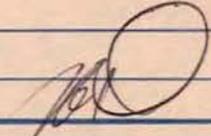
PHONE 202-265-6280

FAX

MOBILE

TELEPHONED	PLEASE CALL
CAME TO SEE YOU	WILL CALL AGAIN
WANTS TO SEE YOU	RUSH
RETURNED YOUR CALL	SPECIAL ATTENTION

MESSAGE _____

SIGNED 

1. Will forks & marble stay in one place for yes ~~at the~~ 7 months?
→ not moving
2. Where exactly is the exhibition
3. How is it guard mounted? What kind of security?
- 4.* Are objects in the open? or behind glass?*

HERBERT FRIEDMAN

~~450.000~~

- o 12 mixed apples fw packing
- o grapefruit
- o juice oranges
- o berries (blue, straw etc.)
- o grapes (champagne grapes if they have)
- o * melons
- o $\frac{1}{2}$ bag musculus
- o pears
- o broccoli
- o bananas

National Museum of American Jewish Military History



1811 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009 • Tel: (202) 265-6280 • Fax: (202) 462-3192 email: nmajmh@erols.com

**Neil Goldman, Past National Commander
President**

September 13, 1999

Rabbi Herbert Friedman
Founding President Emeritus
Wexner Heritage Foundation
551 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear Rabbi Friedman:

I appreciate your willingness to loan us the two silver forks and the piece of marble from your collection for our "Rescue and Renewal" exhibit. Both will greatly enhance our exhibit. I will send you the loan forms as soon as I receive the objects.

I am enclosing a copy of our "GIs Remember" book/catalogue together with a handout for our upcoming Rescue and Renewal exhibit.

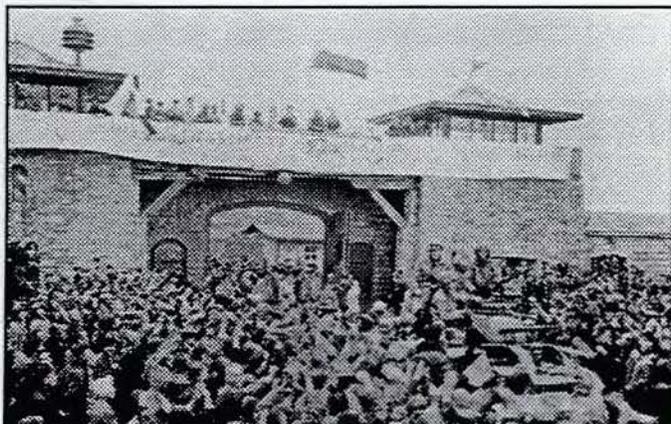
Again, many thanks for your patience and for agreeing to make these objects available.

From a penitent,
Sincerely,

Mort Horvitz
Curator

Rescue & Renewal

GIs and Displaced Persons



With the end of World War II, almost 8 million persons displaced by the war were in Germany and Austria. They included concentration camp survivors, former prisoners of war, forced laborers and ethnic Germans from Poland and Czechoslovakia.

Most of the displaced persons were repatriated or resettled, but for Jewish survivors this was generally not an option. Jewish survivors had no intention of returning to countries where they did not feel welcome and which had, in fact, become vast Jewish cemeteries. Immigration quotas and the British blockade of Palestine kept them in the DP camps longer than most; often two, three years or longer after World War II ended.

Displaced persons were housed in German army barracks, slave labor camps and former concentration camps, among them Bergen-Belsen and Dachau. Initially DP camps were surrounded by barbed wire, under guard and their occupants had to have passes for exit and re-entry. It was not until the intervention of President Truman that this policy was dropped.

Because the history of the displaced persons has heretofore received little attention, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has undertaken a major effort to educate the public about it. This includes an exhibit and culminates in an international conference of former displaced persons in January 2000. In response to a request from the Holocaust Museum, the National Museum of American Jewish Military History has mounted this exhibit on the role of Jewish soldiers in helping survivors to restart their lives. Other participating organizations include the Library of Congress and the National Archives.

Jewish soldiers identified with their fellow Jews. Often they could speak in a language survivors understood and were responsive to their needs. They helped locate relatives and provided food and clothing and other assistance. Jewish chaplains were heavily involved, providing for spiritual needs, improving living conditions in the camps and paving the way for eventual departure from Europe.

This exhibit is divided into two sections. The first on the rescue of survivors of history's greatest crime against humanity. The other on the role of Jewish GIs in helping DPs toward a new life.

Photo above: 11th Armored Division hailed at Mauthausen, May 1945.
From the National Archives; print courtesy U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Herbert A. Friedman

For the DP lecture in January —

Eisenhower visited Con. Camp. Ohrdruf (where
exactly?)
with Major Judah Nadich

Beginning of DP period had — Jews actually locked in — Army
afterwards — altogether different. ^{very} strict

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

FOR HAF

DATE 10/29 TIME 9:30 A.M.
P.M.

M Romana Primus

OF Chair, Displaced Person's Conference

PHONE 800-443-8989 (until 11:00)

FAX 800-443-8361 (after 11:00)

MOBILE

TELEPHONED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PLEASE CALL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CAME TO SEE YOU	<input type="checkbox"/>	WILL CALL AGAIN	<input type="checkbox"/>
WANTS TO SEE YOU	<input type="checkbox"/>	RUSH	<input type="checkbox"/>
RETURNED YOUR CALL	<input type="checkbox"/>	SPECIAL ATTENTION	<input type="checkbox"/>

MESSAGE _____

you wants to discuss your participation in the conference.

SIGNED AS we spoke in detail. She was patient & helpful



UNITED STATES
HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

May 24, 1999

Rabbi Herbert Friedman
President Emeritus
The Wexner Foundation
551 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear Rabbi Friedman:

As you may know, The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and its Second Generation Advisory Group are planning a major international conference scheduled for January 14-17, 2000 in Washington, D.C. The Conference will focus on the displaced persons camp experience, an aspect of Holocaust history that epitomizes the essence of renewal and return to life. It is our pleasure to invite you to share your expertise at the conference.

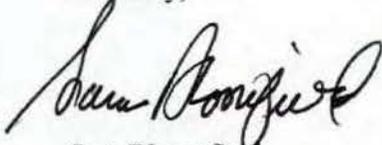
As the Museum's primary new initiative for the year 2000, *Life Reborn: Jewish Displaced Persons, 1945-51* will memorialize, document, and present the remarkable and inspiring story of the rebirth of Jewish life in Europe in the aftermath of the Holocaust. The conference, which will be complemented by related programming at the Museum and at other cultural institutions in Washington, will involve scholars, survivors and their families, and others whose life or work touched upon the DP experience. We anticipate approximately 2,000 registrants.

The conference will consist of plenary sessions, panel discussions, and text study sessions. It will cover topics such as liberation, emigration, daily life, the JDC, long-term effects, Breicha and memorialization. A copy of the tentative program is enclosed for your information.

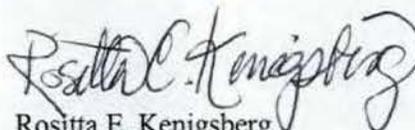
We invite you to be one of three speakers in the plenary session entitled "The DP Period in History," tentatively scheduled for Sunday morning, January 16. The Museum would be happy to cover your travel expenses and hotel accommodations for Saturday night.

Mr. Martin Goldman, Director of Survivor Affairs, is available to answer your questions: by phone (202) 488-0414 or by e-mail mgoldman@ushmm.org. Please confirm your participation with him by Monday, June 21. Your presence will add significantly to the conference, and we truly hope that you will be able to join us.

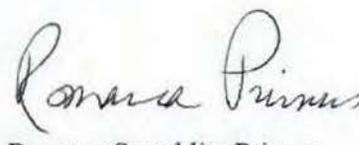
Sincerely,



Sara Bloomfield
Executive Director
United States Holocaust
Memorial Museum



Rositta E. Kenigsberg
Chair, Second Generation
Advisory Group



Romana Strochlitz Primus
Chair, Jewish Displaced
Persons Project

Saturday afternoon study sessions continued:

Selected editorial(s) from a DP newspaper
Selections from the American press
Selections from Yiddish expository prose (in Yiddish)
Selections from Yiddish poetry (in Yiddish)
JDC field reports
Directives from the Yishuv to its emissaries

4-6 p.m. **Receptions** (by affinity groups)

8-9:30 p.m. **Dinner** (*Optional: The cost is not included in the registration fee. Seating will be provided for those who wish to attend the program but not have dinner beforehand.*)
Address by a prominent politician
Presentation and analysis of clips from films listed below

9:30 p.m.-1 a.m. **Screenings of DP Films** *The Long Way Home, Long Is the Way, Unsere kinder, Return to Life, and The Last Sea.*

Sunday, January 16, 2000

~~9-10:30 a.m.~~

8:45

Plenary Session: The DP Period in History

Co-ordinator -

Experience - Personal Recollections

*Avyash Eliev
Sam Bloch*

10:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m. **Forum 1 (breakout sessions): Self-determination**

After Liberation
Non-Jewish DP's
Bergen-Belsen and the British Zone
Breicha and Emigration
Justice and "Courts of Honor"
The U.S. Army, the Germans, and the DPs
Philip Friedman and the Historical Commission
The Nuremberg Trials

12:45- 2:15 p.m.

Lunch Plenary Session: The Special Role of the "Joint"
(*The cost of this meal is included in the registration fee.*)

Relationship between Army + DP's

Sunday
2:30-4 p.m.

Forum 2: Family, Work, and Culture

Women, Children, and the Unmatched Birthrate
Education, Employment, Hakhshara (kibbutz training)
Health Issues
The Press and Book Publishing in the DP Camps
Laughing after the Catastrophe
Sefardim among the DPs
Displaced Persons in Austria, Italy, and Jewish Communities in
Other Countries
Jewish Students at German Universities and Medical Schools
An Illustrated Tour of the DP camps: Photos from the JDC
Archives
Religious Observance

8-10:30 p.m. An evening of songs, dramatic readings, poetry, and dance drawn from the
DP period featuring Theodore Bikel and The Klezmatics

Monday, January 17, 2000

8:30- 9:45 a.m.

Plenary Session: American Policy toward the DPs

10-11:30 a.m.

Forum 3: The Impact of the DPs and DP Life

Child Survivors after the Liberation
Coping with the Psychological Aftermath of Survival
and Extreme Trauma
Artistic Creativity
DP Impact on Zionism, the Creation of Israel, and Israeli Society
DP Impact on American Society
DP Impact on Germany

11:45 a.m.-1:15 p.m.

Closing Plenary Session

The First Years after Liberation
Closing Address

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

FOR Rabbi Friedman
DATE September 3, 199 TIME 11:00 A.M.
M Mr. Horowitz
OF American Jewish War Veterans
PHONE 202-265-6280
AREA CODE NUMBER EXTENSION

FAX
 MOBILE
AREA CODE NUMBER TIME TO CALL

TELEPHONED		PLEASE CALL	
CAME TO SEE YOU		WILL CALL AGAIN	
WANTS TO SEE YOU		RUSH	
RETURNED YOUR CALL	X	SPECIAL ATTENTION	

MESSAGE _____
call him Friday
between 11-2

SIGNED _____ NF

HERBERT FRIEDMAN

photos in Museum archives
need my permission
how do I give it to you?

my most significant Sephardic
are in my book
do you want a copy?

Hitler ash tray + fork

National Museum of American Jewish Military History

1811 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009
(202) 265-6280 Fax (202) 462-3192



Harvey S. Friedman, Past National Commander
President

7 Deborah Place
Oakhurst, NJ 07755
Home: 732-229-8584
Fax: 732-870-8798

May 26, 1999

Rabbi Herbert Friedman
Founding President Emeritus
Wexner Heritage Foundation
551 Madison Avenue, 9th floor
New York, NY 10022

Dear Rabbi Friedman,

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has initiated a major project to increase public awareness of the Displaced Persons experience in the aftermath of World War II. This will include an exhibit and will culminate in an international conference of former displaced persons.

Complementary exhibits will be mounted at our museum, the Library of Congress and the National Archives. Our focus will be an exhibit on Jewish military personnel who provided material and spiritual support to Jewish DPs, and helped them to restart their lives. Our exhibit is timed to open when the Holocaust Museum exhibit opens in November 1999.

Your work on behalf of Jewish DPs is well known. Our hope is that you would be willing to have your experiences included among those featured in our exhibit. Certainly your story would enhance our exhibit.

If you agree to participate we would like to have a summary of your most significant experiences together with relevant memorabilia. The Holocaust Museum has indicated that many of your photos are in its archives and some could be made available with your permission.

I am enclosing background material for your information. Our curator for this exhibit is Morton Horvitz. He can be reached at 202-265-6280.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Harvey S. Friedman
President



UNITED STATES
HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM
HONORING 5 YEARS

September 15, 1998

Dear Holocaust Survivors, Members of the Second Generation, and Family Members:

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is planning a major international conference scheduled for **January 14-17, 2000 in Washington, DC**. This conference will focus on the Displaced Persons Camp Experience, an aspect of Holocaust history that epitomizes the essence of renewal and return to life. We are writing you at this time to inform you of this major project and to invite your participation.

The Displaced Persons Camp Conference will comprise the major project of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum during year 2000. Its purpose will be to memorialize, document, present, and interpret the remarkable, often difficult, yet frequently inspiring, story of the rebirth of Jewish life in Europe in the aftermath of the Holocaust. This subject is vital to a full understanding of Holocaust history and exemplary of the inextinguishable resilience of the Jewish spirit. Yet, it is a subject that has been relatively under-represented in Holocaust scholarship. The year 2000 Conference and related programming have been planned with the core objective of bringing the DP Camp experience to life.

The Conference will bring together Survivors and their families, including those who were born in Displaced Persons camps, scholars of the period, and individuals representing organizations such as the Allied Forces, the Joint Distribution Committee, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, ORT, and the Yishuv.

While the Conference will focus primarily on the DP Camps in Germany, a series of pre-and post-Conference activities will explore the broader story of Jewish life in Europe from liberation of the concentration camps to emigration and resettlement. The Museum intends to complement the Conference with exhibitions of artifacts and photographs, presentation of a documentary film series, production of educational brochures and teacher resource materials, and the dissemination of a "virtual" exhibition on our website.

We invite your partnership in realizing this ambitious effort. If you or your family members have original materials – documents, photographs, personal effects, and/or memorabilia – from this period, please contact us as soon as possible. Such materials – through their very presence – can bring history alive. Moreover, they comprise the very heart of the Museum's work, its commitment to the documentation of history through the preservation and interpretation of authentic materials. We hope that you will consider donating such items to the Museum, where they can be properly

A Project of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council

100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW, Washington, DC 20024-2150, Telephone (202) 488-0400, Fax (202) 488-2690

**National Museum of American
Jewish Military History**

1811 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009
(202) 265-6280 Fax (202) 462-3192



Edward D. Blatt, Past National Commander
President

2941 Jenny Place
Philadelphia, PA 19136
Home (215) 934-5439
Fax (215) 677-6884

July 1, 1998

Sara Bloomfield
Acting Director
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Ms. Bloomfield:

Many thanks for asking us to participate in your project on the post-war efforts of Holocaust survivors to rebuild their lives. We are pleased to have the opportunity to work with you on this project and we believe we can contribute to its success.

Our contact for assisting in the development of the complementary exhibition mentioned in your letter is Morton Horvitz, who was guest curator for our GIs Remember exhibit on the role of Jewish soldiers in liberating the camps. Mr. Horvitz has been closely associated with the subject of your project both as camp liberator and in providing post-war assistance to survivors.

Sincerely,

Herb Rosenbleeth
Director

UNITED STATES
HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

To: Sammy
ED
Florence
Harvey
Rob

June 25, 1998

Mr. Herb Rosenbleeth
Jewish War Museum
1811 R St., NW
Washington, DC 20009

Sammy, please
coordinate a response
with above. Jan
4/30/98

Dear Mr. Rosenbleeth:

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum will sponsor a major international conference on January 14-17, 2000 to memorialize, document and present the remarkable history of the rebirth of Jewish life immediately after the Holocaust. Focusing on the experiences of the displaced persons camps in Germany and liberated Europe during 1945-1957, this conference will draw over 2000 attendees, including Holocaust Survivors and their families, for an exploration of a vital, but relatively unstudied, aspect of Holocaust history. The three-day conference will bring together scholars in this field and substantially increase the public's awareness of this important historical period.

Beginning in October 1999 through February 2000, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum will also mount exhibits of its collections of displaced persons camp materials. These artifacts and archival collections document the post-liberation search for surviving relatives, the formation of new families, the medical, educational, religious and cultural activities that served to reconstruct Jewish lives in the DP camps, and the political activism that petitioned for emigration to the United States, Palestine and other centers of new life for the Survivors.

We invite the participation of your museum in presenting a complementary exhibition relating to the post-Holocaust displaced persons era. The Museum would be pleased to assist you in identifying materials in your collections that illuminate this historical period and to provide you with assistance from our collections whenever possible. We will produce a calendar of all related events and exhibitions for widespread public distribution.

I truly hope that you will be able to join the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in this meaningful project. Please call me at (202) 488-0415 or Martin Goldman, Director of Survivor Affairs, at (202) 488-0414 for further information and assistance. I look forward to working with you as we remember an era of rebirth and renewal that is a powerful source of inspiration for our own time.

Sincerely,



Sara Bloomfield
Acting Director
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

MAIN FACTORS IN D.P. EXPERIENCE

I.) D.P.'s Themselves

- a.) At first, Jews were intermingled with other D.P's, but this resulted in uncomfortable atmosphere. Army finally saw the wisdom of placing Jews in their own camps.
- b.) At height of operation, 1947, there were 64 Jewish camps, mainly in American Zone of Germany, Austria and Italy, containing 1/4 million survivors. A small number lived "free" in German towns.
- c.) An umbrella organization was created in the American Zone called Central Committee of Liberated Jews in Germany. This committee worked on building a life-structure in the camps; i.e. schools, orchestra, police, etc.



II.) Advisers on Jewish Affairs to Commanding General

a.) Eisenhower

Chaplain (Major) Judah Nadich: Consultant on Jewish Problems.

b.) McNarney

Judge Simon H. Rifkind (Oct. '45 - May '46)

Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein (May '46 - Aug. '47)

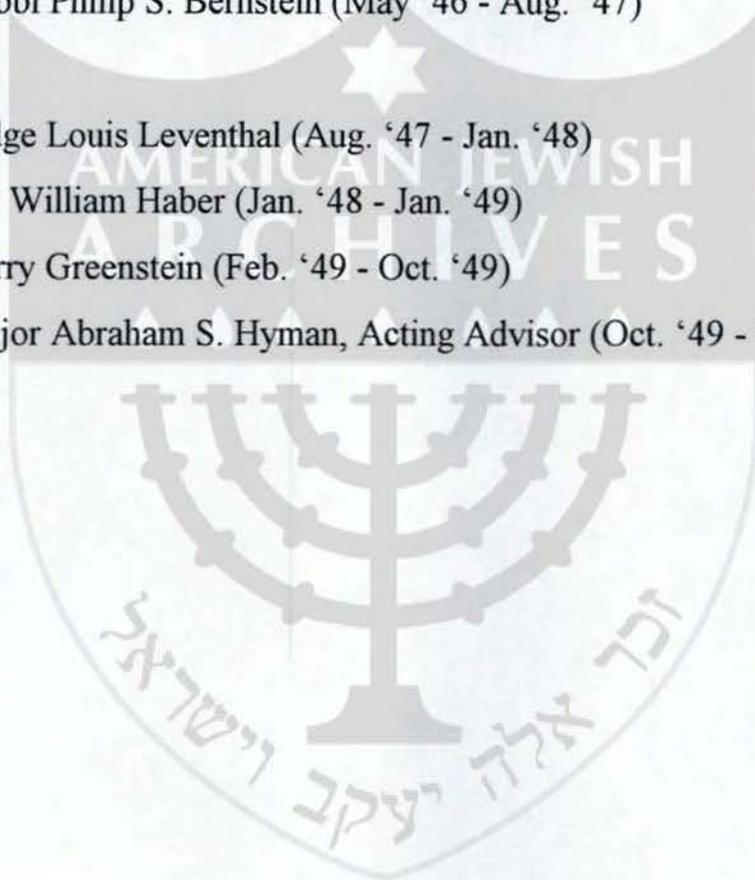
c.) Clay

Judge Louis Leventhal (Aug. '47 - Jan. '48)

Dr. William Haber (Jan. '48 - Jan. '49)

Harry Greenstein (Feb. '49 - Oct. '49)

Major Abraham S. Hyman, Acting Advisor (Oct. '49 - '51)



III.) Attitudes of U.S. Army Top Generals Toward the D.P.'s

- a.) Gen. Walter Bedell Smith - Eisenhower and Patton.

(Pg. 312 Abraham S. Hyman's book, "The Undefeated")

At the beginning, the third Army (Patton Commanding) adopted the practice of placing guards at the entrance to D.P. camps and introducing a pass system. General Smith instructed Patton to discontinue the practice. When that did not occur, Smith referred the matter to Eisenhower, who asked Patton: "George, why don't you do something for these Jewish displaced persons?" Patton responded: "Why the hell should I?" Eisenhower fired back: "If for no other reason, because I order you to."

- b.) Eisenhower and Patton attended a Yom Kippur service in 1945 in Feldafing. (Pg. 281 Hyman)

- c.) Clay attended a Yizkor service in 1946 in Schlachtensee.

- d.) McNarney attended Hanukah party in 1946 in children's center (200 orphans) in Lindenfels. (Pg. 282 Hyman)

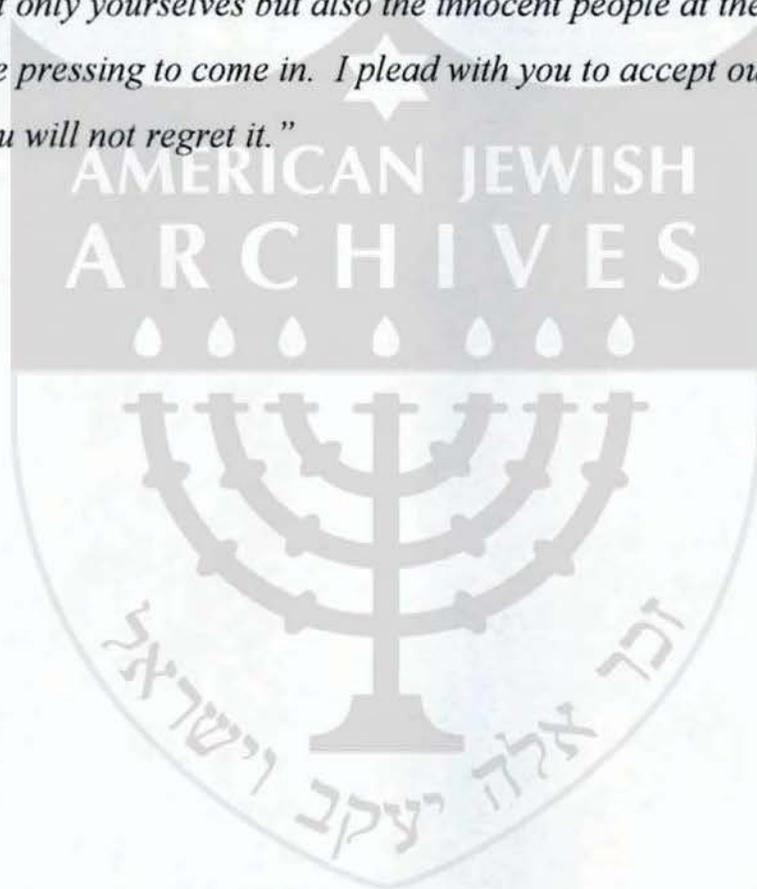
- e.) McNarney, Sept. 7, 1946, granted official recognition to the Central Committee as the self-governing organization of the D.P.'s, also entitling the committee members logistical support and army ID for their travels to all camps.

- f.) Lt. General Geoffrey Keyes came to Babenhausen on Oct. 1, 1946.

(Pg. 287 Hyman)

"I know this place is far from ideal, but it is the best housing we can now give you. You left your homes because you feared for your life. Here you can drop this fear. We are in the midst of setting up new

and better camps. As soon as a better place is available, I will see that you are moved there [a promise Keyes kept within several months]. If you do not accept what we offer you, you will give us no choice but to send you back to Poland. This is something you do not want. Nor do we. If you make difficulties for us you will be hurting not only yourselves but also the innocent people at the borders who are pressing to come in. I plead with you to accept our hospitality. You will not regret it."



IV.) **International Organizations, Jewish and Non-Jewish Working With and For the D.P.'s**

a.) UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration).

Chairman Fiorello LaGuardia came to Germany, spoke Yiddish to the D.P.'s. UNRRA assigned a director to every camp. Harold Fishbein was in Schlachtensee. Gov. Herbert Lehman was also chairman.

- b.)
1. American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.
 2. Jewish Agency for Palestine.
 3. ORT - Organization for Rehabilitation through Training.
 4. Va'ad Hatzala - Orthodox Relief Organization.



V.) **Haganah - Bricha**

- a.) Visit of David Ben-Gurion - I took him to Babenhausen 1964.
- b.) Aliyah Bet
- c.) Rechesh



INDIVIDUAL D.P. EPISODES

References to chapters in "Roots of the Future"

1. Haganah & Aliya Bet - Ch. 6

- a.) Ben Gurion recruited me - Paris.
- b.) Berlin-Stettin; Brigade men; bribes at border.
- c.) Bricha men brought Jews from eastern Europe.
- d.) Palyam sent 65 vessels; 57 captured by British; 60,000 refugees on Cyprus.



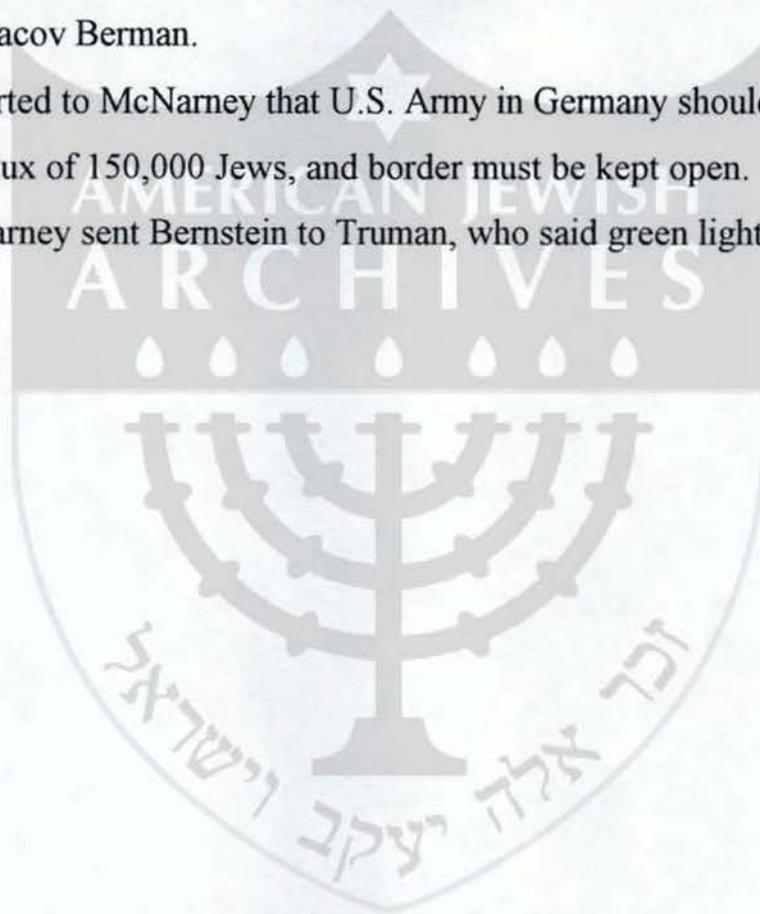
2. **Landsberg Riot** - Ch. 7

- a.) Child missing; Jews rioted in town; Army brought order by arms; 17 youths arrested; huge outcry in U.S.; McNarney sent me; I brought Hyman in; 3 month sentences; rescued by Haganah and taken to ship.



3. **Kielce Pogrom** - Ch. 9

- a.) 42 Jews murdered July 4, 1946.
- b.) McNarney sent Bernstein & me to investigate.
- c.) We met with Arthur Bliss Lane (U.S.Amb. to Poland); Prime Minister Osobka-Morawska; Augustus Cardinal Hlond; Communist ruler Yaacov Berman.
- d.) Reported to McNarney that U.S. Army in Germany should prepare for influx of 150,000 Jews, and border must be kept open.
- e.) McNarney sent Bernstein to Truman, who said green light.



4. Babenhausen - Ch. 10

a.) H.A.F., Hyman, Catholic Chaplain, Lt. Gen. Keyes came himself.

(Hyman p. 287)

"I know this place is far from ideal, but it is the best housing we can now give you. You left your homes because you feared for your life. Here you can drop this fear. We are in the midst of setting up new and better camps. As soon as a better place is available, I will see that you are moved there [a promise Keyes kept within several months]. If you do not accept what we offer you, you will give us no choice but to send you back to Poland. This is something you do not want. Nor do we. If you make difficulties for us you will be hurting not only yourselves but also the innocent people at the borders who are pressing to come in. I plead with you to accept our hospitality. You will not regret it."

b.) Two months later (Dec.) I brought Ben Gurion to the camp.

(Roots, p.97) He said:

"I come to you with empty pockets. I have no British [entrance] certificates to give to you. I can only tell you that you are not abandoned, you are not alone, you will not live endlessly in camps like this. All of you who want to come to Palestine will be brought there as soon as is humanly possible. I bring you no certificates - only hope. Let us sing our national anthem - Hatikvah (Hope)."

5. Army Talmud - Ch. 11

a.) Chief Rabbi of Central Committee and his assistant, Rabbi Samuel Rose, were obsessed with the idea of printing a Talmud in Germany. Bernstein bought the idea, sold it to Gen. Clay. Great technical difficulties. JDC and Army did the job.

(Roots p.100)

This edition of the Talmud is dedicated to the United States Army. The Army played a major role in the rescue of the Jewish people from total annihilation, and after the defeat of Hitler bore the major burden of sustaining the D.P.s of the Jewish faith. This special edition of the Talmud, published in the very land where, but a short time ago, everything Jewish and of Jewish inspiration was anathema, will remain a symbol of the indestructibility of the Torah. The Jewish D.P.s will never forget the generous impulses and the unprecedented humanitarianism of the American forces, to whom they owe so much.

In the name of the Rabbinical Organization

Rabbi Samuel A. Sneig

Chief Rabbi of the U.S. Zone

6. Gen. McNarney Speech

June 1955 - Tenth Anniversary of Liberation.

(Roots p. 437)

The American people and the American Army were led by men to whom it was a matter of the utmost moral responsibility that the fullest possible aid be extended to those who had suffered most at the hands of the Nazi tyranny. Perhaps it was more than an accident that Presidents Truman and Eisenhower are men who, among other things, were brought up in an atmosphere where the Bible is an important symbol of a man's finest hopes and aspirations. For my own part, I regard it as a great privilege to have been able to make a contribution to the work of saving and restoring the Jewish displaced and persecuted. I was happy to be able to recognize and give official status to the Central Committee of Liberated Jews in Germany. I am happy that I was able to issue the order that Jewish persecutees from Eastern Europe would be admitted to haven and sanctuary in the American Zone of Germany. I am happy that, with General Clay, I was able to help make possible the publication of the Talmud in the land where Hitler once ordered it burned. And I am happy that the Army was able to help in the material sense of providing housing and food.

It seems to me that what the Army did in Germany through its humane treatment of these people, and what you have done since that time, represent very real contributions to the winning of the peace. The Army and the American people demonstrated to millions of Germans,

in a manner which I believe they will never forget, that democracy is more than a word and the United States is more than a mechanized civilization, but affords the average man the opportunity to live in dignity, safety, and to share in the good things of life.

