



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES
A DIVISION OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE – JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

MS-630: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler Digital Collection, 1961-1996.
Series A: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1961-1996.

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Holocaust, 1981-1994.

For more information on this collection, please see the finding aid on the
American Jewish Archives website.

The Museum of Jewish Heritage

A Living Memorial to the Holocaust

Under the Auspices of the
New York Holocaust
Memorial Commission

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David Altshuler

*Museum Consultant
to the Commission*
Jeshajahu Weinberg

December 10, 1986

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Ave.
New York, NY 10021

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

I am very pleased to let you know that the New York Holocaust Memorial Commission this month engaged the firm of Chermayeff & Geismar Associates to coordinate ongoing exhibition design planning for The Museum of Jewish Heritage - A Living Memorial to the Holocaust. This eminent firm enjoys a worldwide reputation for its work on the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library in Boston, the Statue of Liberty Museum in New York and scores of other significant museum projects. They also are coordinating all design activities for the Liberty Ellis Island Collaborative.

Even at this earliest stage of their work, it is crucial that the Chermayeff & Geismar principals meet with members of the New York Holocaust Memorial Commission to engage in a dialogue about the Museum's purpose, function, and nature. I am writing to invite you to participate in a small seminar which will be the first of many such sessions as the design planning continues.

Would you be so kind as to join us from 4-7pm on Monday, December 22nd in the offices of Chermayeff & Geismar at 15 East 26th Street, 12th Floor? We would very much like for each Commission member who is invited to attend the entire session, but we will be happy to accommodate you even if your schedule requires that you arrive late or leave early.

Suite 717
342 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10017
(212) 687-9141

*Called
12/15
Monday back.
Home from
Dated*

*hope
you'll be
involved -
Boy due in
March!*

file

The Museum
of Jewish Heritage

Page 2/Design Seminar
December 10, 1986

I regret not being able to give you more advance notice of this meeting, but it could not be scheduled until the engagement of the firm had been finalized, and we are very anxious to have the first such session before the firm's principals travel to Europe and Israel early next month to visit Holocaust-related sites. Even if you cannot attend on the 22nd we certainly will arrange for you to be invited to subsequent meetings.

Please call the Museum office at 687-9141 to indicate whether you will be able to attend.

With sincere thanks,

David Altshuler

David Altshuler ^{RKS}
Museum Project Director

DA/rks

Holocaust

February 10, 1986
1 Adar 5766

Ms. Elisabeth Lakser
4042 Albarross - #25
San Diego, CA 92103

Dear Ms. Lakser:

Your letter of January 20, 1986 pained me greatly. I am, of course, very distressed by your comments and the reports on the sermon which Rabbi Sternfield delivered last Rosh Hashonah. It is my hope his words were misconstrued and not meant in as sharp a manner as it would appear from reading some of the excerpts.

Be that as it may, I really cannot comment on his sermon nor his intent. It is not within my purview to criticize, censor or comment in this or like situations. My role as president of the UAHC, which is the congregational arm of Reform Judaism, is to make certain our congregations obtain from the Union the programmatic materials and assistance they require to provide the multi-faceted programs they offer to congregants. The UAHC is not involved in the selection of rabbinic students nor in the process of evaluating rabbinic performance.

It would be good if you could sit and chat with Rabbi Sternfield and seek to hear from him directly as to the intent of his words. Short of such a conversation I have no other suggestions to share with you but I do feel it would be best to discuss the matter calmly and face-to-face.

With kindest greetings, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

Elisabeth Lakser, Holocaust-Survivor
4042 Albatross, apt. 25
San Diego ca 92103

Jan 20, 1986

To Rabbi M. Alexander Schindler, President - In person!
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 - Fifth Ave New York, N.Y. 10021

Dear Mr President: Dear Rabbi Schindler, whose reputation of a learned,
wise, and compassionate Rabbi, of an outstanding Jew and of a great
humanitarian reaches far and wide!

Enclosed are a few documents, revealing the sad situation of the Jewish
community in San Diego, Cal. created by Rabbi Michael Sternfeld unfortunate
and shameful Rosh-Hashanah-Sermon of 1985, denigrating and nearly doing away
with the sacred memory of the Holocaust, and I quote, "Dayim with being ob-
sessed with the Holocaust! Enough is enough!" and calling for leaving the
Holocaust behind us", because of his annoyance with reading, hearing about
and seeing the Holocaust, too much of the Holocaust and too often on T.V.!

By trivializing our greatest tragedy, still so fresh, that it is almost dripping
with blood, with the cries of our slaughtered families still in the air, this hedonistic
man with a heart of stone, this bad joke of a Rabbi, has painfully and deeply hurt
the still living Holocaust-survivors and, by his desecration of the memory of the
6,000,000 martyrs, an annoyance to him, has outraged the San Diego
Jews of conscience, and has covered Congregation Beth Israel with shame, of his
cynicism and brutality, even though all wrapped up in saccharine.

He has also killed the slowly growing Christian awareness of responsibility and
guilt for the Holocaust, the growing, warm Christian sympathy and compassion
for our suffering, all abruptly obliterated by Michael Sternfeld's ignominious
sermon, and he has set all Christians free from all guilt for the "insignificant"
Holocaust, which is even to a Jewish Rabbi "passé", and has thus anew re-
turned all Christians to their old anti-Jewish prejudices and influences.

One can't help wondering how and why such a self-centered, cruel man of
non-Jewish feelings (!) totally devoid of Jewish kindness and compassion,
but with his cold heart of stone and arrogance, could have ever be or-
dained as a Rabbi and elevated to a position of great dignity, prestige
and of great influence, as a model to follow and a speaker for Judaism!!

Perhaps at the time of Michael Sternfeld's admission to the Union
Hebrew College his ^{absent} genuine moral principles and his total lack of Jewish
kindness and of compassion has not been thoroughly examined and explored,
or he has ably played his part of a sensitive and humble human being,
and he has thus fooled and deceived everybody concerned. How sad!!

I am now wondering, whether this time Michael Sternfield will be severely reprimanded by the Rabbi or Rabbis of Judaic Learning and of Righteousness, superior to him, for his evil deed of spreading his infamous non-Jewish ideas, preached from his pulpit in the San Diego Civic Center to a capacity congregation of several thousand congregants with many non-Jews among them denigrating the Holocaust and by doing this, denigrating all Jews, or he will be allowed to get away with the harm done by him to all Jews, free and unruffled, with all impunity assured, like many times before, without even being restrained, or reprimanded, and ready to do the same evil again and again!

Or would you like me, Dear Mr President, to tell you more about Michael Sternfield and about his lowest behavior, utterly unbecoming and too Shameful for any Jew?!

Perhaps Michael Sternfield was admitted to the Union Hebrew College and ordained as a Rabbi by some unfortunate mistake, or oversight, since I firmly believe, that the Requirements for admission to a Reform Hebrew College are stringent enough to weed out self-centered hypocrites with a heart of stone, as they do it in the yeshivas.

Your friend and admirer from afar,

Elisabeth Lakser

Holocaust survivor

P.S. as if repeating the words by others, Michael Sternfield had the cruelty and the ignorance to describe the "too frequent" for him, Holocaust-Remembrance, a "Redundant, overbearing and commercialized" 21

There is nothing of a Jew, or of a Rabbi in Michael Sternfield: he despises the Holocaust-Remembrance and the Holocaust-survivors, whom he considers as inferior-interlopers and he treats them, as such! I know this first hand!

Dear Rabbi and President Schindler: Please, read the enclosed fiery Yom Kippur Response-Sermon by Rabbi ARON Gold, who had the courage of a Real Rabbi, which compelled him to speak out ~~against~~ against the desecration and grievous injustice, incurred by M. Sternfield's anti-remembering-the-Holocaust-any-longer-Sermon with his badly hidden contempt, while Rabbi Gold's Response Sermon defends the sacred memory and Remembrance of the 6,000,000 martyred Jews, with our slaughtered families among them, defended with wisdom, Righteousness and with warm compassion of a Real Rabbi, of a conscious Jew and of a wonderful, sensitive human being. Ed.

the courage
1) and the conscience

Ten ENCLOSURES

Community Forum

This Community Forum focuses on some Holocaust survivors' response to Rabbi Michael P. Sternfield's sermon "Out of the Ashes — Hope" which was printed in our issue through Nov. 14.

The reaction of the New Life Club of San Diego to the sermon of Rabbi Michael P. Sternfield, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Israel, on eve of Rosh Hashanah 5746.

Reading Rabbi Sternfield's sermon in *Israel Today*, survivors of the Holocaust were shocked and dismayed when he accused the Jewish Community, saying that "We are obsessed with the Holocaust." Rabbi Sternfield, how can anyone be "obsessed" with the Holocaust, one of the greatest tragedies to befall the Jewish people? In making this statement you demonstrated incredible insensitivity to those of us who are survivors of ghettos and concentration camps, to those who avoided the gas chambers by working in slave labor camps, but whose entire families were exterminated by the Nazis, to those who saw their families die.

Where is the "Yiddishkeit" of a rabbi who proclaims a time-limit to our grief because it is the 40th anniversary of the Holocaust: "Reluctant as we are to admit it, after 40 years, we must finally put the past behind us. Though our hearts still ache in sorrow and in remembrance, it is time to stop sitting shivah." He claims we should have said "Dayenu"

after Ellie Wiesel's plea with the President. "Enough is Enough," he says, referring to films and television programs about the Holocaust.

It seems to us that his sermon was directed to those who are so eager to forget the Holocaust that they do not want to be reminded of it at all. The Rabbi is obviously not aware of the reaction that the showing of "The Holocaust" created all over the world. West German President Weizsaecker declared in the German Bundestag after Reagan's visit in Bitburg, "We Germans can never say we did not know. We all knew and we have to live with the shame for the rest of our lives and teach our children so they should never forget those terrible crimes of the Nazi-murderers!"

Rabbi Sternfield says in his sermon: "To cast all current Jewish experience in the shadow of the six million is unwise, unhealthy, and un-Jewish." While the West German Government has changed the curriculum of history teachings to include the teaching of the Holocaust, and while we are fighting here in the United States to have the Holocaust taught in public schools, a rabbi from San Diego objects to "burdening" our Jewish children with the full knowledge of the Holocaust. Does the Rabbi have to be reminded of the famous words, "Those who forget history are condemned to repeat it?"

The Rabbi concludes his sermon, "Finally, we must all begin to turn away from that Holocaust-conditioned view of human nature which teaches cynicism." We, the

survivors, would like to reassure the Rabbi that we do not live "constantly fearful and suspicious of good people." What we fear most are those who proclaim, "Dayeinu - Enough is Enough." This sermon on the eve of Rosh Hashanah was insensitive and un-Jewish.

Although we understand the attitude of a young rabbi, so fortunate in being born in this wonderful country, never having suffered real persecution or personal grief, we must raise our voices in protest, because we bear witness to the horrible tragedy of the Jewish people. While we have been rebuilding our lives in this great country, we have made a vow before God the Almighty never to forget our brothers and sisters whose blood was shed in the Holocaust and whom we heard singing on their last voyage, "Sog nicht keimol dass du gehst den letzten weg...." We want to make sure that the world will remember and that nobody, not even a rabbi of a congregation, will be permitted to call us "obsessed with the Holocaust!"

We wish shalom to the entire Jewish people, especially in Israel, and may this rabbi be forgiven for the hurt he inflicted on us.

In the next issue, Auschwitz survivor Helen Waterford gives her definition of "obsession."

**ISRAEL
TODAY**
SERVING THE
JEWISH COMMUNITY
OF SAN DIEGO

Deeply Distressed

Dear Editor:

As a Jew and a Holocaust survivor, I am deeply distressed by Rabbi Sternfield's sermon, reprinted in *Israel Today*.

This sermon, calling for forgetting about the Holocaust, is a blasphemy and a desecration of the martyrdom and slaughter by the Nazis of my whole family, of my own suffering, and a desecration of the martyrdom and slaughter of European Jewry—the flower of humanity: the beautiful, the innocent, the helpless victims, bewildered by being abandoned by the entire civilized world for six endless years of torture and executions—the horror and infamy of the 20th century!

Our religion commands us to remember our martyrs forever! More so the six long years of exterminations of 6,000,000 Jews, from 1939 to 1945, turned by the Nazis' Holocaust machine into piles of garbage!

There is no "Dayenu" to these gentle victims of the Holocaust, as there is no "Dayenu" to remembering our sacred, ancient past!

Thank you for printing this letter, written with pain and tears, for defending the sacred memory of all Holocaust victims from the desecration of "forgetting."

Elisabeth Laker, Holocaust survivor

In the interest of fairness and accuracy, it should be noted that Rabbi Sternfield did not propose "forgetting" the Holocaust.
Editor

LETTERS

LEST WE FORGET

Dear Editor:

Rabbi Sternfield in his article "Out of the Ashes - Hope" is seeking to rethink an end of our long Jewish history of suffering and pain, and asks us to go forward with our destiny. He is asking us not to overreact ("not to castigate ourselves" were his words) "for the catastrophe we could not, or at least did not prevent." In some small way he is right. I do overreact, but I can't think of any single identifiable period of Jewish history when the threat was not

present.

We are living now in a period of relative calm and prosperity. We are not publically exposed to the language and the evil and the barbarism of Lisbon, of Seville, of Lima, and the auto de fe. But we have Dachau and Bergen-Belson and a purely political step by Mr. Reagan, who was probably unaware that even the Wehrmacht (the German army) was covered with shame as profound and as dirty as that of the S.S.

My reflections on the Second World War, though I am not a survivor, are

powerful. I would remind the Rabbi that it was our powerlessness and impotence that gave our enemies the passion to seek to destroy us. *again!!*

There is no redemption, or forgiving. The German President, Richard Von Weizsacher, accepted the guilt of his people and said they were affected by and liable for it. There is no equating the victim with the perpetrator. The strength of the Jewish people is in its tears, in its anguish and in its response to a world that forgets.

Harvey Silvers

This error in the Editor's Remark, attached to my letter to the Editor stating that "Rabbi Sternfield did not propose forgetting the Holocaust" (!!) seems to be deliberate, meant to cancel out the real reason and the whole meaning of my letter. For, by repeating in various ways: "Dayenu with being desecrated by the Holocaust! Enough is enough!" Rabbi Sternfield certainly did not call for remembering the Holocaust only for forgetting!

Dear Mrs Waterford: excessive gentleness, or meekness, and passivity, when confronted with aggressive contempt, unfriendly and damaging to the memory of the Holocaust and to the Jewish people, is dangerous!! Since "it is our powerlessness and impotence, which gave our enemies the passion to destroy us!" See Harvey Silvers' letter above, "Lest We Forget!! Please!

DAVID GILBERT
6176 Caminito Sacate
San Diego, CA 92120
582-3111

September 19, 1985

RABBI MICHAEL STERNFIELD
c/o Congregation Beth Israel
2512 Third Avenue
San Diego, CA

Dear RABBI STERNFIELD:

From the time Liesel and I joined your congregation we considered you as "our Rabbi," until last Erev Rosh Hashanah when you began your sermon with the irresponsible statement: "WE ARE OBSESSED WITH THE HOLOCAUST."

We did not believe our ears when we heard you saying that the time has come to stop the grief, that there is a limit to mourning and that our children should grow up in our wonderful country full of joy for their liberty and freedom, proud to be Jewish yet not burdened by their heritage of persecution. Did the Talmud not teach you that we Jews should never forget our "Goluth" and all the disasters which had befallen the Jewish people, starting from the Exodus from Egypt, Destruction of the Temple, Pogroms of the Middle Ages and including the Holocaust?

You are entitled to your private opinion but I feel that you exceeded your authority as our spiritual leader in telling us that we are "OBSESSED WITH THE HOLOCAUST" especially on Erev Rosh Hashanah, a holiday for Teshuvah and Rachmanuth! You demonstrated an incredible insensitivity to a number of your congregants who are either Survivors or whose entire families were murdered in the gas chambers of the SS whose grave Reagan visited. You quoted Elie Wiesel begging Reagan to see his place with the victims and, at the same time, you reminded us that we were "OBSESSED WITH THE HOLOCAUST."

I can understand your attitude since you are a young rabbi, so fortunate as to be born in this wonderful country of ours, and never to have suffered real persecution or personal grief. However, this does not entitle you to affront those who will never forget! Are you aware of the fact that the President of the German Republic, Weizsaecker, declared in the German Parliament on the day Reagan visited Bitburg: "We Germans can never say we did not know. We all knew and we have to live with the shame for the rest of our lives and teach our children so that they should never forget those terrible crimes of the Nazi-murderers." I was in Germany when he made that speech and also in Bergen-Belsen the same day as Reagan.

I am enclosing an article written by a Reuter journalist who interviewed me as one of the first inmates of Bergen-Belsen and was picked up by the media. I hope you will have time to read it and get a better understanding why your sermon shocked so many people. Did you expect that your congregation will really limit their grief to the murdered families and the hurt of the survivors? Do you realize that the word "HOLOCAUST" is of Greek origin and means HOLOS - total and CAUSTUS - destruction. For God's sake rabbi, CAN ANYBODY BE OBSESSED WITH THE HOLOCAUST?

I sign this letter with our usual greeting "Shalom" because I wish it to Israel and the entire Jewish people. And may you be forgiven on Yom Kippur for the hurt you have inflicted on us.

Shalom,

DAVID GILBERT

P.S. William Saroyan said "Those who forget history are condemned to repeat it."



Community Forum

ISRAEL TODAY



Helen H. Waterford

Are we obsessed with the Holocaust? This is the question raised by the *Israel Today* editor. As for me, yes, I am obsessed with the Holocaust, and I am glad to read that Rabbi Michael P. Sternfield has understanding for some of the reactions of a survivor.

Sitting Shiva is the time set for the mourning of the loss of a loved one. But the time of mourning of millions of our sisters and brothers cannot be allowed to stop with an "Enough is Enough." Naturally the shape and consequence this mourning takes is important. Everybody agrees that the Holocaust should be remembered — maybe with yearly memorials, gatherings, prayers, collecting

funds. Endless is this easy way of mourning.

Alexander Donat in his book *The Holocaust Kingdom* quotes Dr. Shipper, a man whom he met in Maidenek after working with him on the newspaper in the Warsaw Ghetto, a historian of importance, at this time already without any strength: "Everything depends on who transmits our testament to future generations. History is usually written by the victor. Should our murderers be victorious? Should they write the history of this war? We certainly [did not win] this fight, but it is our responsibility to speak out, because our disaster is the disaster of the entire civilized world. We have the thankless job of proving to a reluctant world that we are Abel, the murdered brother!"

It is my personal obsession to educate the youth of America and to share with them the historical and personal events of my life. I am joined by my speaking partner, who as a 6-year-old child in 1933 was first introduced to National-Socialistic racial theories and who joined the Hitler Youth when he was 10. After many, many years, he learned to recognize that he had been made a fanatic

victim of a mass murderer.

For the past 5 years, we have traveled through the United States. We are speaking to large universities, small colleges, parochial schools of every denomination — Catholic, Baptist, Episcopalian, Methodist, Seventh-day Adventist, Mormon, and so on. We are invited, received with love and admiration, listened to with full attention, and in the always extensive question and answer periods, challenged with many, many questions.

Generally, nobody has heard a survivor speak, one who explains quietly and as unemotionally as possible those events, and one who is accompanied by a speaking partner with such different experiences. Suddenly they understand this part of history. Standing ovations by audiences of 300 to 3000 show me that their education on this subject has been up to now, to say it mildly, neglected.

We travel through the whole year when the schools are open, week for week, from Mississippi to Alaska, from Florida to Lake Superior, the whole New England coast — in short, all over. If you call this "entertainment" or "commercial exploitation," I can only say that commercialization is in the eyes of the beholder.

What we miss and badly need are witnesses, survivors, who know the historic background and want to help to educate the American youth. The Jewish children have a chance to be informed; the others do not, or their interest would not be this monumental. I am often attacked or perhaps misunderstood because the words *hate* and *revenge* are not in my vocabulary. Rabbi Harold Kushner in his book *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* reinforced my belief in his means of education when he said that every one of us has experienced suffering and loss, but that to sublimate our experiences so that hope is most important is to have found the art of mastering our life. If I had carried hate against our persecutors for more than 50 years, I would have destroyed myself long ago. If in every lecture I give, only a seed is planted in the heads of my listeners — to try to find out more on this subject on their own — then I am sure that I was not saved for nothing.

Helen H. Waterford is a survivor of Auschwitz.

Missed the Point!

Dear Editor,

I only recently read Rabbi Michael Sternfield's sermon on the Holocaust and I would like to make a brief point.

It seems to me that he misses the point entirely when he describes how significant the number 40 is in Judaism, but then suggests that because it has been 40 years since the Holocaust, it is time to put it behind us. Every year at Pesach we remember the slavery in Egypt, we don't put it behind us. We think about and study the story of the flood from generation to generation in order to learn from that experience and not to put it behind us. And we try to live by the Ten Commandments that were given to us after 40 days, and we study them in classes and we speak of them in shul, and we teach them to our children. We do not put them behind us and go on with our lives. These things are woven into our lives and our memories and our consciousness so that we will not forget and so that succeeding generations will not

forget. So must it be with the Holocaust. We must NEVER forget, and we must NOT let the world forget. EITH-er!

Ann Middleman.

Teach me the Bible and two basic principles of Judaism: Remembering and Compassion!

ISRAEL
TODAY

Mrs. Middleman explains to Rabbi Sternfield the Bible, which he does not know well! Rabbi Gold does the same in his fiery Response of Yom Kipur.

Mrs. Middleman explains to Rabbi Sternfield the Bible, which he does not know well! Rabbi Gold does the same in his fiery Response sermon!

Yom Kipur 1985 Fiery Sermon By Rabbi Aaron S. Gold
YISKOR--REMEMBER! TIFERETH ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE
6660 COWLES MOUNTAIN BLVD, SAN DIEGO, CALIF 92119

I WANT TO RESPOND TO A FEW ISSUES AND CONCERNS,
THAT SEVERAL OF YOU HAVE SHARED WITH ME.

WE ARE BEING CONFRONTED, NATIONALLY AND LOCALLY,
BY NON-JEWS AND JEWISH LEADERS. *They say*

" THE HOLOCAUST! IT'S TIME TO FORGIVE.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH. DON'T PUT THAT GUILT TRIP ON US!"

But the Torah says "Zachor et asher asah L'cha Amalek"

" REMEMBER WHAT AMALEK DID TO YOU!

--WHO TERRORIZED YOU, TO WHOM BRUTALITY AND TERROR
WERE A NATURAL WAY OF LIFE.

--WHO WAYLAID AND KILLED ALL THE WEAK AND FAINT,
AND HUNGRY, WHO COULDN'T KEEP UP;"

Lo Tishkach

" --DO NOT FORGET!"

AMALEK THEN AND AMALEK NOW!

OUR BATTLE AND THE LORD'S BATTLE WITH AMALEK
ARE FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION--
THEY NEVER STOP!

SOME FARMERS IN NEBRASKA,
WHO ARE PLAGUED BY ECONOMIC DISTRESS,
ARE BEING TARGETED, BY RIGHT WING EXTREMISTS
OF THE ARYAN NATIONS,

AND THE MILITANT IDENTITY MOVEMENT OF WILLIAM P. GALE
TO "BLAME IT ON THE JEWS."

WHO ELSE? WHO ELSE IS MORE VULNERABLE
AND AVAILABLE AND SAFE TO BLAME;
TO USE AS A SCAPEGOAT?

I HAD NUMEROUS CALLS FROM SHOCKED AND FRIGHTENED PEOPLE,
AS IF ANOTHER HOLOCAUST WAS ABOUT TO BE LAUNCHED,
AFTER ALL, HITLER STARTED WITH A SMALL GROUP OF BIGOTS TOO.

THE TROUBLE WITH THE 20/20 SHOW WAS, HOWEVER,
THAT IT OVERSTATED THE CASE.
A FEW SIMPLE-MINDED FARMERS
WERE PARADED BEFORE THE TV CAMERAS

AND SCARED THE HELL OUT OF SOME OF OUR PEOPLE
WITH THEIR FIRSTHAND ANTI-SEMITISM,
BASED ON SECONDHAND MISINFORMATION AND BIGOTRY.

THE FACT IS, THAT MOST FARMERS IN NEBRASKA
HAVE NEVER SEEN A JEW
AND THERE IS LITTLE EVIDENCE TO INDICATE,
THAT THEY ARE RESPONDING TO THE HATE-MONGERING.

THIS IS THE GOOD NEWS: WE KNOW WHO THE KOOKS ARE,
AND WE CAN WATCH THEM. THE ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE, THE FBI,
and the Amer. Jewish Committee,

YISKOR--REMEMBER--3

I BELIEVE, THAT IN A BIZARRE, ABSURD WAY,
THE NAZIS OF SKOKIE, THE KU KLUX KLAN,
THE 20/20 TV FARMERS IN NEBRASKA,
THE FARRAKHANS AND THE JESSE JACKSONS,
HAVE DONE US A SERVICE!

BECAUSE THEY REMINDE US AND ALERT US!

YISKOR - REMEMBER!

A GENERATION HAS GROWN UP,
SINCE THE DAYS OF THE HOLOCAUST,
AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR.

A GENERATION HAS ARISEN,
THAT REMEMBERS NOT HITLER, AND HIS MAD HORDE OF KILLERS;
WHO MURDERED ONE OUT OF EVERY THREE JEWS IN THE WORLD--
6 OUT OF 18 MILLION.

FORTY YEARS HAVE GONE BY! THEY SAY THAT TIME HEALS!

BUT THE SCARS REMAIN! *and ache every time an antisemitic act occurs.*

THE PAIN OF MEMORY,
CAN NOT BE WIPED OUT.

FROM THE GHETTOES AND CAMPS OF SLAUGHTER,
AROSE THE CRIES OF THE VICTIMS.
THE WORLD, DID NOT WANT TO HEAR THEM THEN,
AND NOW IT TRIES, NOT TO REMEMBER!
NO YISKOR, PLEASE!

YISKOR--REMEMBER--4

AND NOW WE ARE TOLD, EVEN BY JEWISH VOICES,
THAT WE ARE "OBSSESSED WITH THE HOLOCAUST...."

"ENOUGH IS ENOUGH." HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS ARE DEEPLY UPSET,
ANGRY AND IN TEARS, SHOCKED, TO HEAR
SUCH SENTIMENTS, TO BE TOLD:

"IT'S UNHEALTHY, UNWISE" TO SAY YISKOR SO OFTEN!

"--AND IT'S UN-JEWISH!" BUT THE TORAH SAYS OTHERWISE:
"Zachor - ... Lo Tishkach - Remember & do not forget!"

THINK OF IT! WE ARE ASKED TO "RETURN

TO THE AUTHENTIC JEWISH FAITH
THAT AFFIRMS THE FUTURE, AND THE GOODNESS
OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT!"

HAVE WE FORGOTTEN GOODNESS, CHARITY, COMPASSION,
LOVE, FREEDOM, AND JUSTICE?

THESE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE JEWISH WAY.

THE NUREMBERG LAWS AND THE GAS CHAMBERS,

WERE THE NAZI WAY.

AFFIRMING THE FUTURE AND GOODNESS OF JEWISH VALUES,

SHOULD NOT BLIND US TO THE EVIL AND HORROR

OF FORGETTING WHAT AMALEK DID, THEN AND NOW!

THE TORAH TELLS US "REMEMBER AND DON'T FORGET!"

SO IT IS PAINFUL FOR ALL OF US,

THE SURVIVORS OF THE HOLOCAUST,

AND WE, WHO WOULD NOT HAVE SURVIVED;

FOR IF HITLER HAD WON--

THE WHOLE WORLD, WOULD HAVE BEEN JUDENREIN!

YISKOR--REMEMBER--5

IT IS VERY PAINFUL TO HEAR A VOICE--
A JEWISH VOICE, HERE AND ELSEWHERE, I AM SURE,
TELLING US THAT WE "OVER-REACTED TO BITBURG"
AND THAT IT IS TIME TO "CALL A MORATORIUM,
AND STOP INVOKING THE HOLOCAUST."
"ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!"

IT IS NOW A.B.--"AFTER BITBURG."
BITBURG IS FINALLY OVER.
BUT THE PRESIDENT LOOKED,
AS IF HE WERE SLEEPWALKING, THROUGH A NIGHTMARE!

HIS STONY FACE, INTIMATED, THAT IT WAS ALL,
AN UNFORTUNATE MISTAKE, STEMMING FROM BAD ADVICE.

HE SEEMED TO BE RIDDING HIMSELF,
OF SOMETHING ODIOUS. HIS SPEECH AT BERGEN-BELSEN WAS SUPERB;
HIS ADDRESS AT THE AIR FORCE BASE,
CONDEMNED THE SS HORROR, PROCLAIMING THE PHRASES,
"NEVER AGAIN," AND "WE ARE ALL JEWS,"
HE REMINDS ME, OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY, IN BERLIN,
SAYING, "MIR ZENEN ALLE BERLINER!"

IT'S OVER, BUT IT'S NOT OVER!
THE DAMAGE IS DONE, STATEMENTS BY PRESIDENT REAGAN:
"IT WAS MORALLY RIGHT TO GO," AND

YISKOR--REMEMBER--6

"THERE IS A PARALLEL
BETWEEN HOLOCAUST VICTIMS AND SS DEAD."

THESE WORDS WILL TAUNT US FOR MANY YEARS.

IT WAS WRONG!

BUT THE GOOD NEWS IS, THAT WE CAN LEARN FROM BITBURG.

I THINK THE FOLLOWING THREE LESSONS, ARE ALL IMPORTANT:

- (1) FIRST, THIS IS THE END OF SILENCE,
THE ERA OF INDIFFERENCE HAS PASSED.
WE MUST PROTEST, BECAUSE OUR CAUSE IS MORAL,
AND THE WORLD NEEDS TO BE REMINDED ABOUT MORALITY--
AND IT WAS!

A PREPONDERANT MAJORITY, OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
AND SENATE, NUMEROUS VETERANS' ORGANIZATIONS,
THE MEDIA, MILLIONS OF WEST GERMANS,
MARGARET THATCHER, JERRY FALWELL, CARDINAL O'CONNOR,
TO MENTION A FEW.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE GERMAN REPUBLIC
DECLARED IN THE GERMAN PARLIAMENT,
ON THE DAY PRESIDENT REAGAN VISITED BITBURG,
"WE GERMANS, CAN NEVER SAY, 'WE DIDN'T KNOW.'
WE ALL KNEW! AND WE HAVE TO LIVE WITH THE SHAME
FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES,
AND TEACH OUR CHILDREN SO THAT THEY SHOULD NEVER FORGET
THOSE TERRIBLE CRIMES OF THE NAZI MURDERERS."

YISKOR--REMEMBER--7

- (2) SECOND, THERE WAS A HOLOCAUST
AND NO ONE CAN PERSIST IN ITS DENIAL!
NOT THE SIGN-CARRYING BIGOTS IN BALBOA PARK,
AND NO ANTI-SEMITIC PROFESSORS,
CAN LECTURE AND WRITE BOOKS,
ANY MORE, THAT THE HOLOCAUST WAS A HOAX--

THE CONTROVERSY OVER BITBURG,
WITHOUT INTENDING TO DO SO, EMPHASIZED THE TRUTH
THAT THE DEATH OF SIX MILLION,
IS AN UNSPEAKABLE OBSCENITY, AND DENYING IT
AN EVEN GREATER OBSCENITY.

DURING THE WEEK AFTER BITBURG
THERE WERE A NUMBER OF UNFORGETTABLE TELEVISION PROGRAMS,
DEPICTING THE HOLOCAUST ATROCITIES--

I HAVE VISITED A CONCENTRATION CAMP, TERIESENSTADT.
I HAVE SEEN MANY DOCUMENTARY MOVIES--
A DOCUMENTARY PUT TOGETHER BY ALFRED HITCHCOCK
SHOWED SS TROOPS, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN,
WHO WERE FORCED TO BULLDOZE HUGE TRENCHES
AND DRAG BODIES TO A COMMON GRAVE.
HERE WERE THE MURDERERS, AND HERE WERE THEIR VICTIMS
FOR ALL THE WORLD TO SEE!

YISKOR--REMEMBER--8

THERE REALLY WAS A LINE OF SELECTION:

As we read during the Holy Days, "Mi yichyeh Umi Yamut"
"WHO WILL LIVE AND WHO WILL DIE."

THEY ACTUALLY ENTERED SHOWERS, THAT CASCADED UPON THEM,
NOT WATER, BUT POISON GAS.

THEIR BODIES WERE STUFFED INTO OVENS,
AND CREMATED INTO DUST AND ASHES.

BUT FIRST, THE GOLD WAS TAKEN FROM THEIR TEETH;
THEIR HAIR REMOVED FOR MATTRESSES.
FROM SKIN, LAMPS WERE FASHIONED;
FROM THE FAT OF THEIR BODIES, SOAP!

THIS WAS TRULY THE MOST CRUEL, INHUMAN DEPRAVITY OF ALL TIME.
AND THESE FILMS WERE HOME MOVIES TAKEN BY NAZIS, *to enjoy with their families at home;*
AND SS FILMS PRESERVED FOR THEIR RECORDS.

AND WE ARE TOLD BY JEWISH LEADERS
"WE ARE OBSESSED WITH THE HOLOCAUST,...
ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!.. CALL A MORATORIUM,...
IT'S UNHEALTHY, UNWISE, AND UN-JEWISH!"
UN-JEWISH? THE TORAH SAYS,

Zechan — --REMEMBER! TO FORGET IS OBSCENE!
TO CALL FOR A MORATORIUM IS A GREATER OBSCENITY!

- (3) THIRD, IN THE LARGER CONTEXT, BITBURG IS A SYMBOL OF EVIL
THAT MUST NOT BE ERADICATED!

WHEN WE SHOW MERCY AND SYMPATHY TO AMALEK,
IN FORGIVENESS OF EVIL, WE MAKE THE NEXT EVIL EASIER.

WHEN WE OVERLOOK EVIL, WE FOSTER, CONDONE AND
CONDITION OURSELVES, FOR THE NEXT EVIL ACT.

THE POPE WAS SHOT BY A TERRORIST AND FORGAVE HIM.
THAT WAS HIS PRIVILEGE,

ALTHOUGH I THINK IT WAS OBSCENE

TO FORGIVE A MURDERER. BUT AFTER ALL,

IF THE POPE WANTS TO FORGIVE

THE MAN WHO TRIED TO MURDER HIM,

HE HAS A RIGHT TO DO SO.

BUT, BY WHAT RIGHT DO WE, WHO WERE NOT KILLED,

FORGIVE THE BEASTS WHO MURDERED SIX MILLION JEWS?

ONLY THE VICTIM HAS A RIGHT TO FORGIVE.

WE WHO SURVIVED DO NOT HAVE SUCH A RIGHT.
*To forgive huge armies of mass murderers is hideous
and, in itself, is criminal!*

AS ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL PUT IT,

"WE HAVE NO RIGHT TO FORGIVE!

THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO COULD FORGIVE ARE THE VICTIMS,

NOT THE SURVIVORS! NO ONE IS HERE TO FORGIVE."

AT NEILAH SERVICES WE PRAY "P'SACH LONOO SHAAR,"

"OH GOD, OPEN FOR US A GATE,"

EVEN AS THE GATE OF YOM KIPPUR CLOSES.

YISKOR--REMEMBER--10

OUR BRETHREN IN ISRAEL OPENED UP A GATE
FOR ALMOST A MILLION SURVIVORS,
EVEN AS THE GATES OF THE CAMPS OPENED UP TO THEM;
AND ALL OTHER JEWS--700,000 FROM ARAB LANDS
OF PERSECUTION, AND THOUSANDS OF JEWS
FROM RUSSIA AND RUMANIA, AND NOW ETHIOPIA--
HAVE A HOME.

IT WAS THE HORRORS OF THE HOLOCAUST
THAT OPENED UP THE GATES
TO THE HEART OF ALL HUMANITY,
AND MADE ISRAEL POSSIBLE.
LET US KEEP ALL GATES OPEN,
TO THE PAST AND TO THE FUTURE!

Zecher-- REMEMBER! *Lo Tishkachet* Do NOT FORGET!
WE CAN'T; WE WON'T; WE HEAR THE BLOOD
OF OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS, CRYING OUT TO US!
" REMEMBER US! "

LET US CONTINUE TO HEAR THEIR VOICES
AND TEACH THE WORLD THE EVIL OF SILENCE!
NEVER AGAIN! NEVER AGAIN!
IT'S AN ONGOING LESSON WE JEWS AND THE WORLD
DARE NOT FORGET.



CONGREGATION
BETH
ISRAEL

Rabbi Laurie Coskey

September 24, 1985

Mr. Mike Zaks
New Life Club
Jewish Community Center
4079 - 54th St.
San Diego, CA 92105

Dear Mr. Zaks:

I would like to thank you for taking the time to compose your thoughts in a letter to me regarding my Erev Rosh Hashanah sermon on the subject of the Holocaust. Since the evening of that sermon, I have been very much disturbed by the reaction to it. Obviously your feeling is that I never should have given this talk and there may be some wisdom in this feeling.

I want to assure you that, in no way, did I ever intend to cause pain to Holocaust survivors or to demean your loss. In fact, if you have a copy of the sermon, I think I said this explicitly in several places. Never did I say that we should forget the Holocaust; never did I say that we should stop teaching about it. The point of my entire sermon was to stress that the Holocaust is a sacred memory which must not be desecrated by exploitation. In addition we don't wish to blacken our children's perception of Jewishness by causing them to believe that all the world hates Jews. When I said "it's time to stop sitting shiva", I was not speaking of forgetfulness. Quite the contrary. I was comparing this to the mourning process itself.

All this notwithstanding, I want you to know I am very much concerned that the sermon was received as reflecting insensitivity. I sincerely regret any anguish that this has caused you. I intend to communicate these same feelings to our congregation on Kol Nidre eve.

Thank you once again for taking the time to write to me in such a thoughtful manner.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Sternfield
Rabbi Michael P. Sternfield

This apology is full of clumsy lies and of false excuses, by which Michael Sternfield failed to whitewash himself from his guilt of desecrating the Holocaust-Remembrance by his infamous sermon of Yom Kipur, 1985

In his sermon Rabbi Sternfield has expressed his greatest contempt for the feelings of the Holocaust survivors and for all Jews of conscience, wisdom and compassion, who are "obsessed by the Holocaust," which spoils his appetite for dinner, when hearing about it, or seeing it on T.V.

"Too gruesome to be shown!" he says, though it seems to be easy for him to switch over to a more pleasant entertainment channel, which suits him better. Like the Comedy Hour, perhaps

ARCHIVES

"What is all this fuss about the Holocaust anyway? I sayinn with being obsessed with the Holocaust! Enough is enough!" Complete contempt, addressed up in SACCHARINE OF FALSE COMPASSION!

Elisabeth Laksen - Holocaust-survivor

December, 1985

My letter to a friend, concerning my recent conversation with a former high congregation Beth-Israel-official, which may be of importance to other Holocaust-survivors, to all American Jews and to all people of conscience.

Dear Dorsha!

I just happened to talk to a former high Temple Beth Israel's official, which deeply affected me and made me wonder about the mentality of ~~the~~ even the best and finest American Jews.

Here is what this gentleman (name deleted) said to me:

"Even though I am not an admirer of Rabbi Sternfield, but the opposite is true, yet the rabbi may be right in his sermon, when he says, that we should not be obsessed by the Holocaust any longer, but to forget about it for preventing us from becoming neurotic, paranoid, petrified and catatonic!"

I said: "But this statement, totally inspired by this rabbi, is totally absurd (!), hostile, false and damaging to the comprehension and the memory of the Holocaust and to the Jewish people! A totally anti Jewish distortion and exaggeration of fact!"

First you are yet to show me a single American Jew "obsessed" by the Holocaust to the point of becoming neurotic, paranoid, petrified and catatonic (as a result) in his outlook on his life in America.

The American Jews were not subjected to the six years long Nazi-extermination of Jews: you did not suffer, except vicariously. You don't know, what it has been like, to be a Jew under the Nazis, but have only a vague and remote idea of this hell on earth; and some of you, with a heart of stone, who have never been moved by this slaughter, became very bored (!) by Holocaust and are now shouting "Dayeinu!"

"In stark contrast there are some righteous non-Jews, who became 'obsessed by the Holocaust', like David Wyman, who devoted years of his life to research and wrote a book, 'The Abandonment of Jews', under the Nazis by Britain and the United States, which then refused to save the European Jews, all condemned to certain death."

But for Rabbi Sternfield and for some American Jews it is boring to hear (!)

about the Holocaust! Enough is enough! Dayeinu!! 2,
In fact we never asked you to prostrate yourself every morning for
mourning the martyrdom and slaughter of the 6,000,000 Jews to which
you were never subjected, nor directly affected by the Holocaust.

All we hoped for is, that you, American Jews, and people of conscience in
whole world comprehend, what has been done to all Jews in Europe (while
the murder of one more Jew, any place, should affect all Jews) that you un-
derstand our horror, pain and grief, that you let us ask the question "Why?"
and let us remember and, that you remember, honor and prevent another
Holocaust of Jews happening again here, or elsewhere!"

The former high official said to me:
We already have a Day of Holocaust-Remembrance - the Yom Hashoah -
what else do you want us to do? Should we have a special Day of Remem-
brance for the burning of Jews by the Spanish Inquisition and for every
massacre of Jews for the last two thousand years?
as for preventing another massacre to happen, it can never happen
here, in the United States!"

at this I answered:
"First: This is exactly, what we kept saying to ourselves in Europe: It can ne-
ver happen to us here, in the 20th Century, in the midst of the most civi-
lized countries in the world! The conscience of the world will never al-
low to let us be slaughtered and will never abandon us to utter
bestiality!!"

yet it took one criminal madman to make the most lucrative "Final So-
lution" - a sacred, patriotic duty (dictated by unlimited greed, hate
and contempt, with all impunity assured in advance) to carry along
all of Germany with all its most learned professors: with the active par-
ticipation of numerous other countries and nations, and with the
rest of the world applauding, except for small Holland and Sweden, and
for some noble, selfsacrificing non-Jews of conscience, often punished
by death for hiding a Jew to save his life."

Second: This Holocaust did not happen in the Middle Ages; it
happened in our time, to us! Just yesterday! and it can happen
again! Here, or elsewhere!"

and this is why it is so important to remember the 20th Centu-
ry Holocaust of 6,000,000 Jews, supposed to be the final extermi-
nation of a nation! for preventing another Holocaust happening
again!!

Third; as about the Day of Holocaust Remembrance, Rabbi Michael Sternfield is calling for doing away with mentioning the Holocaust any further, with all his annoyance, contempt and resentment, because it bothers him! Enough is enough! 3

I don't blame any Jew for being callous, cruel and cynical about the Holocaust, since he can not help it, that in doing so, he reveals his true nature, of the same qualities and his heart of stone!

Being callous, cruel and cynical about the Holocaust comes easy to such a totally insensitive human being and Jew, whom the Holocaust never made to suffer; his blood has never been shed; his whole family has ~~never~~ not been murdered from the closest to the most distant relative; he and his have not been brutally driven out of their houses in 5 minutes; nor instantly robbed of all their possessions and rights (!), and he has not seen all his people murdered, slaughtered, not like cattle, but like infected, contaminated cattle by the dreadful disease of being Jewish; but he and his continued to live the good life (!) undisturbed!

For the squeamish Rabbi Sternfield the nazi-garbage-heaps of Jewish corpses, a documentary, or movie, or book about the Holocaust, even by the non-Jewish man of conscience, David Wyman, is too gruesome, redundant, overbearing and commercialized?! Just too boring to put up with any longer!!

It spoils one's appetite for dinner, as if one can't easily switch over to a comedy-program-channel, or to "Dance-Fever" on T.V.!

Why should one, even a Jewish Rabbi be allowed to call for doing away with remembering the Holocaust, the slaughter of 6,000,000 innocent human beings, young and old; a blasphemy and desecration of Sacred Yom Hashoah! The former Temple-official said to me again, "You are exaggerating this Rabbi's influence." I answered: Rabbi Sternfield's is exactly a position of influence! He preached and spread his denigration and doing-away-with-remembering the Holocaust-idea, with the very sacred Jewish values of Remembrance and compassion, to a gathering of some 5,000? Jews and non-Jews, congregated in the Civic Center in September? He has also influenced you (!), that we should stop being obsessed by the Holocaust "now and then" (ful and absurd!) and he, as a Rabbi, has his numerous congregation of Jews and non-Jews every Friday and every Holiday for spreading the same contempt and resentment for our feelings about the Holocaust thus denigrating, belittling and mocking the Holocaust and all Jews alike to the non-Jewish world. A Jew?! A Rabbi?! or not?!

Why should this rabbi, of non-Jewish feelings, feed with 4. self-denigration and self-contempt the minds of his uncritical congregants, unable to think for themselves and see the facts and the truth through, what looks like "demagoguery"; not able to resist and cope with this rabbi's anti-remembering-the Holocaust-ideas!

"Bathing our children in tears"?!! What a hostile, false exaggeration and distortion of reality!

This rabbi has yet to show us a single, American Jewish child "bathed in tears" over the Holocaust!?!?

Should the American Jewish children grow up like ostriches, with their heads in the sand of fairy tales?! Or like piglets, without knowing, caring, nor honoring the memory of the Holocaust-victims (children and grown-ups alike), and let the same horror and nightmare repeat itself again?! ^{shame}

The Jews and the ^{whole} world should never forget the horror and infamy of the 20th Century, the Holocaust, the extermination of all European Jews by the means of the most efficient, most economical 20th-century-German-technology, with the forced help of Jewish prisoners, forced to carry away the remains of their families after mass ^{exterminations}. Yes, indeed, if we have a throw-away-and-cover-up-the-Holocaust-with-silence spiritual leader, like rabbi Michael Sternfield, we do not need any other "spiritual leader" to annihilate our dignity, our moral fiber, and all of us!

May this rabbi, rabbi Michael Sternfield, never be forgiven for the pain and shame inflicted upon the Holocaust-survivors and upon all Jewish people!

Elisabeth Laksier, Holocaust survivor
graduate of the College of Liberal Arts
and of the College of Education,
Senior-High-School teacher in Michigan
volunteer-school teacher in San Diego, Ca

From my letter to a friend.

My final conclusion is, that by the sacreligious demagoguery of his anti-reviving the Holocaust Sermon rabbi Michael Sternfeld not only confuses, misreads and stuffs the American Jews, but what is so far reaching and even worse, is the fact, that by his denigrating and trivializing the Holocaust, when describing us as "less-affected" by the Holocaust, which is so undignified overbearing and even more ridiculous, he robs this most tragic lesson for the Jews and for humanity of its greatest meaning and significance of events which are of it by the Christians and kills their growing comprehension and understanding of it by the Christians and kills their growing sympathy and compassion toward the suffering of the Jews in general and especially the Holocaust, which is certainly the final expression and result of the 2,000 years of teaching and preaching Christianity toward all Jews by the Christian churches, in which thus paved the way and made the Holocaust taking place in the 20th century in the heart of the Jew most civilized Christian world says in his fiery sermon-Response to rabbi Sternfeld's sermon of shame!

"~~Let us~~" It was the HERBES of the Holocaust that turned up the gates to the heart of all humanity and made Israel possible. Set us keep all gates open to the past and to the future. In lay his ignominious, your Kipur Sermon rabbi Sternfeld managed to thrust another knife deep into the hearts and minds of the still alive Holocaust survivors and has caused Congregation Beth Israel with shame!

There is nothing of a Jew, or of a Rabbi in Michael Sternfeld, but a mockery of a Rabbi, a disgrace and a shame! He has been ordained as a Rabbi, perhaps by some oversight, or mistake of the Union Hebrew College, which has later regretted and the little tried to stop him, but from filling the position of an assisting Rabbi in Congregation Beth Israel, but none could stop this petty aggressive, selfish, cunning, ruthless and cruel man, who subsequently gave a bad name to the Union Hebrew College and to Reform Judaism, whom and those denigrating influence on American Jews and on Christians of conscience, whom he, by his denigrating and trivializing the Holocaust, sermon, as "Redundant, overbearing and demagogic" (ii), turned away from respecting the memory of the greatest in Jewish history martyrdom and regaining the Holocaust, back to the old anti-Jewish prejudices and influences even with greater contempt, which he still continues to do uncontrolled and UNRESTRAINED TODAY!!

As I was told by many.

Dear Mrs Waterford!

12/24/85

Since I wrote my letter to you at different times, starting with page 3 some of my thoughts may be repeated, but there are also new thoughts and conclusions there.

Sorry! I just do not find the necessary energy right now to condense and rewrite it and am making my letter to you, as it is.

If you should wish to make a copy for mailing it to a friend, please, make and enclose a copy of this note too! Thank you!

My good wishes and fond thoughts are with you always.

E.L.

Dear Mrs Waterford:

12/22/88

I would like to express my admiration and gratitude to you for the extremely important work, you are doing, when sharing your indescribable suffering under the Nazis with others and revealing to them the incredible horror of the Holocaust, the greatest shame and infamy of the civilized 20th century world, when a highly advanced technologically country, Germany, successfully organized the extermination of the Jewish nation by mass executions of innocent, defenseless human beings, with other numerous, most civilized countries and nations, actively collaborating in the mass-murders and plunders, with the rest of the civilized world applauding, or in cold blood, indifferently turning away.

You are awakening in people of conscience the comprehension of the utter cruelty and bestiality done to the Jews just for being Jewish, trapped in the bloodthirsty Nazi claws of the Nazis with none caring enough to protest and try to save our martyred, slaughtered families, in the eyes of the world, with all impunity assured.

I am enclosing here the copy of my letter to a friend, which I have promised to mail to you.

Your letter, published in "Israel Today", which should bear the name: "I am obsessed by the Holocaust." is extremely gentle, almost apologetic, as if you are afraid to "hurt the feelings" or ruffle the feathers of Rabbi Michael Sternfield, who just made shambles of your dedicating your life to the Holocaust, and then with all his annoyance and contempt, kicked these shambles and the Holocaust away!

We have only once a year the Remembrance of the Holocaust - Yom Hashoah, and yet it still bothers Michael Sternfield. "Enough with being obsessed with the Holocaust! Enough is enough!"

2.
and this by his non-rabbinical, un-Jewish sermon rabbi Sternfield cynically did away with two of the most important Jewish values: respect for the memory of the martyrs of the Holocaust and with compassion!

The tragedy, created by the damaging to the Jews' influence of this unfortunate sermon is, that the conscience and consciousness of the non-Jewish world is only now awakening to the full horror of the greatest slaughter of Jews in human history and in the 20th century.

This awakening is expressed in growing interest of the non-Jews of conscience to comprehend the reasons for the happening of our greatest tragedy; in sympathy for the Jews and in compassion, all of which rabbi Sternfield has successfully destroyed by belittling and denigrating our "obsession with the Holocaust", unfriendly and damaging to the Jewish people!

While you, Dear Mrs Waterford, by your revealing to your non-Jewish listeners your suffering and the enormity of the horror of the Holocaust in the ~~at~~ fortune and slaughter of the 6,000,000 of Jews, are counteracting the growing antisemitism in the U.S. (the ^{among} farmers; the extreme right; the KKK, Klan, the Neo-nazis, Louis Farrahan who gathers 20,000 of ~~harmless~~ black people, hawking against the Jews (Hebrew)) rabbi Sternfield, by his heartless sermon has destroyed your desperate effort to awaken the conscience of the non-Jews toward us, but ^{he} is making the non-Jewish world to dismiss their guilt for the Holocaust (!) to kill their interest in the Holocaust and their sympathy for the Jews, but increasing their indifference and feelings opposite to sympathy for Jews.

Recently I heard a group of Jewish people, discussing 3
rabbi Sternfield's unfortunate sermon; one of them said:
"It has been a great disservice to the Jewish people by the
Hebrew Theological Seminary to elevate to the dignity of a Rabbi
and to a position of great influence a man as totally insen-
-sitive, callous, cynical, self centered and hedonistic, as Michael
Sternfield, who has now covered Congregation Beth Israel and
all Jewish people with shame!

I suppose, when his rabbinical contract is up there, they will ter-
minate his contract."

The other person said:

"Don't worry about Rabbi Sternfield! He has powerful friends
and protectors on the Temple's Board. In eight years from
now, when his contract will be up, his protectors will double
his salary again and will change the name of Congregation
Beth Israel to Congregation Beth Sternfield."

"But this should never happen!" the first lady said, "Not
after his sermon so greatly damaging to the Jewish people!"
the first lady said again.

The second person answered:

"So who is going to do anything about it? You? Jewish
people are like sheep: they don't want to worry about a
threat until the knife is upon them and when it is too late!"

May you be blessed with good Health, Dear Mrs Water-
ford, for enjoying your family life and for keeping
up your badly needed, marvelous work, of great service
to the Jewish people, and for keeping the sacred memory and
the honor of the 600,000 Jewish Holocaust-martyrs alive!!!
With my friendliest feelings to you and
with affection,

Elisabeth Laksner,
Holocaust Survivor.

The Holocaust is the crown-result of the 2,000 years ^{of} teaching hate and contempt toward the Jews by the Christian churches all around the world: teaching and preaching that all Jews are Christ killers, evil children of the devil, not to be trusted, or spared, a damned nation, a scourge of the earth to be eliminated, and from eliminated to exterminated the distance is short!! *) ^{see below}

Some Holocaust-survivors, who managed to escape from the barbed-wire-and-Germans-with-guns surrounded ghetto (until caught, or delivered to Gestapo (Germans) and thrown into extermination camps, from where there was no escape) who lived as servants with Christian families and went to church with them, heard at the services Christian clergymen spreading hatred and warnings against saving, hiding, or harboring a Jew, but to deliver him to his death. I have heard it myself!

I also knew some righteous Christians, risking their lives to save a Jew, afraid to be denounced by their neighbors, and sometimes paying with their lives, if discovered.

The Christian World in its late wakening to the horror of the Holocaust is only now starting to realize, that all Christians (except the Righteous ones!) are guilty of the Holocaust of the Jews!! the eager collaborators-participants, the applauding bystanders, the cold-blooded, indifferent spectators and the apathetic Christians in more distant lands, reading about the six-years-long slaughter of all Jews in Europe and dismissing it from their conscience and consciousness, as if nothing was happening. There was no world-outcry against the murder of 6,000,000 innocent human beings, guilty only of being Jewish!

What a tremendous irreversible loss for the whole world, even when considering only the great contributions in various fields by Jews benefiting the mankind!

And now, that the Christian Conscience and consciousness has been finally moved to a late ~~wake~~ ^{wake} and greater ^{and readiness} comprehension of halfheartedly, tacitly, and sometimes subconsciously accepting its guilt for the Holocaust, there is a growing Christian interest in the Holocaust, sincere regret and warm sympathy for the unheard of suffering of Jews, the greatest slaughter of Jews in history, the shame and infamy of the 20-th century Christian World!

*) *) until Pope John 23rd, who removed the guilt for killing Christ from the Jews, as false! But Pope John 23rd was after the Holocaust!

Hence from the much belated, ^{conscious} or subconscious acceptance of 5
guilt for the Holocaust by the Christian World stems the though slowly but
ever growing interest, Christian interest in the Holocaust and the sincere effort
to comprehend how and why such horror could have happened and what this
nightmare of human bestiality was like, and a will and determination,
perhaps not too strong yet, to work toward preventing mankind from
such Satanic darkness - at noon ever happening again.
This noble growing effort by Christians of conscience and of good will is be-
ing variously expressed:

A. In the Annual Holocaust Symposium at the Catholic University of San Diego,
with the participation of clergymen of all Christian Denominations, and of Rabbis,
and laymen of Christian and Jewish faith, as introduced and annually repeated
by the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

B. Writing by Christians about the Holocaust, like "The abandonment of
Jews by the Christian World" by David Wyman and others.

C. Various Christian Churches from all over the United States inviting Helen
Waterford, a Holocaust-survivor, and her companion, a former German-Nazi
to speak about the Holocaust.

D. Essays, Documentary-films, movies about the Holocaust and others.

and at this, perhaps most important, precious moment, or period of wake-
ning of the Christian conscience toward accepting guilt; guilt for the active
participation in the Holocaust-slaughter, or guilt by indifference and
passivity, of warm compassion and of sincere desire to learn more
about the Holocaust, to comprehend, what happened, to do good and to
prevent another Holocaust from happening again, comes Rabbi Mi-
chael Sternfeld, annoyed and bored by all this writing, talking, dis-
cussing and showing the Holocaust on T.V. which spoils one's
appetite for dinner, and he proclaims to a congregation of sever-
al thousand Jews and non-Jews, present at the services:

Dayeinu with being obsessed by the Holocaust! Enough is
enough!" thus belittling, deriding and denigrating the sacred-
ness of the martyrdom and slaughter of 6,000,000 Jews
and all the living Jewish people in the eyes of the non-Jewish
world, and painfully and deeply hurting the remaining Holocaust-
survivors. &c.

RABBINIC INSIGHTS

Out of the Ashes — Hope.

From all the Pain — Promise

Are we obsessed with the Holocaust?

Rabbi Michael Sternfield's Erev Rosh Hashanah sermon has been the subject of considerable conversation and controversy. We have heard numerous comments about it, many from people who were not there to hear it firsthand. It is apparent that some of the things he said were misconstrued and/or taken out of context. We have received Rabbi Sternfield's permission to publish his sermon (unedited), to give you the opportunity to read and evaluate it for yourself.

- Ed.

In April and May of this year, we marked the fortieth anniversary of the end of the War in Europe, and the liberation of the concentration camps. When Ronald Reagan decided to visit the military cemetery at Bitburg, West Germany, in commemoration of this anniversary, he

After Wiesel's plea, we should have said "Dayeinu."

opened a real hornet's nest of opposition. American veterans, Jewish leaders and the vast majorities of both houses of Congress all were opposed to his visit. The mere thought that an American President actually would lay a wreath anywhere near the graves of the dreaded SS was appalling.

Elie Wiesel spoke for all Jews when he pleaded with the President: "Your place is not with them. Your place is with the victims." As one who has had many close contacts with Holocaust survivors and their families, I also knew instinctively that this ceremony was certain to re-open old wounds.

Well, despite many eloquent pleas, the President went anyway, adding a stop at Bergen Belsen to his itinerary, as if this would actually mollify the critics.

In retrospect, I still wish the President had not gone to the Bitburg cemetery. Even now, my heart is pained in knowing how excruciating it was for the survivors to observe the President of the United States participating in this memorial observance in close proximity to the graves of their loved ones' murderers. Wounds such as theirs will never heal, not even in a hundred lifetimes. The President should have known this before he decided to go to Bitburg.

Though our hearts still ache in sorrow and in remembrance, it is time to stop sitting shivah.

But in reassessing Bitburg, there are a number of issues which this visit has compelled us to consider. We say in Hebrew: "Gam Zu l'tovah," which means, "Perhaps even this was for the best."

I feel strongly that the Jewish community over-reacted to Bitburg. Obviously, the choice of this particular cemetery was poorly conceived. Nevertheless, there was a point at which the visit became inevitable, due to international considerations. We made our point — no one could have spoken more eloquently, nor more courageously than did Elie Wiesel. After Wiesel's plea, we should have said "Dayeinu." To further embarrass the President of the United States served no useful purpose. After all, Bitburg is only a cemetery, a symbol, with no practical impact on present day Jewish practical concerns. The President was not visiting a PLO camp, or a neo-Nazi gathering. It was just a cemetery. And the President is a proven friend of Israel and of the Jewish people.

Michael P. Sternfield is spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Israel.

Our over-reaction, however, is indicative of a much larger problem, which we Jews finally must begin to confront, and that is our obsession with the Holocaust.

If we had been more receptive, we might have listened more carefully to the President's speeches at Bitburg and at Bergen Belsen, which, by the way, were historically significant. He was speaking to us as well, delivering a message we have been loathe to heed.

At Bergen Belsen, the President said: "Here lie people — Jews — whose death was inflicted for no reason other than their very existence. Their pain was borne only because of who they were and because of the God in their prayers. Here death ruled. But," he said, "we have learned something as well. Because of what happened, we found that death cannot rule forever. And that is why we are here today...We are here to commemorate that life triumphed over the

tragedy and the death of the Holocaust...We are here today to confirm that the horror cannot outlast hope, and that even from the worst of all things, the best may come forth...Yes, out of this sickness — as crushing and cruel as it was — there is hope for the world as well as for the world to come. Out of the ashes — hope. From all the pain — promise."

For 40 years now, the recollection of the Holocaust has been the Jews' crushing burden.

For 40 years now, we have castigated ourselves and all others for the catastrophe we could not, or at least, did not prevent.

For 40 years, we have been plagued by distrust and hostility against all Christian peoples and nations, who closed their eyes and their borders, and thereby sealed the fate of European Jewry.

We still cannot turn away from those feelings, or deny them. But, the President was right when he said: "Death cannot rule forever."

In the Bible, 40 is a frequently recurring number: For 40 days and 40 nights it rained in the time of Noah; for 40 years the Israelites wandered in the wilderness; for 40 days and 40 nights, Moses was alone with God on Mt. Sinai.

The number forty is associated with almost each new development in the history of God's

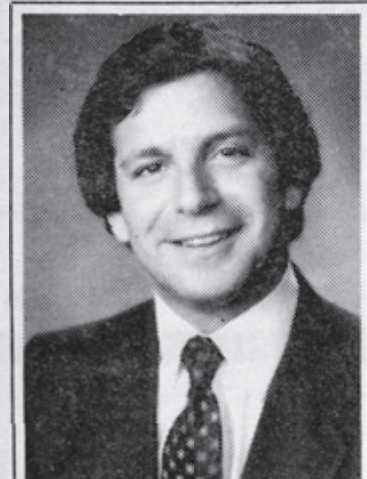
mighty acts, especially of redemption. When the Bible tells of 40 years, it means one full generation. In order for the people of Israel to enter the Promised Land as fully emancipated people, it was necessary for a period of 40 years to pass so that one generation might die and one new generation be born...one which had never known the bitterness of Egyptian slavery.

Reluctant as we are to admit it, after 40 years, we must finally put the past behind us. Though

For most, the Holocaust is history, irretrievably so.

our hearts still ache in sorrow and in remembrance, it is time to stop sitting shivah.

Every rabbi knows that mourning is a process which has a beginning and must also have a conclusion. Excessive grief is unhealthy and ultimately self-destructive. It blocks the possibility of creative living. That is why we say



Rabbi Michael P. Sternfield

throughout the Holy Days: "Choose life, that you may live."

The author of Ecclesiastes teaches: "to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven...a time to keep and a time to cast away." There is a time to remember and also a time to set aside bitterness. It seems to me that we must do both.

This requires a number of specific positive steps which we must take, for our own well-being, and for the well-being of coming generations.

First, let us affirm publicly that we cannot hold responsible the new generation of Germans who knew not Hitler, for the sins their parents and grandparents committed. Nor can we continue to blame the human race at large, when the vast majority of all living people were not alive 40 years ago. That wretched sight of Josef Mengele's bones serves as a morbid reminder that his generation is now virtually extinct. As cheated as we may feel that many Nazis, including Mengele, escaped justice, the matter now is beyond human control.

Second, let us realize that the world has become weary of the Holocaust. For most, the

I do not believe that this tragedy is a fitting subject for commercial exploitation.

Holocaust is history, irretrievably so. Even the best of our friends will tell us that they do not relate to our former tragedy when there are so many others who are suffering here and now. They find our preoccupation with the past overbearing and redundant, and they reject our desire to make them feel responsible for events which occurred before most of them were even born.

Far too many films and television programs have been aired, and too many books written. It is time to call a moratorium. Enough is enough! Speaking personally, I do not believe that this tragedy is a fitting subject for commercial exploitation. There is nothing "entertaining" about the Holocaust!

And if we find Hollywood's commercialization of the death camps repulsive, then let's be honest enough with ourselves to admit that we Jews also have exploited the Holocaust continuously. Each and every Jewish defense organization raises its funds by reminding us of those same haunting memories, even going so far as to cart out desecrated Torah scrolls, atrocity photographs and other lurid relics, in crass emotional appeals for money.

Virtually every appeal for Israel also invokes painful memories of the death camps. Support for Israel must exist independently of the images of the gas chambers. Auschwitz should not be cited at every public forum to provide emotional blackmail compelling support of Israel or its policies. Nor can rabbis and teachers invoke

the Holocaust to command loyalty to Jewish teachings and institutions. If Judaism is going to remain viable in years to come, it must be for reasons far more noble than merely depriving Hitler of a posthumous victory. The memory of the Holocaust is too sacred to be made subser-

Continued on page 18

the sparks to be concealed.
understood the pervasiveness of evil in the for Jewish living, and not merely the post-

sion of the author.

From Out of the Ashes — Hope, From All the Pain — Promise

Continued from page 2

vient to other goals.

Third, we must make a more conscious effort to teach our children in a more positive manner than is being done now, in most places. To cast all current Jewish experience in the shadow of the Six Million is unwise, unhealthy, and un-Jewish. This teaches distrust of non-Jews, and worst of all, it teaches our children that to be a Jew is to be a victim. As Rabbi Harold Schulweis has pointed out: Our obsession with the Holocaust has conditioned us. We have adopted a negative mind-set which greets even acts of goodness with suspicion, as if good fortune for the Jews is a Trojan horse carrying disaster within.

This fixed negativism is being permitted to taint our children's view of being Jewish. We must not bathe our children in the tears of suffering. We need to be more concerned with positive Jewish morale. In our schools, we have been working toward this positive goal for some time, and we will continue to do so even more vigorously. I want our children to regard Judaism as a joyful and illuminating experience, as a blessing and not as a curse. I do not want them to grow up believing that the world hates the Jews, or that to be a Jew is an onerous burden. Let us teach our children of the terror and bestiality of the world — of course they must know these things — but let us not allow the sparks to be concealed.

Why has so little been taught about those many acts of heroism that saved thousands of lives? We teach all about the duplicity and silence of the Vatican, yet why have we not also taught about the courage of countless church men and women who sheltered Jews, who, at great personal risk saved many lives? Why are our children so familiar with names such as Eichmann and Mengele, yet not even recognize names such as that of the Italian Army's General Robatta who saved the lives of thousands of Croatian Jews from the grip of the Nazis? Why is not more taught of the courage of Bulgarians, Greeks, Danes and many others who refused to cooperate with the Nazis? Why is it that we have so belatedly learned of the extraordinary heroism of Raoul Wallenberg, who

We must not bathe our children in the tears of suffering.

saved as many as 100,000 Jews from certain death? What ever happened to that wise Jewish tradition which stresses the singular power of the few?

What ever happened to the tradition that acknowledged the overwhelming evil of Sodom and Gomorrah, yet held on to the saving power of the ten who might have redeemed those cities from destruction?

What ever happened to that tradition that understood the pervasiveness of evil in the

world, yet raised to high honor the few, the 36 lamid-vavniks, without whom the heavens would certainly fall?

Our obsession with cruelty has made us blind to the considerable goodness of those who resisted and saved many lives. The story of courageous resistance is worthy of retelling in detail in at least as much detail as we recount the efficiency of the death machine.

Finally, we must all begin to turn away from that Holocaust-conditioned view of human nature which teaches cynicism. It is one thing to be vigilant concerning anti-Semitism. It is another matter to live constantly fearful and suspicious of good people. There are millions of real and potential friends among the peoples of the world who are not contaminated by the Holocaust. To live with obsessive fear of the non-Jewish world is to be condemned to die a thousand deaths.

We must return to the authentic Jewish faith that affirms in the openness of the future, and also affirms the goodness of the human spirit. We must return to embracing the ennobling spirit of Judaism, which was so beautifully articulated by Edmond Fleg, when he wrote: "I am a Jew because when despair cries out, the Jew hopes."

We owe ourselves and our children more than an expectation of future suffering, more than a victim heritage. We owe them positive reasons for Jewish living, and not merely the post-

Holocaust reasons of cynicism, remorse and fear.

Tonight marks the beginning of a New Year, the 41st year since the end of the Holocaust.

Rosh Hashanah is a day whose many names are synonymous with hope itself.

We call this day, Yom HaZikaron, a Day of Remembrance. Yet, even as we do remember, Rosh Hashanah teaches us that the past is not where we live. That is why we also say "HaYom Harat Olam! Today the world is born anew!"

Rosh Hashanah represents the hope that, with the dawning of this New Year, we can free ourselves from obsessive remorse and bitterness over events now past, and experience a healing of the soul.

On this day, then, let us resolve to move forward, confronting the future as men and women who have learned much not only from the world's capacity for evil — but also for good.

As President Reagan said so well: "Out of this sickness, as crushing and cruel as it was, there is hope for the world, as well as for the world to come...Everywhere are memories, pulling us, touching us, making us understand that they never can be erased. Such memories take us where God intended His children to go— toward learning, toward healing, and above all toward redemption."

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RABBINIC INSIGHTS

A Response

The Holocaust: An Opposite View

Rabbi Aaron S. Gold

Spiritual leader, Tifereth Israel Synagogue

The policy not to attack the person, but the idea, has been a traditional trait of Talmudic rabbis. The phrase, "Perhaps the opposite view is correct" is frequently used by those sages.

I use this method in presenting the "opposite view" to Rabbi Michael Sternfield's sermon "Out of Ashes—Hope. From All the Pain—Promises."

The idea that after Wiesel's moving appeal to the President we should have said "Daveinu — the Jewish community overreacted to Bitburg" due to "our obsession with the Holocaust," and

commemoration of Yom Hashoah makes some people "weary" and the past horrors of the Holocaust "overbearing and redundant," then it is those people who have a problem — a failure to face a moral issue. If the Holocaust should no longer be commemorated, then many lesser celebrations and commemorations should be eliminated. Why celebrate July 4th and remind the British every year of their past injustices? Surely the present-day Englishmen are not guilty of the sins of their fathers. Why continue to observe Tisha B'av annually, or to break a glass at the end of a wedding ceremony? Why not wipe out of our history books the horror of



RABBI AARON S. GOLD

**"Dayeinu" is a nice Passover song,
but in the...world of political issues it
does not sing — it crows.**

"to further embarrass the President [would serve] no useful purpose" is sheer nonsense. Jewish leaders leaned over backwards to be respectful in the hope that the President would recognize that he was duped by Kohl, given bad advice, and would have the courage to say "I made a mistake. I'm sorry." Shall we say "Dayeinu," we have said enough, and not embarrass our President on lesser issues than the Holocaust, such as abortion and prayer in the public schools? Shall we, because we are Jews, be silent, and by our silence show indifference to the poor and needy in our midst, to the plight of the unemployed in racial minorities, to arms sales to Arab nations that endanger the security of Israel? "Dayeinu" is a nice Passover song, but in the real world of political issues it does not sing — it crows.

What makes American democracy great is that citizens do and should speak out to correct the wrongs in our society, even when the President stubbornly insists that his view is the only correct view.

Evidence that the Jewish view regarding Bitburg was right came from numerous sources — from Christian, labor, and black leadership here, from German leaders abroad, and from the general media. To even suggest that there was a "parallel between Holocaust victims and the SS dead" was, like the other thoughtless statements by our President, a blow to our nation's position as a world moral leader and an in-

the Crusades, the Inquisition, the pogroms or even a show like "Fiddler on the Roof?" All of these reminders may make some people feel guilty.

The argument that too many films have been shown and too many books written about the Holocaust ("It is time to call a moratorium. Enough is enough!") is ludicrous. The Holocaust was an event that shook the very

The Holocaust...shook the very foundations of our capacity...to cope with brutality and genocide.

foundations of our capacity as human beings to cope with brutality and genocide. How and when will our world learn if we don't continue to remind and teach? Look at all the other horrors that have transpired since the Holocaust. Look at Biafra, Cambodia, Argentina, Afghanistan, and so on. If we don't remind the world, and yes, remind ourselves, what becomes of the possibility of changing the terror everywhere around us? I think of Rebbe, who in answer to a disciple's question, "Aren't you wasting your time speaking out against injustice and violence? You won't change them," he replied, "I may not change them, but I need to speak out regularly, so that they won't change me."

on the Avenue of the Righteous, where trees are planted on the road to Yad Vashem. Christians of many European countries are represented. In San Diego, several annual Holocaust commemorations sponsored by Jewish and non-Jewish organizations have featured the heroism of non-Jews. Each year I invite non-Jewish clergy to speak from my pulpit on Yom Hashoah, and they have invited me to reciprocate. I suspect that other rabbis in San Diego have had similar experiences.

"Though our hearts still ache in sorrow and remembrance it is time to stop sitting shiva" is a statement that ignores the herosim, initiative, and dynamic strength of our Holocaust survivors — those who have lost their families, have remarried, have raised second families, and have made significant contributions to Jewish and general life here in America and in Israel. Nobody is still sitting shiva. But we will always rise when they recite the Kaddish and thank the Author of life for their miraculous survival.

The nightmare of the Holocaust dare not be forgotten by us or by future generations. As the President of the German republic put it, "We Germans can never say 'We didn't know.' We all

**The nightmare of the Holocaust dare
not be forgotten by us or by future
generations.**

sult to those who perished that no brilliant speeches in Germany could paper over.

The three steps my colleague suggests "which we must take for our own well-being and for the well-being of coming generations" are based on false premises.

1. No responsible Jew or Jewish organization holds the "new generation of Germans" responsible for the sins of their fathers, or "continues to blame the human race at large." This notion is as preposterous as was the Christian world holding all Jews responsible for Deicide — before the Ecumenical Council under Pope John XXIII changed this anti-Semitic nonsense.

2. "The world has become weary of the Holocaust...the Holocaust is history.... They find our preoccupation with the past overbearing and redundant, and they reject our desire to make them feel responsible." I can't believe these words! The world is responsible! Any reading of history proves this. If the once-a-year

Is it time to call a moratorium and say enough is enough? Those who think so need only turn the knobs of their TV sets and refrain from buying those "redundant" books that exploit the Holocaust.

The assumption that people give money to

**...Talmudic Sages...(said) "Perhaps
the opposite view is correct."**

Israel due to tear-jerking references to the Holocaust is false. Most people I know give to UJF to support Israel and our local agencies because it is our responsibility and duty as Jews to do so, and not because of some fund-raisers who invoke the Holocaust. Numerous missions to Israel have inspired Jews to give more to Israel because the experience of being there has enabled them to see what Israel does and what Israel is, and to recognize Israel's needs for peace and security.

knew. And we have to live with the shame for the rest of our lives, and teach our children so that they should never forget those terrible crimes of the Nazi murderers."

Numerous German youths go to Israel during their summer vacations to work on a Kibbutz. Why? As one of them said, "We go to Israel to atone for the sins of our fathers."

Indeed, our Talmudic sages were right to question a colleague by saying, "Perhaps the opposite view is correct."



AUSCHWITZ MEMORIAL PAVILION Project
TOWN OF KUROSE
Hiroshima Province, Japan

October 1, 1985

Rabbi Alexander Schindler
President of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York City, NY 10021

Dear Rabbi Schindler,

We are pleased to present to you ten copies of our recently published brochure on the Auschwitz Memorial Pavilion Project. You are welcome to distribute them to interested parties as you see fit.

You can see in the brochure the recent events and developments in the project. Covered in the brochure is the concert given by Maestro Issac Stern in honor of the project which was an extraordinary success.

We are planning other events to further the project, one of which is possibly to visit the US with a travelling exhibit. If you have any suggestions, they would be welcome. One place considered was the Jewish Museum in New York. Also, we spoke to Leonard Bernstein while he was in Israel and he offered to help us publicise the project, but we haven't finalized the details yet.

Best wishes for a prosperous New Year and hope to hear from you in the near future.

Regards,
F. Inoue

Holocaust

✓

June 3, 1985

Mr. Menachem Z. Rosensaft
425 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear Menachem:

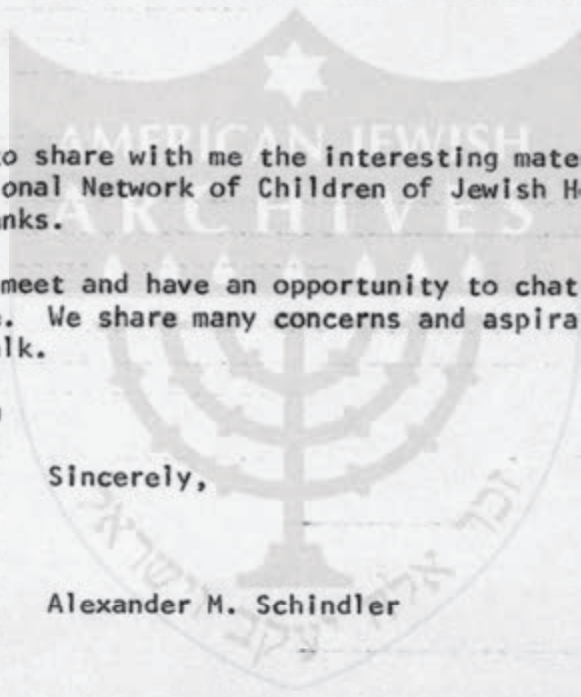
It was thoughtful of you to share with me the interesting materials published by the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors. Many thanks.

I, too, hope that we will meet and have an opportunity to chat in the not-too-distant future. We share many concerns and aspirations and it would be good to talk.

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler



425 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022

May 28, 1985

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler
President
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10021

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

I thought you might be interested
in reading the most recent mailing which we
sent to the members of the International Network
of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors.

I hope that we shall have the
oppportunity to meet in the not-too-distant
future.

With best regards,

Sincerely yours,



Menachem Z. Rosensaft



International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, Inc.

One Park Avenue, Suite 1900 • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016

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MENACHEM Z. ROSENSAFT
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MICHAEL KORENBLIT
Executive Vice Presidents

HOWARD I. BUTNICK
Treasurer

SARAH L. DUCORSKY
Secretary

May 17, 1985

Dear Friends:

For the past two months one issue has posed an unprecedented challenge to the Jewish community in the United States: the appearance of President Reagan at the German military cemetery in Bitburg where 49 Waffen-SS soldiers lie buried. The President's trip to Germany to attend the economic summit of the Western powers coincided with the May 8 anniversary of the Nazi surrender and the end of World War II in Europe. It was widely expected that the President would use this occasion to pay homage to the victims of war, including the 6 million Jews who perished in the Holocaust, by visiting a site of a concentration camp in Germany. It would have also been an appropriate place to underscore the emergence of a new Germany, a democracy firmly allied with the West, which, during the past 40 years, has made significant efforts to overcome the terrible legacy of the Third Reich. Regrettably, insensitivity to the emotions of millions of people, survivors of the Holocaust, other victims of the Nazi regime, the American war veterans, and all others who remember the depth of evil that Hitler and Nazism represented, and the political bungling by the President and the West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, combined to turn this opportunity into its opposite -- a ceremony that, regardless of intentions, became a tribute to the perpetrators of Nazi crimes, and a gesture of rehabilitation of the SS murderers.

As the issue developed in March and April, the International Network became the leader among Jewish organizations in protesting these plans. At the March 23 press conference the President explained that he would not visit Dachau, the site of the first concentration camp set up by the Nazis, because he saw no point in imposing "unnecessary" guilt on the Germans, few among whom were old enough to remember the atrocities. Unfortunately, this statement provoked almost no response from the established Jewish leadership. Mario M. Cuomo, governor of New York, and Menachem Rosensaft were virtually alone in publicly condemning the President. On March 30, the New York Times published an Op-Ed article by Rosensaft, which pointed out the errors in Reagan's statement and criticized the plan to omit the visit to Dachau.

A few days later the White House announced the plan to visit Bitburg. Apparently, the lack of strong public reaction to the March 23 press conference led the President's staff to believe that the Bitburg ceremony would not cause too much of an uproar. In response to the wave of protests raised by Jewish and veteran organizations, and the criticism in virtually the entire media, the White House hastily amended Reagan's travel plans to add a Presidential visit to Bergen-Belsen. Evidently, the administration believed that homage to SS-men could be balanced by laying a wreath in memory of their victims. Despite continuing outrage, and the televised plea by Elie Wiesel to Reagan not to go to Bitburg, the White House refused to drop it from the President's itinerary.

On April 21 the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors opened its Inaugural Assembly in Philadelphia. Despite misgivings by some survivor leaders who were reluctant to attack President Reagan, Rosensaft delivered an impassioned speech in front of the Liberty Hall, condemning the President for creating "a moral crisis of unprecedented proportions" by tying the Bitburg and Bergen-Belsen visits into "an obscene package deal." If the President did not eliminate the Bitburg visit, challenged Rosensaft, survivors and children of survivors should go to Germany to protest, so that the President would have to see them as he proceeded to honor the memory of the SS.

Immediately after the conclusion of the Gathering, officers of the Network began planning the protest in Germany. Since it was expected that the Bitburg site would attract large crowds of demonstrators who intended to use the Reagan visit as an occasion to press their own political agendas, such as the Green Party, the nuclear freeze movement, and other anti-American groups, we decided to stage our protest in Bergen-Belsen. The symbolic significance of the site where tens of thousands of Jewish victims lay buried seemed to us much more appropriate than the vicinity of a German cemetery. Our presence at Bergen-Belsen would have unmistakable legitimacy and thus have a greater impact. We also wanted to combine our protest with a memorial ceremony to honor the victims of the Holocaust.

We thus decided to send a delegation of Network leaders and activists to stand at the entrance to Bergen-Belsen as Reagan came in, with the intention of making clear that, in light of his intention to lay a wreath at Bitburg two hours later, his presence at Belsen constituted a desecration, because, for the first time since the liberation, the site would be used for blatantly political purposes. As our preparations proceeded, the Network received public support from only two Jewish organizations, the World Jewish Congress and the World Federation of Bergen-Belsen Survivors, particularly Sam Bloch, Hadassah Rosensaft, and Norbert Wollheim.

Menachem and I met with the Consul General of West Germany in New York, Dr. Peter Sympher, requesting his assistance in securing a demonstration permit. Through his good offices we were put in contact with the police authorities in Lower Saxony. They were very cooperative and courteous but turned out to be powerless: all security arrangements concerning the President's trip had to be cleared with the White House staff which had in the meantime set up operations in Bonn. All efforts to contact them and secure access to the site proved to be of no avail. Telephone calls made by Rosensaft from Israel went unreturned, and my efforts to contact the State Department in Washington were also frustrated, despite the personal intervention on our behalf by Sigmund Strochlitz, member of the US Holocaust Memorial Council, with a high State Department official.

On May 3, in Jerusalem, at a press conference held together with Sam Bloch, professor Yehuda Bauer of the Hebrew University, and Rositta Kenigsberg, Rosensaft stated: "President Reagan has accomplished in Germany what would be impermissible in America: denial of freedom of assembly and freedom of speech."

Meanwhile, in New York, Jean Rosensaft and Dr. Bonnie Maslin, wife of Dr. Yehuda Nir, a survivor who joined the delegation to Belsen, enlisted the assistance of Nina Rosenwald, Aaron Ziegelman, and Joel Boyarski, all of whom are prominent in the Jewish community, and together brought the situation to the attention of Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York. On May 4 Senator Moynihan devoted his entire national radio broadcast, made in response to Reagan's weekly radio talk, to the fact that we were being prevented by the administration from holding our demonstration at Bergen-Belsen while the President entered the memorial site. We learned later that Senator Joseph Biden of Delaware had also made intense efforts to help us in this matter.

The delegation, consisting of about 50 persons, held a press conference in New York before departure. Hadassah Rosensaft, a survivor of Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen, Eva Fogelman, Stephen Tencer, Tom Teicholz and I explained the purpose of the trip and the form our protest would take. Similar press conferences were held in Hannover for the West German and international press. In addition to Rosensaft, Kenigsberg, Fogelman, Tencer, Teicholz and myself, the delegation included the following leaders of the Network: Michael Korenblit, Sarah Ducorsky, Esther Fink, Rebecca Knaster, Joyce Celnik, Charles Silow, Bernard Kent, Jeanette Friedman-Sieradski, and Ritalynne Brechner. We were also joined by professor Henry Friedlander of Brooklyn College, a survivor, who provided invaluable advice and assistance throughout the trip. In Germany our group was joined by Jack Eisner, president of the Holocaust Survivors Memorial Foundation.

Despite the efforts of the White House to stonewall us, we received help and cooperation from the authorities in Lower Saxony who provided our bus with a police escort, enabling us to cross all the checkpoints on the road to Bergen-Belsen. On Sunday, May 5, immediately after Reagan left Belsen by helicopter, we were allowed to enter the Memorial site. We lay roses at the Jewish Memorial and sang Ani Maamin. Menachem Rosensaft spoke on behalf of the delegation. His speech was followed by remarks made by Kalman Sultanik, a survivor and Vice-President of the World Jewish Congress, and Jack Eisner. Stephen Tencer read El Mole Rachamim, and the ceremony concluded with the saying of Kaddish and singing of the Zog Nit Kein Mol. In this way we paid homage to the memory of the victims and expressed our protest against the way they were exploited by the President.

Enclosed are some of the press accounts of our demonstration. They prove that, despite obstacles, we were correct in proceeding with our protest, and that we have accomplished our goal. We were helped by a number of individuals. In addition to those mentioned above, the officers would like to express their gratitude to Walter Kirschenbaum, who, together with Tom Teicholz helped us coordinate press briefings, Naomi Kabak and Kathy Golan of Kenness International, who made all travel arrangements, and Joseph Tekulsky and Solomon Zynstein, two other leaders of the survivors who gave us their encouragement and support. Above all, we are grateful to all those who, moved by a sense of moral outrage and deep concern that Bitburg would become a symbol of rehabilitation of Nazi crimes, offered to join the Network at their own expense, and came to be with us in Bergen-Belsen.

We shall keep you advised of all continuing developments and our future plans. With all good wishes,

Dr. . .

The New York Times

MONDAY, MAY 6, 1985

Reagan in Germany: Belsen Visit Condemned as 'a Desecration'

The Two Ceremonies at Bergen-Belsen

By JOHN TAGLIABUE

Special to The New York Times

BELSEN, West Germany, May 5 — There were two ceremonies at the Bergen-Belsen memorial today.

The first ended when President Reagan's helicopter lifted out of a sea of West German policemen. Rows of invited guests, shaking hands and chatting, then filed out and climbed into the Mercedes-Benz limousines of postwar West German prosperity.

The second ceremony began 20 minutes later, when 50 or so Jews, some former inmates and some the children of victims, entered the concentration camp in a somber procession, each bearing a rose and many in tears. They attended a brief commemorative service that one of their leaders, Menachem Rosensaft, said was to "reconsecrate" the memorial.

Says It Was 'Desecrated'

Mr. Rosensaft said the memorial had been "desecrated" by the visit of President Reagan and West Germany's Chancellor, Helmut Kohl.

"Never, until today, has anyone dared to prevent survivors and children of survivors from standing beside these mass graves and this monument," Mr. Rosensaft told a gathering at the squat, gray memorial to the more than 50,000 people who died in the camp, "while two politicians violate their sanctity and every principle of decency by coming here on their way to honoring the memory of the SS."

Mr. Rosensaft, the founding chairman of the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, was born at Bergen-Belsen in 1947, when it served as a camp for displaced persons.

Camp Is Sealed Off

Hundreds of West German policemen, with American Secret Service agents at their side, sealed off the camp for all but the 400 or so invited guests while President Reagan and Mr. Kohl visited the memorial and laid a wreath to its dead.

"Here lie people — Jews — whose death was inflicted for no reason other than their very existence," Mr. Reagan said in his address.

Chancellor Kohl, in his brief remarks, said, "We bow in sorrow before the victims of murder and genocide."

Kohl Remarks At Camp Site

BERGEN, West Germany, May 5 (AP) — Following, in official translation, is the text of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's remarks today during the visit by Mr. Kohl and President Reagan to the site of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp:

Mr. President, you have come here to pay homage to the victims of National Socialist tyranny. Bergen-Belsen was a place of unimaginable atrocities; it was only one of the many sites testifying to a demonic will to destroy.

At a ceremony here two weeks ago I, in my capacity as Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, professed our historical responsibility.

You, Mr. President, represent a country which played a decisive part in liberating Europe and ultimately the Germans, too, from Hitler's tyranny. We Germans reverently commemorate the soldiers of your nation who lost their lives in that act of liberation.

We bow in sorrow before the victims of murder and genocide.

The supreme goal of our political efforts is to render impossible any repetition of that systematic destruction of human life and dignity. With their partners and friends, the Americans and Germans therefore stand together as allies in the community of shared values and in the defense alliance in order to safeguard man's absolute and inviolable dignity in conditions of freedom and peace.

Jewish leaders in the United States, Israel and elsewhere refused to send representatives to the service because

of President Reagan's decision to go from the camp to the Bitburg cemetery, where SS soldiers are buried.

On Saturday night, West German policemen removed a group of about a dozen Jews from the camp's document center, where they intended to remain to protest the President's visit. At 5 A.M. today, the West German police carried off about 35 French Jews, some of them former camp inmates, who refused to leave the parking lot where Mr. Reagan's helicopter later landed.

United States Secret Service agents were with the West German police patrols that blocked two forest roads leading to the camp memorial.

The roadblocks infuriated Jewish leaders, like Rabbi Avraham Weiss of the Hebrew Institute of Riverdale, the Bronx, who accused the White House of having ordered the West German police to seal the camp and bar Jews from protesting.

'They Cannot Do Both'

Speaking later by the camp memorial, Mr. Rosensaft said of the President and Chancellor Kohl: "Today, we say to them that they can either honor the memory of the victims of Belsen, or they can honor the SS. They cannot do both."

The absence of Jews at Mr. Reagan's service troubled some official guests, like Friedrich Wöbeking, Belsen's village pastor, who expressed "distress" and said he had considered staying away. By contrast, Norbert Blüm, Bonn's Minister for Social Affairs, approved the removal of the protesters. "Quiet is important," he said. "Dignity must prevail."

One who remembered less-dignified times was Dimitri Pluchator, 71 years old, a Galician Jew and survivor of Auschwitz, Birkenau and Bergen-Belsen who said he had visited the memorial almost every Sunday since British soldiers liberated him and other survivors in April 1945.

"For 14 days we wandered through here, stepping over corpses like wood in the forest," he said. "And now, I cannot enter, though I come every Sunday."

Wrapped in a trench coat against a chill wind, he shook his head and repeated, "Sad, sad."

The Boston Globe

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Reagan's desecration . . .

Minutes after President Reagan's helicopter had lifted him out of Bergen-Belsen, about 50 people were allowed to enter the grounds. They were survivors of the death camps and the children of survivors. While Reagan and Chancellor Helmut Kohl were making their visit and giving their speeches, the unofficial delegation had been kept out of sight of the cameras.

When they were finally permitted to visit the place where their mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers had perished, they had to reconcile the past and the present, the old memories of corpses strewn the earth and the new experience of having the White House staff prevent them from praying for their murdered families in the presence of the President.

Menachem Rosensaft, chairman of the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, spoke to the small cluster of mourners. He said: "Never, until today, has anyone dared to prevent survivors and children of survivors from standing beside these mass graves and this monument, while two politicians violate their sanctity and every principle of decency by coming here on their way to honoring the memory of the SS."

If Reagan and Kohl spoke for their governments and were motivated by the cold calculations of politics, then Rosensaft was speaking for all the men, women and children who were shot or starved or gassed by the Nazis.

Rosensaft said that the visit to Bitburg by Reagan and Kohl was "a desecration of the six million dead." He was right; it was a desecration.

Kalman Sultanik, a survivor of the Belsen

camp and now vice president of the World Jewish Congress, expressed the hope that Reagan would "correct his repugnant comparison of Nazi murderers with their victims." He was right; it was a repugnant comparison.

Serge Klarsfeld, who tracked down Klaus Barbie, the Nazi official responsible for torturing and murdering French Resistance fighters and for deporting Jewish children to the concentration camps, took exception to Reagan's saying that one man - Hitler - was responsible for murdering millions of Jews, Poles, Czechs, Russians, Gypsies, homosexuals, socialists, Christians and democrats. He was right; the Holocaust was not the crime of one man.

Reagan in Germany spoke about reconciliation and remembrance, and he concluded his talk at Bergen-Belsen with the reverberating phrase, "Never again." The people who have his ear should now try to make him understand the difference between reconciliation with killers and reconciliation with the victims.

They should remind him of the shameful behavior of US officials who turned Jewish refugees away from sanctuary in America after the truth was known about the Final Solution. They should tell him about the Nazi criminals who went on the payroll of the US government after the war - for reasons of state.

Someone should tell him that he excluded the blacks of South Africa and the Indians of Guatemala from his list of people suffering today from the scourge of "totalitarianism." He should know that Hitler is still not alone.

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

A day of tears and bitterness

BELSEN — In a sea of tears and anguish, Jews from the world over converged on the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp yesterday.

Thousands streamed into Belsen, where 50,000 Jews died during World War II.

They were protesting President Reagan's trip later in the day to the Bitburg cemetery where 49 SS men are buried.

Fifty children of Holocaust



By **PETER
MOSES**
in Belsen,
W.Germany

survivors who came to pray and express their outrage made up the largest and most vocal contingent.

"There is no excuse for the Bitburg visit," said Mena-

chem Rosensaft, the leader of the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors.

"It is a desecration of the 6 million dead and to all of us that he has gone there. We must morally, spiritually and ethically oppose him."

Rosensaft, 37, was born at Bergen-Belsen after it became a Displaced Persons' camp following the war.

Both his parents — who are camp survivors — have testified in Germany against accused Nazi killers, and were instrumental in the creation of the Jewish Memorial at Belsen.

The British liberated the camp on April 15, 1945, and found thousands of bodies piled on top of one another.

For sanitary reasons, the British used bulldozers to bury the bodies in mass graves. One

month later, the British ordered all camp buildings razed because of disease.

Today, Bergen-Belsen is stark. The only objects breaking the horizon are the grass-covered mounds that hide the thousands of anonymous Jews who perished here.

There also are monuments to the butchered thousands.

When Rosensaft's group ar-

Continued on Page 22

A TASTE OF FEAR ON BUS TO HELL

By PETER MOSES
N.Y. Post Correspondent

BELSEN — I rode on the bus from Hannover to Bergen-Belsen yesterday with 50 people whose lives have been forever scarred by the Holocaust.

They are members of the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, and almost all of them had parents who went through the inferno that was Bergen-Belsen.

At 11 a.m. a police escort took us from the hotel for the hour-and-a-half long journey to the camp, and from the moment the bus was boarded it was obvious that tensions were high.

"A German police escort," one rider observed,



"I hope we are not being taken for a ride."

Menachem Rosensaft, the group's chairman, laid out the ground rules and listed the itinerary.

"We have a chance to make history, to help right the wrong of Reagan's trip to Bitburg," he said.

Half way up to Bergen-Belsen the passengers murmured with the realization that they

were traveling the same route as those who perished in the camps.

"This is what we saw," said Henry Friedlander, 55, of New York, who survived death marches and the camps to become a historian and professor at Brooklyn College.

"Only then the road was filled with defeated German soldiers and refugees seeking a place to stop."

Jack Eisner, another Bergen-Belsen survivor, recounted his story.

"When we were in Eastern Europe, we always dreamed of escape," he said.

"But not in Germany. To us, Germany was one big concentration camp."

In the back of the bus

sat George Horney, 29, of Frankfurt.

"We are the first Jews in almost 35 years to celebrate Shabbat in Belsen," he said.

The mood in the bus became anxious again when we were forced to wait on the side of the road just two miles from the camp.

We were then ushered into the camp past other demonstrators and curious bystanders.

"We are on Bergen-Belsen soil," said Rosensaft softly, minutes later.

"Remember who we are and remain dignified. This is holy, sacred ground. We are here to honor the memory of our brothers in the mass graves."

Belsen: day of tears & bitterness

Continued from Page 3

rived at the Jewish memorial, they sang *Ani Ma'amin* (I Believe), the same song millions sang as they were led into gas chambers.

Earlier yesterday, the contingent was denied admission to the camp while the President was on the grounds.

Rosensaft said Reagan's staff

gave the orders to prevent them from confronting the President during the ceremony.

"Who is he to deny us the right to pray for our fallen brothers?" Rosensaft asked rhetorically.

"He had no right to bar us."

Before departing, the group solemnly said the *Kaddish* (mourners' prayer) for the 6 million dead Jews.

"President Reagan did for one hour what has not been done in 40 years," said Kalman Sultanik, the president of the World Jewish Congress.

"He made Bergen-Belsen *Judenfrei* [free of Jews]."

In other protests at Bergen-Belsen, five Jews from San Francisco managed to elude the heavy security and get within 50 feet of Reagan as he

left his helicopter.

"We told him that according to his definition, Adolf Hitler was a victim, too," Rabbi Mordechai Rindenow said.

Thirty-five French Jews, who followed a line of limousines to the camp, got to within a half-mile of Bergen-Belsen, only to be stopped by mounted police.

Roads were blocked for five

miles from the camp, and police went through the vast woods foot-by-foot, looking for possible snipers and terrorists. None was found.

"Let's hope we learn and never forget what this place stands for," said Rosensaft.

"This is sacred land, a holy place. Politics and Bergen-Belsen must never mix again."

The Washington Post

FRIDAY, MAY 10, 1985

Philip Geyelin

Off-Camera at Bergen-Belsen

It was mid-morning on Saturday, May 4. In two hours, Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.) was due to deliver a Democratic Party response to Ronald Reagan's weekly radio talk. Suddenly, there came an urgent call for help from a New York City constituent who happened to be in Hanover, West Germany. So shocked was the senator by what he heard that he threw away his script (on Social Security) and instead delivered an impassioned plea to the president "or to any of his staff" who might be listening:

"Please, won't you reconsider? It is not like you. It is not like us."

That was the day before Reagan's Sunday visit to the site of the Bergen-Belsen Nazi death camp, by way of offsetting his stop at the German war cemetery at Bitburg. But Moynihan, even though he thought Bitburg was "bad enough," knew well that it was too late to do anything about it. What the senator wanted the president to "reconsider" was something else; something that could still have been stopped; something so "incredible," the senator told his radio listeners, that "the mind cracks, the heart breaks . . . we must not let the world see this happen."

See what happen?

The story begins with an organization called the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors. Its founding chairman is a 37-year-old New York attorney, Menachem Z. Rosensaft. Bergen-Belsen has a particular resonance to Rosensaft: he was born in the town of that name three years after his parents were liberated from the death camp of that name in 1945.

He and 50 other children of Holocaust survivors, and a handful of survivors, were moved to approach the West German consul general in New York City for permission to stage a peaceful, nonviolent protest at the death camp gates when Reagan arrived. It was not the president's visit to Bergen-Belsen as such that outraged Rosensaft. It was the visit as an afterthought—as an antidote to Bitburg.

As Moynihan told it on the radio, and as Rosensaft elaborated in a telephone interview, the West German authorities were "very sympathetic." A recommendation was relayed to Bonn that the delegation "be accommodated." When the group arrived in Hanover, local German authorities were also "very responsive."

But then the stunning word came back: the West Germans were not in charge; security regulations for "non-Germans" were wholly in the hands of the "Bonn White House." And the presidential entourage had decreed that the Americans could get no closer than one kilometer (more than half-a-mile) to the gates of the Bergen-Belsen camp until the president had been whisked away.

Rosensaft made four calls to the embassy in Bonn, trying to reach the White House authorities. Four times he was told "someone would call me back." Nobody did. Hence his eleventh-hour appeal on Saturday morning to Moynihan, who quickly reached the State Department's man for human rights, Elliott Abrams, only to be told that not even an assistant secretary of state could get through to the "Bonn White House."

And so on Sunday, it was not until minutes after Reagan and his traveling press corps had departed that Rosensaft and the rest of the delegation made it to the death-camp site at Bergen-Belsen with the help of a local West German police escort. For all their long journey, during the moments that mattered, they were off-camera, out of sight, out of mind.

The writ of the First Amendment guaranteeing "the right of the people peaceably to assemble" did not run to Bergen-Belsen—by American, not West German, decree.

That's partly what Rosensaft has in mind when he says it was "a nightmare for us." As he sees it, the "Bonn White House" had accomplished at the gates of a former Nazi death camp in West Germany what the Washington White House couldn't have accomplished in front of its own gates in the United States.

Thus, in its small way, this episode explains how what should have been a moving ceremonial occasion was transformed into a needless trauma. It speaks to the arrogance of ham-handed game-playing with symbols, signals and camera angles in search of the mix and the balance that would somehow set everything right.

It speaks, as well, to a triumph of first reflexes over first principles—of the instinct to protect the presidential image at the expense of the very values the president made so much of in his various European preachments on freedom and democracy, genocide and tyranny.

German Police Persuade Jews to Give Up Bergen-Belsen Vigil

By TYLER MARSHALL, Times Staff Writer

BONN—After 10 hours of tense negotiations, West German police late Saturday persuaded a group of Jewish worshippers to leave the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp memorial before President Reagan's trip there today.

Meanwhile, a second group of 40 relatives of Holocaust survivors, who were spending the night 25 miles away, asserted that the White House has prevented their presence at the memorial during the presidential stop.

Both groups, composed largely of Americans, have said they wanted to protest Reagan's trip to a German military cemetery, also planned for today.

Police officials at the town of Celle, 15 miles east of the camp memorial, said they led the group of 18 Jews from the Bergen-Belsen grounds "as politely as possible."

"We did it with as much sensitivity as we can," said Wilfried Papst, Celle police spokesman.

Force Would Have Been Used

Papst said that the group, led by Rabbi Avi Weiss of New York City, was allowed into the memorial to celebrate the Jewish Sabbath on condition it leave at noon Saturday. If police had failed to convince the group to leave the camp memorial by early today, they would have been forced to carry members out.

While clearing an area before a presidential visit is considered routine and necessary for security purposes, the encounter between West German police and Jews at the camp memorial added more tension to Reagan's controversial trip.

Jewish and gypsy organizations formally invited to Bergen-Belsen during Reagan's stopover said Friday that they would not attend.

The Bergen-Belsen stop was added to Reagan's itinerary in an unsuccessful attempt to quell the uproar that erupted after plans for his visit to the German war cemetery at Bitburg were announced.

Among the Bitburg cemetery's 1,887 graves of World War II German war dead are 49 of soldiers from the Waffen SS, or combat arm, of Adolf Hitler's SS elite force.

Menachem Z. Rosensaft, spokesman for the second group attempting to be present at the presidential visit to Bergen-Belsen, the International Network of Children of the Jewish Holocaust, said that it had decided against any confrontation with the police.

"We didn't want to desecrate the memory of the dead or violate the sanctity of the graves," he said. There are 12 mass graves in the forest clearing where the camp once stood.

Rosensaft, who was born in Bergen-Belsen, said that he had been informed by West German authorities that the group's request to conduct a protest during Reagan's 55-minute visit to the memorial had been blocked by the White House.

Reagan is scheduled to give a speech at the memorial before flying on to Bitburg, 60 miles southwest of Bonn.

"It was vetoed by the Bonn White House," Rosensaft said, referring to the President's traveling staff.

Police spokesman Papst con-

firmed that the refusal for permission to carry out the protest "was made at the political level, from the American side."

No one from the White House staff was available for comment late Saturday. However, in the past, U.S. officials have declined to comment on any matter related to presidential security.

Rosensaft said that his group, mostly children of Holocaust survivors, had wanted to hold "a peaceful protest, a non-destructive rally" at the site.

"We were ready to submit to any and all security requirements," he said. "If the President did not want to be confronted, we would have stood 50, 100 or 200 yards away. We felt we had a right to be there. Our families died there."

"We want to protest the rehabilitation of the SS by President Reagan," he added.

Calls Unanswered

Rosensaft said that he made four telephone calls to the U.S. Embassy in Bonn last week, seeking permission to stand at the gates to the memorial while Reagan was there, but that none of his calls was returned.

West German police officials said that the group will be permitted to conduct its protest, but only after Reagan has left the area.

Rosensaft said the protest "would be vocal," consisting of a religious ceremony and a speech.

In Washington, Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.) accused the Reagan White House of pressuring the West German government into keeping Rosensaft's group from demonstrating outside the Bergen-Belsen camp while the President is there.

"Their purpose . . . was to make a statement through nonviolent demonstration. They intended no embarrassment to the President. They were exercising a right guaranteed them in the First Amendment to the Constitution," Moynihan said as he delivered his party's response to Reagan's weekly radio broadcast, which Saturday originated from Bonn.

SPECIAL INTERVIEW A SPECIAL HOMECOMING

By Kevin Freeman

NEW YORK, May 8 (JTA) -- For Stephen Tencer, his return last weekend to the site of the concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen that after liberation 40 years ago by the allied forces served as his home for three years as a displaced persons camp, "was a very important homecoming for me."

"It was bad enough to go to Bergen-Belsen under any circumstances then to go in this circumstance--of trying to rectify a horror that was done to those who are buried there," said Tencer, chairman of the Second Generation Council of New Jersey.

The horror, according to Tencer and a delegation of 51 other American members of the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, was President Reagan's visit to the site of the death camp at which thousands of men, women and children were slaughtered, followed by his visit to the German military cemetery at Bitburg where some 50 SS soldiers are buried among the 2,000 war dead.

Cites A More Personal Mission

In an interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Tencer also said he had another, more personal mission, besides participating in a protest at Bergen-Belsen. "I also had this personal mission I was on which I guess I didn't think much about, and that was going back to my hometown," Tencer said.

It was his first visit to West Germany and the hospital in Celle where he was born. Celle is located outside Bergen-Belsen's former displaced persons camp that he called home. The site of the former DP camp is now used as a base for a British military unit attached to NATO.

In Celle, however, where he visited briefly with a friend, he said he found a "negative reaction" to the controversy that surrounded Reagan's visit to the military cemetery Sunday, a visit that drew intense outrage for weeks from Jewish groups, war veterans and the Congress.

"I don't know whether you could say it was a small town mentality, anti-Americanism or anti-Semitism," Tencer said. He recalled that one hotel owner informed him that there were only two "good" American Presidents -- John Kennedy for his "Ich bin ein Berliner" speech at the Berlin Wall, and President Reagan for his visit to Bitburg.

Joining Tencer in the JTA interview were three other members of the Network who just returned from West Germany: Menachem Rosensaft, founding chairman of the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors; Eva Fogelman, chairperson of the Network's psycho-social committee; and Jerzy Warman, the Network's president.

Each participated in the ceremony at Bergen-Belsen, which began some 20 minutes after Reagan and West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl left the site. They had requested from the Bonn govern-

ment permission to protest at the gates of the site of Bergen-Belsen, but, according to Rosensaft, were refused permission to demonstrate, just a day before Reagan's visit, by the United States personnel responsible for security arrangements.

"The President of the United States," Rosensaft declared in the interview, "was able to accomplish in Germany what he could never have accomplished in the United States -- to prevent an orderly, peaceful protest against the visit."

After the President left the camp site, the delegation entered it to say Kaddish, and to "reconsecrate" the mass graves of thousands of victims of the Holocaust who are buried there. "What we mean by reconsecration is not that we have any religious authority to confer holiness on one place or another," Warman explained.

"But, rather by a symbolic statement that although what happened, happened, we still want to assure survivors ... that the memory of the victims that lie buried there will be preserved."

'Collective Memory Needs To Be Developed'

All four indicated that they had no problem with efforts at U.S.-German reconciliation, the stated purpose of Reagan's visit to Bitburg. But as Fogelman stressed, "We felt that the message of reconciliation that Reagan was giving is not the message of reconciliation that we as children of survivors and Jews want the Germans to know."

"We feel that the act of reconciliation needs to include both memory and commemoration," Fogelman said. "A collective memory needs to be developed of what had happened and the message that Reagan is giving people is that, in fact, there is no difference between the victims and the perpetrators."

Rosensaft, an outspoken critic of Reagan's Bitburg cemetery visit where he laid a wreath during a brief ceremony, said, "We support and are in favor of reconciliation with the Germany of the past 40 years meaning the Germany that has tried to create a new image for itself and to reject all of the attributes of the Third Reich. We will not accept any reconciliation with Nazism and we will not accept any type of rehabilitation of the SS."

"This is the first time in 40 years that an event took place at Bergen-Belsen in opposition to the wishes of the entire Jewish community," he added. "You had the travesty of a religious ceremony at Bergen-Belsen in which only priests and ministers -- Christians -- spoke in the name of the Trinity at a cemetery and at mass graves which are more than 90 percent Jewish. This was an absolute and utter desecration."

Concern Over Public Opinion Polls

The four children of Jewish Holocaust survivors expressed some concern over public opinion polls conducted before the Bitburg visit which indicated that a slim majority of Americans disapproved of the cemetery visit. Warman attributed the public opinion view to the power of the White House to "manage events" and diffuse controversy. (A New York Times/CBS News poll taken Monday showed the American public equally divided over Reagan's Bitburg visit. See separate story.)

Tencer viewed the public opinion split on the Bitburg visit as a result of general American support for the actions of the President. On the other hand, he said he attributed the results of the opinion poll to the lack of knowledge among most Americans of the events of World War II, and particularly the Holocaust.

Fogelman suggested that despite the poll's results, there was exhibited among the many who opposed the Bitburg visit a strong consensus against it, and that group made their voices heard in the media and among the general public. Rosensaft added that he felt many Americans were not concerned about the Bitburg visit.

Overall, however, all four of those interviewed expressed the view that some good may come from the controversy -- perhaps as Fogelman suggested, an increase in Holocaust education and a general awareness of the plight of Jews under the Nazis.

LONG ISLAND JewishWorld

May 10-16, 1985

Protestors at Belsen respond with anger, prayers

By WALTER RUBY

BERGEN-BESEN—Even with the prominence of Israel in the news over the last decade, it is still relatively rare for much of the world to focus its attention on the unfolding of a genuine Jewish psychodrama. The agitation over President Reagan's itinerary in Germany, which reached its denouement here and at the Bitburg cemetery on May 5, placed in sharp focus many of the contradictions within the Jewish world, as well as between Jews and the gentile world beyond.

One of the most evident splits revealed at Bergen-Belsen was between diaspora Jewry and Israel. While several hundred Jews of various affiliations demonstrated against the visit of Reagan and West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl behind police barricades half a kilometer from the entrance of Bergen-Belsen, and while the German Jewish community boycotted Reagan's speech despite an official invitation from the German government to community leaders, Israeli Ambassador Yitshak Ben-Ari was one of the 200 dignitaries who sat in chairs before the obelisk memorial to the murdered of Bergen-Belsen and listened to Reagan's remarks.

Asked by this reporter why he attended an event which was boycotted by the entire German Jewish community and described as a "desecration" by almost the entire leadership of American Jewry, Ben-Ari responded, "With all due respect, the decision of a Jewish community cannot be the same as a state. Israel has other interests and obligations."

Ben-Ari added, "Don't forget, it was the American Jewish community that demanded that Reagan go to a concentration camp... I believe Reagan's visit to Bitburg was a mistake and I said so publicly. But I believe the decision of the President to come to Bergen-Belsen was correct and there was nothing here that ought to have hindered anyone from attending. If the ambassador of Israel had not come, it would not have been understood by many of the people involved—including Chancellor Kohl and President

Reagan."

Student Leader Angered

David Makovsky, president of the World Union of Jewish Students, who led 600 Jewish students in a demonstration in Bitburg against Reagan's visit there, said of Ben-Ari, "I was very angry and upset to learn that the Israeli ambassador attended the ceremony at Belsen. It seemed to fly in the face of everything the international Jewish community had been trying to accomplish."

However, Menachem Rosensaft, founding chairman of the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, who led the largest Jewish delegation at Bergen-Belsen, would say only, "I would rather doubt that the ambassador got much *nachas* from this event, so I do not want to make his day any worse."

The style of the various Jewish groups protesting the Reagan visit varied from the Gush Emunim style activism of Rabbi Avi Weiss and a small group of followers, who followed up their sit-in at the museum Saturday with a demonstration behind police lines outside Belsen, to the less confrontational style of the children of the survivors group.

The survivors group negotiated an agreement with German authorities to be provided with a police escort to bring them to a special ceremony at the 'Jewish monument' inside the gates of Belsen about 15 minutes after the departure of Reagan and Kohl and before other groups were allowed to enter the Bergen-Belsen grounds.

With reporters gathered round, Rosensaft stood beside the memorial built and maintained for many years by his father Yosef, himself a Belsen survivor, and spoke in a style that was at once dignified and impassioned.

According to Rosensaft, "I speak

today on behalf of all of those who are buried here in these mass graves, whose memory has been desecrated by the President of the U.S. and the Chancellor of Germany."

Terming the Reagan visits to Bergen-Belsen and Bitburg "a grotesque package deal," Rosensaft stated, "Never until today has anyone dared to prevent survivors and children of survivors from standing beside these mass graves and this monument, while two politicians violate their sanctity and every principle of decency by coming here on their way to honoring the memory of the dead SS."

Healing Process

In the end, as German and Jewish protestors left Bergen-Belsen, there was a feeling that few of the divisions that had marked the day had been appreciably lessened. Nevertheless, there appeared to be a subtle healing process beginning to work almost in spite of itself. Certainly among the Jewish protestors, despite the sharp political and cultural differences separating many, there was a palpable sense of shared satisfaction for having followed a moral imperative to the end and having appeared—despite everything—at one of the most notorious Nazi death camps.

According to Mike Kornblitt of Washington, D.C., a leader of the children of the survivors group, "On a personal level, it was terribly important for me to be at Bergen-Belsen on behalf of my parents, and to let my parents and all of the survivors know that despite the debacle with Reagan, there are some who cared and who were willing to come even here to express their feelings. We haven't forgotten and we never will."

Kornblitt added, "I would come back tomorrow to protect the sanctity of the mass graves of Bergen-Belsen." □



MANFRED OHRENSTEIN
MINORITY LEADER

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

May 16, 1984

free

Rabbi Alexander Schindler
Union of Amer. Hebrew Congreg.
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10021

Dear Rabbi Schindler:

I'm sorry you were not able to attend the first meeting of the Advisory Board for the New York State Holocaust Memorial Resource Center/Exhibit. You missed a productive and successful meeting.

As we went around the table and introduced ourselves, I was moved and impressed by the backgrounds of those members who were present. I know that other members who could not be with us also have backgrounds which will enhance the Advisory Board and the project.

The three highlights of the meeting were: 1) announcement of the discovery of Nuremberg Tribunal documents in the basement of the New York State Library; 2) discussion of the Oswego refugee camp as a feature of the permanent Holocaust Exhibit now being planned for the New York State Museum; and 3) unveiling of a bronze sculpture by artist Hy Rosen, which will be part of the museum exhibit.

It will probably be some six months before we reconvene the Advisory Board. In the interim, please continue to give us your input by contacting my Advisory Board Coordinator, Rochelle Saidel, at my New York Office, 270 Broadway - Suite 1812, New York, New York 10007. The phone number is (212) 587-5531.

We would be especially interested in obtaining artifacts and memorabilia for the resource center and exhibit, and welcome your ideas on sources.

I am enclosing some informational materials. If you wish, please feel free to use the press release locally, by adding an opening paragraph that states you have been appointed to the Advisory Board. After adding the information about yourself, you can send the revised release to your local newspaper(s).

I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Manfred Ohrenstein
Chairman

MO: cmm
Enclosures

MANFRED OHRENSTEIN State Senate Minority Leader

A30-84

news for
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IMMEDIATE:

May 15,
1984

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(212) 587-5531

NUREMBERG DOCUMENTS AND OSWEGO CAMP DISCUSSED AT FIRST MEETING OF NEW YORK STATE HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

ALBANY -- The discovery of 144 crates of documents from the Nuremberg Tribunals on Nazi war criminals, now stored in the basement of the New York State Cultural Education Center, was announced here this month by New York State Senate Democratic Leader Manfred Ohrenstein at the first meeting of the advisory board of the New York State Holocaust Memorial Resource Center/Exhibit.

Some 50 Holocaust survivors, professors, teachers, and other concerned citizens from throughout the State, who have been appointed to the advisory board by its Chairman, Senator Ohrenstein, met to discuss the disposition of the Nuremberg documents, progress to date, and proposed plans for the exhibit and resource center. Elie Wiesel is Honorary Chairman of the advisory board.

Based on recommendations by a Library of Congress National Archives expert, the New York State Department of Education will determine how best to preserve and use the Nuremberg materials. Preliminary investigations have established that the documents are one of some 20 mimeographed sets now housed in libraries, documentation centers and universities in America and Europe, Martin Sullivan, the State Education Department's Assistant Commissioner for State Museum Science and Historical Services, told the advisory board.

The Albany documents consist of 12 trial transcripts of major war criminals. Included are minutes books, official court files, order and judgment books, clemency petitions, prosecution and defense exhibits, and prosecution and defense

Timothy Taylor
Press Secretary

(212) 587-5547
(518) 455-2721

- more -

documents books. A thorough examination of the documents has been requested by the State Library and Senator Ohrenstein.

"Both as an attorney and as a refugee from Nazi Germany, I was extremely excited to learn of the existence here of a set of Nuremberg documents," Senator Ohrenstein said. "I hope that further examination will result in the recommendation that they become the cornerstone of our New York State Holocaust Memorial Resource Center."

Advisory board member Professor Abraham Karp, a professor of Jewish studies at the University of Rochester and a past president of the American Jewish Historical Society, discussed Fort Ontario, the displaced persons camp that was located in Oswego, New York. During World War II, this was the only refugee camp in America that sheltered victims of the Holocaust. The Oswego site and experience will be a focal point of the Holocaust exhibit in the New York State Museum, Senator Ohrenstein said.

A bronze sculpture commissioned and created by Albany artist Hy Rosen was unveiled by the artist at the May 2nd meeting and presented to Senator Ohrenstein for the Holocaust exhibit in the State Museum. The two foot high sculpture is based on the photo of a small boy in the Warsaw ghetto, with hands raised and an SS gun pointed at his back.

The Legislature has appropriated \$90,000, at Senator Ohrenstein's request, with which to launch the New York State Holocaust project. Individuals are also contributing seed money through the Greater Albany Jewish Federation. Working with the Federation, the New York State Department of Education will be responsible for the exhibit and resource center. Both the exhibit and resource center will enhance the new Holocaust studies program that the Education Department has launched in secondary schools.

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(as of May 1984)



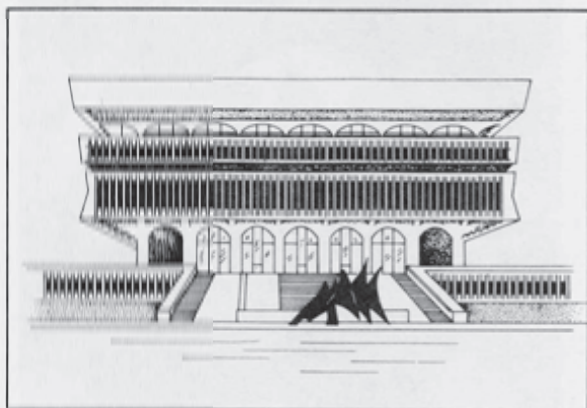
Holocaust Resource Center
N.Y.S. Museum
Albany, N.Y. 12230



NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM

Holocaust Resource Center and Permanent Exhibit

in the
Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York



The New York State Holocaust Resource Center/Exhibit project was created by the New York State Education Department in conjunction with the Greater Albany Jewish Federation, through a legislative grant sponsored by NYS Senate Minority Leader Manfred Ohrenstein.

The Center was established to help bring to the public knowledge of the destruction of three-quarters of European Jewry and millions of other innocent victims by the Nazis and their collaborators during World War II. While the subject of the Holocaust continues to raise more questions than it answers, the Resource Center can help to erase the ignorance that leads to prejudice against any group in any place at any time.

What? The New York State Holocaust Resource Center/Exhibit was established for the purpose of providing research materials in the form of books, videotapes, records, art, speakers and curricula.

For Whom? Schools, groups and individuals interested in finding out about the Holocaust and related topics may visit the Center and use its materials. Some materials will be available for loan on request.

Where? The Resource Center is located in the NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM, Empire State Plaza, Albany, New York.

When? The Permanent Exhibit will share the same hours as the State Museum exhibit area which are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Resource Center visits are by appointment.

Why? Philosopher George Santayana answers this question simply:
"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

The raging madness of the Holocaust era demands that we understand the social, religious, economic, political and human behavioral causes that led to Nazi occupied Europe. There are no easy answers for the annihilation of any group, but the questions raised by the Holocaust are universal subjects of urgency for all humanity.

PERMANENT EXHIBIT

The permanent exhibit area will portray the origins and events of the Holocaust and show the tragic inability of the United States and the rest of the free world to help the victims of the Nazi "Final Solution."

In addition, it will show one inspiring effort of the War Refugee Board which established a "temporary haven" for 982 refugees in Oswego, New York and the positive actions of the inhabitants of this small upstate community. (Exhibit to open in Spring, 1985)

NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM LOCATION & PARKING

Museum Via Interstate I-90 West — Take I-90 West to I-787 South and exit at US 20 West. Continue on US 20 West (Madison Avenue) to Museum.

Museum Via Thruway North — Take Thruway Exit 23 to I-787, exit at US 20 West. Continue on US 20 West (Madison Avenue) to Museum.

Museum Via Thruway East or Northway — Take Thruway Exit 24 or from Northway, take Exit I-90 East (Albany). Follow I-90 East to I-787 South and exit on US 20 West. Continue on US 20 West (Madison Avenue) to Museum.

Parking — From I-787 follow signs to South Mall (Empire State Plaza) PARKING AREAS (Free on weekends).

- A — Museum Visitor Parking
- B — Underground Plaza Parking
- C — Philip Street Parking Lot
- D — Pearl Street Parking Lot

For Resource Center individual or group visits contact:

Norma L. Ball
Project Administrator
(518) 474-5801

Roselle Chartock, Ed.D.
Project Consultant

AGENDA

NYS HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL RESOURCE CENTER/EXHIBIT ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

ROOM 711-A, LOB

ALBANY, NEW YORK

11 A.M.

1. Invocation by the Rev. Bertrand Fay, College of St. Rose
2. Greetings and opening remarks by Senator Manfred Ohrenstein, Chairman
3. Introduction of Advisory Board Members
4. Greetings from Greater Albany Jewish Federation by Dr. Steven Windmueller
5. Overview of project by Norma Ball, Resource Center coordinator
6. Remarks by Dr. Roselle Chartock, project advisor for 1983-84
7. Tie-in of project with Holocaust curriculum by George Gregory,
Bureau of Curriculum Development, Dept. of Education
8. Report on existing resources, temporary and permanent
exhibit plans by Martin Sullivan, Asst. Commissioner for
State Museum Science Services and Historical Services
9. Background of Oswego, N.Y. refugee camp by Prof. Abraham Karp
10. Questions and discussion from the floor
11. Break at 12:45 and reconvene at 1:00 for buffet luncheon
12. Resume program at 1:30, Senator Ohrenstein presiding
13. Formal introductions of dignitaries and greetings
14. Presentation of Inscribed book from World Gathering of Holocaust
Survivors by Anton Segore
15. Presentation of Yom HaShoah Legislative Resolution
16. Presentation of Sculpture by Hy Rosen
17. Closing remarks by Senator Ohrenstein

HOLOCAUST RESOURCE CENTER

Audio/Visual Materials
March 1984

AVENUE OF THE JUST

55 minutes

Includes interviews with people who helped rescue imperiled Jews; explores their motivations. These individuals are memorialized at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

ACT OF FAITH

28 minutes

A dramatization of the role played by the Danish resistance in saving their countrymen from Nazi extermination.

GENOCIDE

52 minutes

Part of the British produced "World at War" TV series. The story of the "Final Solution" from the 1920's to 1945. Seeing and hearing the living who tell of the dying remains; a haunting experience for anyone who has viewed the film.

EMMY - A JOURNEY FROM THE PAST

57 minutes

Albany's Channel 13-filmed documentary of a local survivor's participation in the 1981 World Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors in Israel. Emmy, who escaped from Germany on one of the children's transports, relates her story with deep sensitivity.

GENOCIDE

83 minutes

Using old film clips, still photographs, paintings and animation, the film traces the life of Europe's Jewish population from its mixture of hardship and scholarship in the 19th century to its tragedy in the ghettos, labor camps and concentration camps of Hitler's Europe. Reveals the victims' courage and philosophy of life.

THE WAVE

46 minutes

An ABC-TV Special (1981) which dramatizes the classroom experiment by a teacher who manipulates students much as Hitler manipulated the Germans soon after they see a film about the Nazi concentration camps. The piece responds to the often asked question, "How could anyone be a Nazi?"

ANNE FRANK IN MAINE

28 minutes

In Richard Murphy's Junior High School class in Kennebunk, Maine, a group of typical American youngsters learned about the Holocaust during a year of classroom study. In their quest for knowledge about the Holocaust, students begin to question adults who lived through the Holocaust years and gradually the whole community becomes involved.

JOSEPH SCHULTZ

14 minutes

Vital questions concerning personal moral choice vs. obedience to authority are raised in this film based on an actual incident which occurred during the Second World War. Schultz is a soldier in the Nazi army fighting in Yugoslavia. He has been a "good soldier" following orders which resulted in death and destruction. Yet, when he is ordered to take his place as a member of a firing squad and execute a group of villagers, he refuses to raise his rifle.

THE WALL

83 minutes

A dramatic adaptation of John Hersey's book based on the experiences of the Jews living in the Warsaw Ghetto and their heroic efforts in resisting the Nazis.

PLAYING FOR TIME

83 minutes

Written by Arthur Miller and based on the true story of Fania Fenelon, a Parisian nightclub singer who survived the monstrous Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp by performing in the desperate little Women's Orchestra there.

THE HUNTER AND THE HUNTED

57 minutes

A documentary based on individuals who have actively opposed the continued presence and protection of Nazi war criminals. These champions of justice, i.e. Simon Wiesenthal, Beate and Serge Klarsfeld, do not seek vengeance. They are motivated by the conviction that the failure to punish the executioners of six million Jews and five million Gentiles is an invitation to future holocausts.

THE CHILDREN'S STORY

27 minutes

Based on a story by James Clavell, this film depicts an elementary school classroom on the morning after the nation has been conquered by "the enemy." Skillful manipulation by the new teacher creates a chilling atmosphere vividly illustrating the acceptance of authority.

RAOUL WALLENBERG

47 minutes

During the Second World War, Raoul Wallenberg became Secretary of the Swedish Legation in Budapest. His job, urged upon the Swedes by the American War Refugee Board, was to save Jews. He stopped deportation trains and death marches to hand over protective Swedish passes to the deportees; he organized a section of "international houses" and saved the lives of thousands of Hungarian Jews.

THE WORLD THAT WAS

A series of lectures and programs to be held at the Cultural Education Center during late 1984. All topics are directly related to the themes expressed in Roman Vishniac's photographic exhibition -- A VANISHED WORLD -- which will be on display at the Center from mid-October through January, 1985.

ROMAN VISHNIAC will lecture at the reception for the show October 25

DAVID ROSKIES "The Shtetl" October 21

SARAH BLACHER COHEN "The Legacy of the Yiddish Theatre" October 28

JACK GOTTLIEB "Funny, it Doesn't Sound Jewish (A Study in American Popular Music)" November 4

SARAH BLACHER COHEN "Live Interviews of Tradition Bearers" November 11

ELIE WIESEL "The Holocaust: A Personal Experience" November 18

HOLOCAUST FILM SERIES WITH SCHOLAR: November 25, December 2, 9, 16

SUSAN FANTEL SPIVACK "Stories by Yiddish Writers" November 25
Storytelling sessions December 9

JEANNINE LAVERTY "Stories by Yiddish Writers" December 2
Storytelling sessions December 16

SUZANNE GROSSBERG "A Mourner's Kaddish" multi-media performance to be held during school hours for area students

With the exception of Suzanne Grossberg, all performances and lectures will be held on Sunday afternoons.

Schedule and content has been approved by the Museum Program Committee.

ADVISORY BOARD
NYS HOLOCAUST EXHIBIT/RESOURCE CENTER IN ALBANY

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Albany, New York 12247

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Zachor Holocaust & Resource Ctr.
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Judge Stephen Safranko
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Albany, NY 12207

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Union of Amer. Hebrew Congreg.
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Rabbi Arthur Schneier
Chairman
World Jewish Congress, Amer. Sec.
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New Hartford, NY 13413

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Mr. Eugene Weiss
Latham Circle Shopping Center
Latham, New York 12110

Congressman Ted Weiss
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City of Albany
City Hall
Albany, New York 12247

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Anti-Defamation League of B'nai
B'rith
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(in formation)

May 2, 1984

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Senator Manfred Ohrenstein
Holocaust Resource Center/Permanent Exhibit Advisory Committee

FROM: Norma L. Ball

SUBJECT: Project Update

RESOURCE CENTER

Statement of Mission: AMERICAN JEWISH

Goal I

To inform the public, educators and students about the Holocaust, its historical precedence and its historical consequences.

Goal II

To identify for the public, educators and students the underlying human behavior traits that allowed the Holocaust to occur and to alert them that these traits still exist.

Goal III

To document for the public, educators and students the direct effect of the Holocaust on developments within the State of New York.

Goal IV

To record and make accessible to the public, educators and students the living memories and experiences of Holocaust survivors.

Goal V

To promote communications between New York State Holocaust studies agencies.

Goal VI

To facilitate the implementation of State Education Department Holocaust Curriculum materials throughout New York State.

The Holocaust Resource Room, located in the New York State Museum, is available for lectures, discussions and audio-visual presentations on the Holocaust for students in grades 7 - 12. They may be scheduled from 1-3 hours in length on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. The Resource Room will also provide individual sessions for teachers which focus on particular needs and interests. Sixty area secondary school Social Studies Department Heads were notified of this project in mid-April.

Video equipment has been purchased and the attached materials are presently available.

A bibliography of books to be purchased is being developed with the assistance of the State Library staff and will be distributed through their inter-library loan system.

PERMANENT EXHIBIT

Statement of Purpose:

The permanent exhibit area will portray the origins and events of the Holocaust and show the tragic inability of the United States and the rest of the free world to help the victims of the Nazi "Final Solution." In addition, it will show one inspiring effort of the War Refugee Board which established a "temporary haven" for 982 refugees in Oswego, New York and the positive actions of the inhabitants of this small upstate community.

A Task Force, headed by G. Carroll Lindsey, has engaged an exhibit script writer, Dardis MacNamee, and the preliminary script has been completed. It will go to the Exhibit Planning Department during May.

Area artist, Hy Rosen, has been commissioned to produce a Holocaust sculpture for the Permanent Exhibit. The original piece will remain in the Museum, but additional castings may be purchased by individuals or groups with income reverting to the project.

RELATED PROGRAMS

Roman Vishniac's photographic exhibit "A Vanished World" will open at the New York State Museum in mid-October 1984. It will be accompanied by ten weeks of in-depth programming relating to the pre-Holocaust and Holocaust periods. Schedule and content of programs have been approved by the Museum Program Committee. Funding for the entire schedule of events is underway.

The State Archives presently house 144 cases of Nuremberg Trial transcripts. They will be examined by a staff member from the Washington Archives.

We have been notified that the 1984-85 fiscal appropriation for this Special Project is \$40,000.00.

March 19, 1982

Dr. Jerry Hochbaum
Acting Executive Director
Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture
15 East 26th Street
New York, NY 10010

Dear Jerry,

This is to acknowledge with gratitude on behalf of the UAHC
the Memorial Foundation's initial grant to us of \$15,000
for the Holocaust film project.

We are currently working on a first script for the project,
and you'll be kept in touch with our progress.

Thank you for the efforts you made to bring this grant about.
We'll meet soon.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Daniel B. Syme
National Director of Education

DBS:am

cc: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler

82-IG-01

MEMORIAL FOUNDATION FOR JEWISH CULTURE

15 East 26th Street • New York, N.Y. 10010 • (212) 679-4074

March 16, 1982

Rabbi Daniel B. Syme
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10021

Dear Sirs:

Enclosed please find our check # 5621 in the amount of \$15,000.00.
This disbursement represents the first payment of the Memorial Foundation's
grant to you for the project(s) listed below:

79-HOL-02 Audio Visual Project



Please keep us advised as work on the project(s) progresses. At the end of the academic year, a full detailed progress and financial report must be submitted. Upon receipt of these reports and copies of the published volume(s), the balance of the grant will be made available to you.

Please note that all future correspondence and published materials related to your grant must include the Foundation's project number.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Jerry Hochbaum
Acting Executive Director

JH/rc
Enc.



איחוד
ליהדות
מתקדמת
באמריקה

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

PATRON OF HEBREW UNION COLLEGE—JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
838 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 (212) 249-0100 CABLES: UNIONUAHC

February 9, 1982

Dr. Jerry Hochbaum
Memorial Federation for Jewish Culture
15 East 26th Street
New York, N.Y. 10010

Dear Jerry:

I am happy to enclose the formal outline for the Holocaust trigger films, which are reflective of themes articulated in the curriculum.

The proposal outlines a series of six tapes, including a production budget, and bios on the two principals, producers of "Emmy - a Journey From The Past."

I would appreciate receiving a check for \$15,400. as soon as possible, so that we can begin work on the first two programs simultaneously. Needless to say, I would welcome comments from readers of your choosing.

Two copies of the proposal have been sent to your office in New York. I hope that the enclosed eight copies will be sufficient for readers.

Thank you, Jerry, for your unfailing support. I am confident that we will, together, add new and powerful tools to the field of Holocaust education.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Daniel B. Syme
National Director of Education

DBS/e
encl.

S.L.U.G. PRODUCTIONS

JOLA COPE-NYDEGGER
PRODUCER

NORMA BALL
ADMINISTRATOR

January 21, 1982

PROPOSAL

The production of a series of video-tape teaching segments on the Holocaust, each to be accompanied by an extensive written guide/teacher's aid which will outline suggestions as to how the tapes might be used, questions, issues to be discussed, follow-up exercises, etc. The intent of each individual tape segment, and of the package as a whole, is not to teach historical specifics; facts, figures, dates, numbers, etc. This series will be unique in that it will deal with human issues raised by circumstances; the greater issues surrounding the specific circumstances.

While the story of the Holocaust is unquestionably the story of the Jews, the producers of this series feel it is imperative that this package not be directed or aimed solely at Jewish students in Jewish schools. The issues involved are universal issues and must be felt, faced, and dealt with by the world at large, not just the Jewish community. To this end efforts will be made to make the introduction of this topic via these tapes essential to the overall educational process and aims of the non-Jewish teacher teaching non-Jewish students.

This series will form a logical, coherent package. The video tapes will also be structured and produced in such a way that each will be an entity unto itself. The written guide will have guidelines for the use of each segment as a complete unit in a cross-section of course areas, i.e. history, sociology, psychology, religion, etc. Packaging the series on six individual tapes will allow more than one teacher in a school to make use of the program or parts of it simultaneously. It should be offered on all readily available forms of video tape... 3/4", VHS, and Beta Max.

Each tape segment will be 8 to 15 minutes in length. Visually all written materials will be tied to each cassette. There will be a clean, consistent look and tone to each of the individual segments. Following is a brief description of the structure of each currently projected segment and a preliminary idea of how we intend to deal with the subject matter visually. While the specifics of script and video for each segment will no doubt change during the production process, we guarantee no talking head segments.

TAPE # 1: The making of a Nazi. Q: How could the Nazis do what they did? How could anyone become a Nazi? One of the first issues a student must come to grips with in dealing with the Holocaust is the realization that the Nazis were not alien beings, not monsters. Germany was a highly civilized nation, and the people who became Nazis were human beings... mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters, respectable law abiding citizens of a modern 20th century country. They were human beings like you and me, and as such, vulnerable to a philosophy which seemingly held relatively easy answers to their problems. Vulnerable to mass psychology, group dynamics, a charismatic leader -- capable of becoming followers of a cause, members of an elite and special group. There are examples today of the same process, the same psychology leading a group of people to follow a person or an idea which from the outside may look ludicrous... Jim Jones and the people in Guyana; the Ku Klux Klan; a long list of faith healers, etc.

AMERICAN JEWISH

TAPE # 2: The German Jew. Q: How could the Jews let this happen to them? Wasn't there something they could have done? Why didn't the Jews leave? In order to better understand how the Jews became victims of Hitler's policies, the student must understand the role of the German Jew in German society following World War I, particularly the Jew's perception of his/her place in that society. The Jews were an integral part of the German society, economically, culturally, etc. They had fought as Germans in WWI, they had assimilated so completely that they thought of themselves first as Germans. The sense of nationalistic pride was, and is, amazing. The second major issue to be understood is how the process happened. It was done legally, it was done slowly. Step-by-step rights and freedoms were taken away from the Jews. The net closed around them slowly and systematically with no "handwriting on the wall" as to the final step. The handwriting wasn't even on the wall for Hitler himself, so how could the Jews have foreseen what was to happen. Steps: 1. Emigration... why didn't the Jews just leave? Separation anxiety, assimilation, and no handwriting on the wall; 2. Concentration, registration, yellow star, ghettos; 3. Final Solution, beginning with the invasion of Russia, June, 1941.

TAPE # 3: The Holocaust. Q: Is the Holocaust unique and why? Is it unique to the history of the Jewish people? How do the more recent atrocities of Vietnam and Cambodia differ? The process and its execution set it apart. The intent, the complicity of millions, all one step removed from responsibility. While others

TAPE # 3 (cont.):

died in the killing machine, it was designed for the Jews, the Jews were the only people whose right to live was denied in principle. The Nuremburg Laws, particularly regarding Mischlings.

TAPE # 4: Resistance. Q: When the handwriting was finally on the wall, did the Jews resist, fight back? There must be an understanding not only that there was substantial resistance, but of the two very distinctly different forms resistance took. The armed resistance of the camps and the ghettos, such as the Warsaw ghetto where an incredible stand was organized and carried out by a group of 18-20 year olds. The other kind of resistance was a resistance of the spirit... the maintaining of civilization in a totally uncivilized setting. Music, literature of the ghettos and camps; schools in Warsaw and Lublin ghettos; the Vilna Ghetto Cultural Department. The saving and nurturing of culture, education, humanness and dignity as an ultimate form of resistance.

TAPE # 5: The Free World: Sins of Omission and The Righteous Gentiles. Q: If the Jews were resisting in the camps and the ghettos, where was the Free World, where were the protests of America, Great Britain, the Vatican? An understanding of what was going on in the rest of the world, outside of Hitler's Europe; and a recognition that while the world turned a deaf ear, there were those who stepped forward and took incredible risks to help the Jews. They were individuals, clergy, families, groups, towns, and countries.

TAPE # 6: The Survivors and the Second Generation. Q: What can we learn from the survivors? Why is it imperative that they talk? Is what the Historical Revisionists are saying worth worrying about? Did the survivors ever look for revenge? What is the role of Israel to the survivors? How did their experience affect their faith, and their commitment to Judaism? A look at the World Gathering and the legacy of the Second Generation.


VISUAL TREATMENT

Although it is impossible to give you specifics about the visual treatments of these segments, we can give you an idea of where we will be culling the visual materials from and how they will be treated.

VISUAL TREATMENT (cont.)

There is a vast amount of original footage and photographs available in a number of different archives and libraries such as various Jewish organizations, the U.S. Army, the German government, Movietone archives, and various radio archives. In terms of still photographs, much can be done technically to make them come alive; they can be "animated," sound effects can be added, etc. Authentic and composed newspaper front pages will be used. Simple graphics or charts might be used to reinforce what's being said, either full screen or keyed over pictures. Original pen & ink or watercolor artwork might be used to illustrate a single idea within a segment. There will also be new video.

The idea will be to use simple visuals in order to reinforce the ideas being presented without detracting with too much flash and razzle dazzle. The word simple does not connote cheap or easy... merely effective.


Jola Cope-Nydegger

Norma L. Ball
Norma L. Ball

BUDGET PER SEGMENT

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 8 hour shoot (1" video) | \$640.00 |
| 6 KCS 20 Cassettes | 150.00 |
| 4 One hour 1" tapes | 400.00 |
| 2 hr. transfer (old film footage, etc.) | 200.00 |
| 1" transfer to 3/4 with time code | 150.00 |
| 20 hrs. 3/4" editing | 600.00 |
| 8 hrs. 1" editing | 800.00 |
| 4 hrs. control room final put together | 640.00 |
| 2 hrs. announcer | 100.00 |
| Production Cost Total..... | \$3,680.00 |
| Contingency..... | <u>320.00</u> |
| | \$4,000.00 Production Cost |

Salaries:

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Producer/Writer | \$2,400.00 |
| Assistant Producer | 300.00 |
| Writer/Consultant | <u>1,000.00</u> |
| | \$3,700.00 Total Salaries |

Total Cost per Segment:
(Production + Salaries)..... \$7,700.00

Estimated total production cost for the entire
package... video tapes (6) and the written material
in finished form: \$45,000.00

Estimated total publications cost for the entire
package: \$25,000.00

TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$70,000.00

A. Memorial Foundation Grant: \$35,000.00

B. U.A.H.C. Contribution: \$35,000.00

Jola Cope-Nydegger
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Norma L. Ball
Norma L. Ball

S.L.U.G. PRODUCTIONS

JOLA COPE-NYDEGGER
PRODUCER

NORMA BALL
ADMINISTRATOR

Norma L. Ball is the Director of Holocaust Studies for the Greater Albany Jewish Federation. For the past fifteen years, she has taught courses on the Holocaust in both public and private schools and lectured extensively on the topic.

Ms. Ball is the originator and administrator of a special "in-service" credit program for teachers on "Teaching the Holocaust in Public Schools" and has published papers and curricula in this area. She is a graduate instructor at The University at Albany and The College of St. Rose.

In 1978, Ms. Ball was honored by the Greater Albany Jewish Federation for her work in the field of Jewish Education and Holocaust Studies.

In 1980, she served as the Consultant/Advisor for "Emmy: A Journey from the Past."

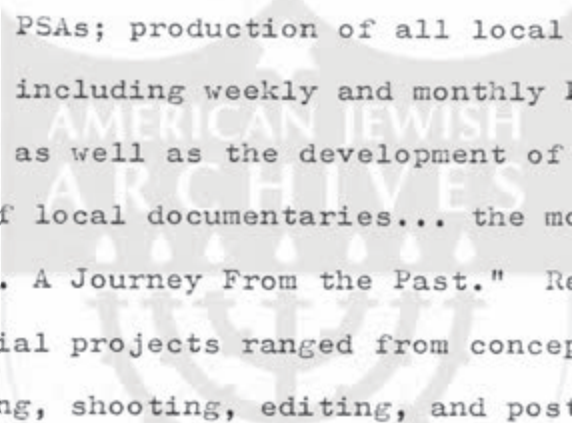
S.L.U.G. PRODUCTIONS

JOLA COPE-NYDEGGER
PRODUCER

NORMA BALL
ADMINISTRATOR

JOLA COPE-NYDEGGER

For the past two years has been a producer and Public Affairs Director for WNYT-TV in Albany, New York. In charge of administrative responsibilities of the Public Affairs Department; development, production, and scheduling of PSAs; production of all local shows outside of news, including weekly and monthly Public Affairs shows as well as the development of specials in the form of local documentaries... the most recent being "Emmy... A Journey From the Past." Responsibilities on these special projects ranged from conceptualization through writing, shooting, editing, and post production.



*Man 7d
for J. Culture*

November 25, 1981

Dr. Uri Fargo
School of Social Work
Haifa University
Mount Carmel, Haifa 31999
ISRAEL

RE: 79-HOL-03
Teaching about the Holocaust in Israel

Dear Dr. Fargo:

We are pleased to inform you that the Memorial Foundation, in accordance with the recommendation of its Commission on the Holocaust, has approved a grant in the amount of \$2,000 for the above project. The grant carries the condition that your report will be completed by May 1, in order that the report can be distributed to members of the Commission on the Holocaust prior to their meeting next summer.

Please acknowledge receipt of this letter and your acceptance of the conditions attached to the grant. A reply form is enclosed for your convenience.

We ask that three copies of your report be sent to our office. Furthermore, there must be an acknowledgment, should any publication result from this project, that the preparation and publication of the work was made possible through a grant by the Memorial Foundation. The Foundation reserves the right to cancel any allocation whenever the project is not carried out as originally proposed, or the terms of the grant are not being fulfilled.

Payments of your grant will be as follows: the first installment, one-half of the allocation, will be paid upon receipt of your acknowledgment and confirmation that work on the project has begun. Upon receipt of your report and a financial statement of your expenses, the balance of the grant will be released.

We are pleased that the Foundation can assist you in this project which will contribute to the strengthening of Jewish culture.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Jerry Hochbaum, Ph.D.
Associate Executive Director

JH:fb
Enc.

cc: Dr. Joachim Prinz
Rabbi Alexander Schindler
Prof. Simon Herman