Biography

Stuart E. Eizenstat
Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs

On June 6, 1997, Stuart E. Eizenstat was sworn in as Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs. The Under Secretary serves as the senior economic official at the Department of State. He advises the Secretary on international economic policy and leads the work of the Department on issues ranging from trade and aviation negotiations to bilateral relations with major partners such as Japan and the European Union. Ambassador Eizenstat retains his title and responsibilities as Special Envoy for Property Claims in Central and Eastern Europe.

From April 5, 1996 to June 6, 1997, Ambassador Eizenstat was Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade. At Commerce, Under Secretary Eizenstat led the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration, which has responsibility for promoting U.S. exports, assisting American business efforts abroad, enforcing laws against unfair trade practices and developing trade policy.

Eizenstat served as the U.S. Representative to the European Union (The United States Senate confirmed the nomination on July 30, 1993 and the Ambassador presented his credentials in Brussels on September 23, 1993). At the time of his nomination, he was Partner and Vice-Chairman of the law firm, and Chairman of the Washington office, of Powell, Goldstein, Frazer & Murphy, where he had been since 1981. He concurrently served as Adjunct Lecturer at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and was a Guest Scholar at the Brookings Institution in Washington.

From 1977 to 1981, Mr. Eizenstat served as President Carter's Assistant for Domestic Affairs and Policy and Executive Director of the Domestic Policy staff at the White House. In 1976, he had joined the Carter Presidential campaign full-time as Director of Issues and Policy; after the election, he became the Carter-Mondale Transition Planning Group's Director for Policy, Planning and Analysis.

From 1968 to 1970, Mr. Eizenstat worked in Atlanta as law clerk to U.S. District Court Judge Newell Edenfield, Northern District of Georgia, and, from 1970 to 1976, as attorney and partner, Powell, Goldstein, Frazer & Murphy. Ambassador Eizenstat has written extensively in leading newspapers, magazines, and legal publications, and co-edited a book, The American Agenda.

At the time of his nomination as Ambassador, Eizenstat sat on the boards of such non-profit organizations as the Weizmann Institute of Science, The Jerusalem Foundation, Brandeis University, Council on Foreign Relations, Council for Excellence in Government Center for National Policy, Overseas Development Council, International Management and Development Institute (Jerusalem), American Jewish Committee, and the UJA Federation of Greater Washington, and was chairman of the Feinberg Graduate School of the Weizmann Institute. He also was on the Board of Directors of Hercules Incorporated, PSI Energy, Inc., and the Israel
Discount Bank of New York.

In 1996, at the conclusion of his service as U.S. Ambassador to the European Union, Ambassador Eizenstat received from Secretary of State Warren Christopher the highest award which can be given to a non-career Ambassador, the Foreign Affairs Award for Public Service.

Stuart Eizenstat was born in Chicago in 1943. He is an honors graduate in political science of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and received his law degree from Harvard University in 1967. His distinguished career in government began during his university years, when he spent three summers (1963, 1964, and 1966) working as an intern for both the legislative and the executive branches of the Federal Government. In 1967-68, he served as a staff aide in the Johnson White House and in 1968 as Research Director for Vice President Hubert Humphrey's Presidential Campaign.


Ambassador Eizenstat is married to Frances Carol Eizenstat and is the father of two sons, Jay and Brian.

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Memorandum

To: Caroline Keene  
Office of Undersecretary Eizenstat

From: Stu Loeser  
President's Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States

Re: Scheduling Request

Date: August 4, 2000  1/8/99

Per our conversation today, please consider this request for a meeting with the Undersecretary for Kenneth L. Klothen, Executive Director (designate) of the President's Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States.

Mr. Klothen is meeting with Commission Chair Bronfman on Thursday, January 14. Therefore, it is important that Mr. Klothen meet with the Undersecretary on or before Wednesday, January 13. If Mr. Eizenstat cannot meet in person, a scheduled telephone call would be adequate.

The issues Mr. Klothen would like to discuss with Mr. Eizenstat include:

1. The scope and mandate of the Commission  
2. The history and background of the authorizing legislation  
3. Staffing issues – the size of the staff and their desired backgrounds

You can reach me at (202) 606-5000, extension 429, to follow up.

Thank you for your assistance.
To: Jodi Manning
From: Stu Loeser
Re: Amb. Eizenstat's remarks
Date: March 18, 1999

Per your request, following is language for the Under Secretary's remarks on Thursday:

The Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States builds on and continues the work begun by the Interagency working group that produced the 1997 and 1998 reports as well as the 1998 Washington Conference.

This Commission is now fully operational. As we speak, the Commission has three teams of researchers at work investigating the art and cultural property, gold, and other financial assets of Holocaust victims that came into the possession or control of the Federal government.

Currently, the research teams are examining or re-examining all relevant documents in the National Archives, and from there they will move to wherever the trail leads them.

The Commission is also working closely with other groups including representatives of state government, the private sector, non-profit research organizations, and other nations' Holocaust assets commissions to complete the historical record.

Representatives from the American public, Republican and Democratic members of Congress, and the Departments of the Army, Justice, State, and Treasury sit on the Commission.

When he signed the legislation that created the Commission, President Clinton said that the Commission will send a strong message, both at home and abroad, that we are determined to acknowledge and address the fate of Holocaust assets in the United States. I am confident that the Commission's ongoing work and its final report to the President will do precisely that.
BY STUART E. EIZENSTAT
U.S. UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ECONOMIC, BUSINESS
AND AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS

THE CONFERENCE ON JEWISH MATERIAL CLAIMS AGAINST GERMANY AND
AUSTRIA ANNUAL MEETING

NEW YORK; JULY 14, 1999

Let me start by thanking all of you and, in particular, your President, Israel Miller, my dear friend and a valued colleague in working to resolve Holocaust restitution issues. In Gideon Taylor, the Claims Conference has chosen an immensely able successor. I am deeply honored to be among you knowing how hard the Claims Conference has worked for the past half century on behalf of Holocaust survivors worldwide in its negotiations with Germany and Austria as well as in its recent activities in the areas of insurance and slave labor. You in the Claims Conference have been responsible for so much that is vital to so many -- from the creation of the Central and Eastern European Fund, which will bring aid to thousands of the most persecuted survivors for the first time, to the allocation of millions of dollars from property sale proceeds, used to better the daily lives of survivors around the world. Your continued contribution on issues of importance to Holocaust survivors is crucial. You have my assurance that I intend to carry on cooperation with the Claims Conference on the unfinished business of the Holocaust era.
Today -- perhaps more than at any other recent time -- ours is a serious task: less than six months away from the new century and a new millennium, it is important to prepare for the future by reflecting on the past.

This century has been one of incredible contrasts -- a duality of good and evil that has particularly defined the plight of the Jewish people during the 20th century. The past hundred years have been witness to the greatest of tragedies -- as well as the greatest of triumphs -- for the Jewish people. At the end of World War II, one third of our world population and two-thirds of European Jewry had perished at the hands of the Nazis. Sixty years later, we have yet to recover our numbers. The loss was, and remains, incalculable. Priceless Jewish scholarship, Jewish artistry, Jewish traditions, and Jewish teaching were lost forever. The Jewish people faced the very real risk of being marginalized to the trash heap of history.

But, in the 50 years since, the Jewish people have experienced a miraculous rebirth. Far from dropping off the pages of history, as one could have imagined, Jews today have become the authors of their own destiny.

Four great events have occurred since the end of World War II -- all unprecedented, all unpredictable, and all unexpected -- that have helped create this dramatic revival.

Rebirth of the Jewish state

The most important development is unquestionably the creation of a modern Jewish state after a two-millennia-long exile. This is an event unparalleled in the annals of history. Never has a state passed out of existence and recreated itself 2000 years later. It is a tribute to the indomitable Jewish spirit and love of Zionism that was maintained despite dispersion around the globe. In the interest of time and because I know so many here have a deep understanding of and an abiding commitment to
Israel, I will comment only that Israel has become the spiritual, cultural, and religious core of World Jewry. The recent assumption of power by a new government is another manifestation of the remarkable progress Israel has made in 50 years as a stable, prosperous, militarily secure, democratic state in the Middle East. A world leader in technology from agriculture to computer-chips and software to medicine -- Israel is now unquestionably the center of Jewish life worldwide and the focal point of Diaspora Jewry from the Americas to Europe.

Revival of Jewry in Europe

The second astounding and inspirational event of the post-World War II era has been the cataclysmic change in Jewish life brought about by the fall of communism and the breakup of the Soviet Union. The Jews of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have lived through the twin tragedies of the 20th century -- Nazism and communism -- six years of systematic extermination followed by 40 years of repression. But, over the past several years, my wife Fran and I have been witness to the rebirth of Jewish life in Eastern Europe. As the State Department's Special Envoy on Property Restitution, I have traveled frequently to urge the leaders of newly free governments in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union to return communal property -- synagogues, cemeteries, day schools, and community centers -- confiscated by the Nazis and nationalized by the communists. The goal is to ensure that these reemerging Jewish communities will have the infrastructure needed to sustain them.

Although slow and still inadequate, Jewish communal properties confiscated by the Nazis and nationalized by the communists are being returned across central Europe. Synagogues, day schools, yeshivots, cemeteries, and community centers are being returned to Jewish community
hands. Like needy flowers in spring, Jewish life in Europe is being reborn, albeit in tragically smaller numbers.

_Passage of Jews from the Margins to the Center_

Third is the remarkable passage of Jews from the margins to the center of American life. With just less than 3% of the population, the level of Jewish participation in the arts, sciences, business, finance, politics, and government in the United States is, in a word, amazing. If the people of Israel have the first real power Jews have enjoyed since the destruction of the Second Temple, Jews in America have influence unlike that in any other Diaspora country in world history.

_International Effort for Justice_

The fourth and most recent extraordinary event is the focus on justice long denied. I am speaking of the remarkable effort by countries and institutions to come to terms with their roles in World War II in dealing with Nazi Germany and German-looted assets and their responsibility to do justice to Holocaust survivors and their families. The firm actions of the United States and NATO in Kosovo are motivated, in part, by the unwillingness to repeat the world's indifference during the Holocaust to the plight of Jews and other civilians. We cannot finish this century by allowing ethnic cleansing to succeed yet again. As we have seen in Kosovo, the reawakening to the horrors of the Holocaust provides contemporary lessons for our actions today and into the next millennium. None of this could have been anticipated, even a few years ago. These issues, and the Holocaust itself, could have been consigned to the dry pages of history books or, with respect to looted assets, remained explored. Yet, now, these are front-page stories -- from Nazi gold and dormant bank accounts to looted art, insurance policies, and Aryanized property. There has been a notable effort to right
the wrongs of the most ghastly events of the 20th century so that we can enter the 21st century in a wiser and more just manner.

Early on, my own involvement with the international community's Holocaust-related efforts focused on the examination of dormant Swiss bank accounts, which the World Jewish Congress under Israel Singer's leadership had begun. In 1996, I attended a meeting in Switzerland with the Swiss Bank Association to urge the creation of what became the Volcker Commission. Back in Washington, I was privileged to lead the eleven-agency study of May 1997 on the identification and disposition of Nazi-looted gold. We provided an index to 15 million pages of documents and declassified 1 million pages of documents, the largest declassification in history. We revealed that the Nazis plundered gold on a vast scale — the equivalent of $4 billion in today's currency — from European central banks and from individual Jews. The gold from individual Jews was resmelted and disguised as central bank gold. The now indistinguishable gold bars were transferred to Switzerland and converted into Swiss francs, which the Germans then used for funding their war machine. We discovered that some of this "victim gold" was inadvertently swept up by the Allied armies after the war and mistakenly returned to European central banks.

Our study has galvanized an effort by numerous countries to face their past, as former neutral and allied countries alike are reexamining their roles during the war. Now 17 countries — from Latin America to Europe, including the Baltic states — have established historical commissions.

A culmination of the international efforts on the Nazi-gold issues occurred at the 1997 London Conference, which brought together 42 countries and sought to uncover the full implications of the Nazi plundering of gold during World War II. It succeeded, in my view, in putting the final
nail in the coffin of Holocaust revisionists. In London, we created a Nazi Persecutee Relief Fund, to which a dozen countries have contributed some $60 million, including nine of ten claimant countries that donated the last six tons of gold to which they would have been entitled. The U.S. contribution is $25 million over three years.

Our efforts in London were followed up by the release in June of 1998 of our supplemental report on Nazi gold, which examined the economic relationships between Nazi Germany and neutral and nonbelligerent states -- including Argentina, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and the Vatican -- that helped sustain the German war effort.

The momentum built up at the London Conference led to last December's Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets, held at the State Department, in partnership with the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, with the participation of 44 countries and 13 NGOs. There we made historic progress in helping complete one of the most important pieces of unfinished business in this century -- uncovering the long-hidden and under-investigated issue of a range of Nazi-looted assets from the Holocaust era. On a number of issues, from communal property and Nazi-confiscated insurance claims to archival openness and Holocaust education, significant progress was made.

But, on one issue we achieved a particularly significant and historic breakthrough -- on the complex and sensitive issue of Nazi-looted art. The Washington Conference created a remarkable international consensus and a new climate for action on this issue. The sale, purchase, and exchange of art from that era have been dramatically and irrevocably altered. As Phillipe de Montebello, Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, pointed out, "The genie is at last out of the bottle on Nazi-confiscated art." At the Washington
Conference, an abiding consensus was forged on eleven principles that provide an effective road-map for our continuing efforts to return much of this art and achieve justice and restitution. While not legally binding, these principles represent a moral commitment that all nations must now take into greater account. These principles encourage efforts to locate missing art and research its provenance; they call for the establishment of a central digital registry, which will link all databases concerning Nazi-looted art; and they encourage the resolution of claims through mediation and arbitration instead of through lengthy lawsuits that most Holocaust survivors can ill afford. It is our hope that each nation will commit itself to the implementation of these principles. Now, major museums in the United States (including the National Gallery), Switzerland, the Netherlands, England, Austria, and France are examining their inventories for suspect art. In France, a Monet looted by the Nazis was identified and returned to its rightful Jewish owner. At the same time, a Matisse discovered in the Seattle Art Museum and several masterworks from Austria have also been returned, and other artworks confiscated by the Nazis are being returned to their Jewish owners.

At the Washington Conference, an important step was made on the long, difficult road to restoring property that was wrongfully seized by fascist and communist regimes in central and eastern Europe. I am pleased to say this multilateral attention to the process of property restitution in Europe was not a one-shot event. The Polish Government is planning to hold an international conference on communal property restitution later in 1999. It was however the Washington Conference that represented the U.S. Government’s first attempt to take a multilateral approach to the subject of property restitution. I believe it was also the first international conference among governments, with non-governmental organizations participating, on
real property restitution. With our leadership and the cooperation of this varied group of players, we generated an important exchange of ideas that should promote the restitution process.

I outlined a series of principles and "best practices" appropriate for restitution of communal property seized originally by the Nazis or their fascist allies, generally from Jewish communities, or later expropriated by communist regimes without compensation. While not all of these practices have been adopted in all countries, they give us a broadly applicable set of concepts which countries should consider. Taken together, they clearly illustrate that property restitution is an integral part of the economic and political reform now underway in central and eastern Europe. It reflects, and contributes to, the development of democratic and pluralistic institutions. By establishing new legal protections for private and other non-state ownership, property restitution helps establish a sound basis for a market economy.

Of course, for years now, Jewish organizations -- such as the American Joint Distribution Committee, the Claims Conference, the Lauder Foundation -- have been supporting the survival of Jewish communities in Eastern and Central Europe through many services, especially for the elderly victims of both fascism and communism. For example, Claims Conference funds from heirless Jewish property in eastern Germany have been used in poorer countries to the East.

The process -- under way in almost all formerly communist countries -- remains incomplete. Progress in most places is tediously slow; more could be done. A case in point is Poland, where in early 1997, the law on relations with the Jewish communities went into effect, allowing for the restitution of a wide range of communal properties that once belonged to
millions of Jews. It set forth a five-year period in which claims for restitution would have to be filed. The small Jewish communities now in Poland will be hard pressed and perhaps indeed unable to prepare and defend so many claims, let alone manage a fraction of so much property effectively. It was anticipated that they could join with outside groups, such as the World Jewish Restitution Organization, to form a foundation, which would claim, receive, and manage a major part of the property. Yet two and a half years have already passed -- half of the period available for claims -- and this foundation still does not exist. Most of that time has been lost in haggling between the Polish Jewish communities and international Jewish organizations over the terms under which the foundation will operate. It is time -- no, it is long overdue -- for both sides to recognize the much larger benefits they can gain through cooperation, forge some reasonable compromises, and get on with this historic responsibility by working together.

Another very important assets issue concerns what happened to moveable assets seized by Nazis, some of which came under U.S. control. This past spring in Washington, we held the initial meeting of the Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States, initiated by President Clinton and chaired by Edgar Bronfman. It has two tasks: to conduct original research on the collection and disposition of Holocaust era assets that came under the control of the U.S. Government after 1933, and to review research being conducted more broadly in the public and private sectors.

Perhaps the culminating triumph of the Washington Conference was to place an important spotlight on the issue of Holocaust education. In many ways, this new attention on educating future generations may be the greatest
legacy of our efforts. And, at a time of growing controversy over class-action lawsuits and the degree to which survivors will actually benefit from their settlement, international efforts on widening Holocaust education could not be timelier. It would be a great shame if the last word of this century on the Holocaust were focused exclusively on issues dealing with money. That is why the promotion of Holocaust education worldwide to future generations of citizens through a new inter-governmental task force, which grew to eight countries at the Conference, is so encouraging. The rededication among all participating nations to the idea that the victims' individual worth and personal dignity will never be forgotten is helping ensure that their memory will provide enduring lessons for all humanity as we enter a new millennium.

While the Washington Conference was an epoch-making event, we have not been sitting upon our laurels. A little over a month ago in London, former Secretary of State Lawrence S. Eagleburger -- in his role as Chairman of the Washington-Conference-endorsed International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims -- announced a breakthrough agreement on key issues of value for policies issued before and during World War II and of shared responsibility for policies nationalized after the war. The International Commission, which includes the Claims Conference, has already given evidence of its capacity to produce tangible results by beginning a "fast-track" for payments on claims already submitted to the State Insurance Commissioners and to the European insurers on the Commission.

Most recently we have given much serious attention to issues concerning compensation for Nazi-era slave and forced laborers. When the new German Chancellor, Gerhard Schroeder, took office in October of 1998,
he pledged his support for the creation of a national foundation that would attempt to compensate these victims of Nazi injustices. Then, in February, a dozen German companies together with the German Government issued a statement calling for the creation of a private sector foundation to make payments to victims of forced labor and other groups who suffered at the hands of the Nazis. I had already been in contact with German government and company representatives when the announcement was made, urging the German government to broaden the discussion of the foundation initiative to include more interested parties, particularly the governments of Central and Eastern Europe.

The upshot has been two plenary meetings on forced and slave labor, the first on May 12 and the second on June 22, as well as other meetings in smaller groups. The participants in these meetings were the German and U.S. Governments, the Israeli Government, the governments of Russia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Belarus, and Ukraine, as well as the reconciliation foundations in these same Central and Eastern European countries that have been established by the German Government. In addition, there were representatives of German companies that support the foundation initiative and your own Claims Conference. I should note that the CJMC is the only NGO involved in this process because of its legal status in administering German compensation programs.

All participants have agreed to a target date for launching the industry foundation of September 1, 1999, the 60th anniversary of Germany's invasion of Poland. They are also in agreement that a German industry foundation under German law -- directed by a board of trustees with a multinational character -- would be the appropriate core institution to make payments to former laborers and other victims of Nazi injustices. There is
tentative agreement on the concept that the German industry foundation should cover those slave and forced laborers who worked for any private German enterprise during the Nazi period or for a public sector entity that has since been privatized.

There is also agreement on the need for a complementary federal foundation to compensate those laborers that may not be covered by the industry foundation. The importance to this entire process of a federal foundation is capital since German companies believe that the proposed industry foundation should cover only those former forced and slave laborers who had worked for private sector German companies. The German Government indeed recognizes that public sector and agricultural laborers received harsh treatment requiring compensation and is, therefore, committed to establishing a federal foundation that would make payments to them. In supporting this German Government commitment, I of course understand that the German Bundestag will have the final say.

We have a consensus that there should be no discrimination in compensation on the basis of nationality or religion. Of course, that does not mean that there cannot be different levels of compensation for different circumstances, such as the degree of suffering under which forced laborers and slave laborers worked. Indeed, there should be a differential in payment between what we call category "A" forced laborers, who lived in concentration camps or similar facilities while they worked, and category "B" laborers, who lived under different conditions.

Finally, we all agree that the German companies that support the foundation deserve to receive legal peace. They understandably feel that they should not have to pay twice for the same set of facts. We have seen extraordinary flexibility and creativity by all sides, particularly the plaintiffs'
attorneys in the class action lawsuits, and we believe that we have resolved many of the issues. Legal peace is a critical issue because, without it, we cannot get German companies to put money into the foundation. Moreover, legal peace would help us increase the number of German companies willing to contribute: 16 German companies are already prepared to support the private sector foundation, and I believe there are many other companies that may add their support if legal peace can be obtained.

Clearly, many complicated issues remain to be addressed. These include eligibility requirements for compensation by the industry foundation, a more precise definition of forced laborers and slave laborers, whether there should be variations from a flat per capita payment to former laborers, details relating to foundation governance, coverage of laborers that worked exclusively in SS companies, and legal closure. We also need to work out how to handle individual claims most expeditiously.

The terrible aftermath of the Holocaust and its forever relevant lessons remain omnipresent. We must learn these lessons, which will help make the 21st century a time when human rights and human dignity will be better respected -- and the international community more willing to act to protect those rights -- than was the case during World War II. Forever mindful of the Holocaust's lessons and working together in close association, the Claims Conference and the U.S. Department of State will, I know, continue to be a leading partnership in the efforts to assure justice for the victims of the Holocaust throughout the world. Thank you.
Katherine Page

Date: 03/01/2000 09:04 pm (Wednesday)
From: Carolyn Keene
To: ex.mail."kpage@PCHA.GOV", ex.mail."carolyn.keene"
CC: MOOREH
Subject: Appointment with Mr. Eizenstat -Reply

Could you please tell me what the subject is of the meeting?

Mr. Eizenstat cannot meet Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday and most of the day on Thursday and Friday.

>>> ex.mail."kpage@PCHA.GOV" 03/01/00 04:26pm >>>
Carolyn,

Kenneth Klothen would like to meet with Mr. Eizenstat some time during the week of March 6th, if possible. Mr. Klothen’s schedule is free for Tuesday through Friday, except Tuesday, noon to 1 and Wednesday, 12:30 - 1:30. You may contact me by phone at (202) 371-6400 x 442 or by e-mail. Thank you!

Katherine Page
Carolyn,

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Katherine Page
Thank you, Carolyn, for your reply. Mr. Klothen would like to discuss views on the French & their research/restitution procedures, as well as issues of the U.S. banks and how to deal with them without squandering limited resources. I believe that they discussed meeting on these issues at the Commission's Board meeting on Tuesday. Mr. Klothen is not available on Thursday, noon to 1, however any other time on Thursday or Friday would be fine, dependant upon Mr. Eizenstat's schedule.

Katherine Page
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